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“Let Us Unite Our Strength”: The Role of Diplomacy in the French and Indian War

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## **ABSTRACT**

The French and Indian War began in the Ohio Valley, where the British and French tried to seize land and assert their authority over the Native Americans living there. The war started because of spectacular failures of diplomacy, and the treating of the Ohio Indians as imperial subjects. As the war progressed, both the French and the British experienced morale-shattering defeats and hardships. It was only when the British began treating the Indians living in Pennsylvania as allies, rather than subjects, that they were able to obtain victory. The war was decided by diplomacy and trade goods, rather than muskets and bayonets. Unfortunately, that diplomatic spirit proved short lived, and the past was quickly forgotten.

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## Introduction

“I cannot finish my letter without expressing my Fears that when the Indians come to hear this and no more said to them on the part of the Government, they will grow dissatisfied and leave us...to the Cruelties of our Enemies, nay may be compelled against their Inclinations by the French to join in murdering our Inhabitants.”<sup>1</sup>

Pennsylvania Secretary Richard Peters, 25 October 1755

Few letters so fully encapsulate the anxieties swirling through Pennsylvania at the beginning of the French and Indian War as the one quoted above. As things stood, the people of Pennsylvania were witnessing the violent and unanticipated end of eighty years of mostly peaceful coexistence with the Native American groups living around and among the colonists. Over the course of those eighty years, the colonists had gone from dealing directly with the relevant Indian tribes to purchase land at a fair price to instead leveraging a relationship of convenience with the Iroquois Confederacy to conclude deals that were at best unfair and, at worst, were outright theft. As the people who were cheated in these deals were pushed off their lands and moved west, they carried with them a bitter resentment that spread to people as yet unaffected and their resentment served as the smoldering ember that would grow into the roaring inferno in the Ohio Country. But as those people carried their resentment west, they also dropped out of sight of most colonists, who continued to believe that all was still well between the colony and its original inhabitants.

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Peters to Weiser, 25 Oct 1755, vol. 1, p. 59, Conrad Weiser Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. Hereafter cited as CWP.

All of the elements that would come to shape Pennsylvania's participation in the war are present in the above quote. Peters feared the Indians would find out that the Colonial Assembly had not voted to allow the governor to raise a militia or to pay and support friendly Indians to fight for the colony, and he could "neither promise nor do any thing that can avail the unhappy people," meaning those soon to be disaffected Indians. To make matters worse, the Assembly showed no sign of budging.<sup>2</sup> This was partly the result of a long-festering conflict over taxation between the anti-proprietary faction of the Assembly and the sons of William Penn. While William Penn had developed a reputation for treating the Indians fairly and dealing with them in an honest way, his sons turned out to be apples which had defied the odds and managed to land remarkably far from the tree. The other issue was the pacifist principles of the leading Quakers of the Assembly, whose beliefs prevented them from doing anything to aid in warfare. Pacifism had never been a liability in a colony that had only known peace, but as that peace crumbled, it suddenly seemed like the Quaker elites were committing something close to fratricide.

Peters wrote his letter in the aftermath of British General Edward Braddock's devastating defeat at the hands of the French and their Indian allies near the French Fort Duquesne, at modern-day Pittsburgh, on 9 July 1755. This defeat had upended everything and thrown the political order of the colonies into disarray. As historian Fred Anderson put it, "The backwoods settlements of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia felt it like a blow to the solar plexus." The annihilation of the only military force in the backcountry left the door wide open for unopposed raids on frontier settlements, while emboldening Natives who were already allied with the French. Perhaps more importantly, Braddock's defeat forced those Native Americans who had

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<sup>2</sup> Peters to Weiser, 25 Oct 1755, CWP.

tried to remain neutral, or even allied with the British, to have to reassess the reality of their situation due to mounting French control in the Ohio Valley. Faced with choosing between an impotent colonial alliance or the recent victors, they chose the latter and began to participate in taking “captives, plunder, and scalps” in the backcountry.<sup>3</sup>

Overlooked, even in the above analysis, is the secretary’s inability to see the Indians’ agency. These were not irrational people changing sides on a whim. Instead, each group had to operate within its own unique set of circumstances to find its own best course of action. Peters failed to consider the unique circumstances of the Delawares, Shawnees, Senecas, and the myriad of other tribes and communities who found themselves caught between the two jaws of the imperial vice in the Ohio Country. Peters feared that by being cut off from one colonial provider, they would “be compelled against their inclinations by the French” to join Pennsylvania’s colonial enemies in “murdering our Inhabitants.” He presented the Indians as a homogenous group and as little more than naïve people easily manipulated by Europeans. The only justification they could have for taking up the axe against Pennsylvania was if some other group of white Europeans “compelled” them to do so. There is no analysis by Peters of what may have caused the Indians to be more tolerant of the French in the first place or how the French would have managed to compel them. As seen from Philadelphia, the Native Americans were nothing more than foils for Europeans to act upon.<sup>4</sup>

In fact, when one takes a step back and views the French and Indian War through the context of intercultural relationships, it becomes obvious that the war and its ultimate resolution

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<sup>3</sup> Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years’ War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000), 108-110, quote 110.

<sup>4</sup> Peters to Weiser, 25 Oct 1755, CWP.



were proxies for settling the debate over whether the Native Americans would be imperial subjects or allied nations. The French learned this lesson in 1749 during Pierre-Joseph Céleron's expedition through the Ohio Country when his demand that the Indians kick the English out of "my territories" was met with an icy reception.<sup>5</sup> Later, Ohio Seneca leader Tanaghrisson made this tension explicit when he told a French officer, "Both you and the English are white, we live in a Country between; therefore the Land belongs to neither one nor t'other...I am not afraid to discharge you off this Land."<sup>6</sup> Ultimately, British victory in the war did not come until they tacitly recognized the importance of treating the Indians as allies, not subjects, as summarized by General John Forbes' warning in February 1759 to overall North American commander General Jeffery Amherst to "not think triflingly of the Indians or their friendship."<sup>7</sup> It is nothing short of a human tragedy that Amherst chose to discard that friendship once he had victory in hand, slamming shut the door of coexistence forever. Instead, he sent the British colonies careening down the path towards Manifest Destiny and the nearly complete erasure of Native Americans from not only the landscape, but also the very history of what became the United States. However, without the support of Indian allies and the diplomatic efforts necessary to build and maintain those alliances, there would have been no British victory and perhaps no United States.

Up until recent decades, the story of the French and Indian War has been told explicitly through a Euro-centric lens, with Native Americans serving only as skulking pawns manipulated by first one side and then the other. The perfect encapsulation of this school of thought is the

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<sup>5</sup> Michael N. McConnell, *A Country Between: The Upper Ohio Valley and Its Peoples, 1724-1774* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 83-88.

<sup>6</sup> Tanaghrisson as recorded by George Washington, *The Journal of Major George Washington* (1754; repr., Williamsburg, VA: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1959), 7.

<sup>7</sup> Forbes to Jeffrey Amherst, 7 Feb 1759, in *Writings of General John Forbes Relating to his Service in North America*, ed. Alfred Procter James (Menasha, WI: Collegiate Press, 1938), 290.

semi-mythical account by Francis Parkman. He wrote in 1884 in his still popular *Montcalm and Wolfe*, for example, that the “Mission Indians of Canada retained all their native fierceness” and “Their wigwams were hung with scalps, male and female, adult and infant; and these so-called missions were but nests of baptized savages, who wore the crucifix instead of the medicine-bag, and were encouraged by the Government for purposes of war.”<sup>8</sup> As Francis Jennings wrote more than a century later in 1988, “This conflict has long been seen in romantic terms that pit the forces of Good (England, civilization, progress) against the powers of Evil (France, savagery, perpetual wilderness).”<sup>9</sup>

This romanticized interpretation also included the perpetuation of what some scholars have come to call the “Myth of Iroquois Empire.” As Wilcomb E. Washburn put it, “The Iroquois were perceived by nineteenth-century American historians and writers as supermen of the wild frontier, fierce warriors who dominated their Indian neighbors and intimidated the French, Dutch, and English colonists.”<sup>10</sup> This myth had profound implications on the historiography of Native American relations in Pennsylvania and led to historians writing histories that minimized the autonomy and relative importance of non-Iroquois groups, especially those living in the Ohio Valley as well as the Delawares still living in eastern Pennsylvania. Scholarship since the 1980s, however, has done much to correct this erroneous view and to show that the Iroquois did not have imperial control over the Indians of Pennsylvania. Instead, a complex set of circumstances caused the Delawares, Shawnees,

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<sup>8</sup> Francis Parkman, *Montcalm and Wolfe: The Riveting Story of the Heroes of the French and Indian War* (New York: Modern Library, 1999), 329.

<sup>9</sup> Francis Jennings, *Empire of Fortune: Crowns, Colonies, and Tribes in the Seven Years War in America* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1988), xx.

<sup>10</sup> Wilcomb E. Washburn, foreword to *Beyond the Covenant Chain: The Iroquois and Their Neighbors in Indian North America, 1600-1800*, ed. Daniel K. Richter and James H. Merrell (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1987), xiii.

Susquehannocks, and the Mingos (Iroquois people living outside of Iroquoia) living in Pennsylvania and the Ohio Country to make the decisions they did.<sup>11</sup>

While there have been several excellent works that have incorporated this new perspective into the narrative of the French and Indian War, there is still more work to be done.<sup>12</sup> A separate work by James H. Merrell provided an excellent analysis of the efforts of negotiators and diplomats on the Pennsylvania frontier from its founding through the 1760s.<sup>13</sup> More can still be said, however, about the intercultural exchanges and the role of diplomacy during the war years specifically. By focusing on the immediate build-up to the war and the war years themselves, this work will hopefully shed further light on this important topic. The patterns and cycle of diplomacy and expansion would become a recurring trend throughout the history of the United States.

Before jumping into the backstory of the war, however, a few acknowledgments regarding terminology need to be made. The first has to do with the names of people and cultures. The most obvious term that must be dealt with is “Indian.” While people have astutely pointed out that Native Americans are not from the sub-continent of India, that does not negate the over four hundred years of meaning the term “Indian” has built. As historian James Axtell pointed out, the term “Indian,” when compared to the alternatives, is “simpler, sanctioned by tradition, normatively neutral, and preferred by the vast majority of native people themselves.” It

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<sup>11</sup> See Francis Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire: The Covenant Chain Confederation of Indian Tribes with English Colonies* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1984); Richter and Merrell, ed., *Beyond the Covenant Chain*; Daniel K. Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1992); McConnell, *A Country Between*.

<sup>12</sup> See Jennings, *Empire of Fortune*; Anderson, *Crucible of War*; and Matthew C. Ward, *Breaking the Backcountry: The Seven Years' War in Virginia and Pennsylvania, 1754-1765* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003).

<sup>13</sup> See James H. Merrell, *Into the American Woods: Negotiators on the Pennsylvania Frontier* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1999).

does not carry the negative baggage people suppose it to and continues to be the official and legal term. A visit to the official website of the Seneca Nation, for example, shows their seal that reads, “Seneca Nation of Indians.” Still, in order to avoid some amount of repetition, the terms “Indian” and “Native American” are both used interchangeably throughout this thesis, even if the latter term has its own problems.<sup>14</sup>

In addition, all peoples are referred to by their specific cultural, political, or geographic affiliations. Such references can be incredibly difficult as well, as there are often many names for the group of people in question, probably none of which are what they actually called themselves. An obvious example is “Iroquois.” The French came to use it to describe the political league of originally five and later six independent nations, but they themselves would have never called themselves that. Instead, they had a different term in each of their respective languages: *Haudenosaunee* in Seneca, *Kanosoni* in Mohawk, etc.<sup>15</sup> With that complication in mind, the terms used throughout this thesis are the ones commonly seen and understood in historical scholarship, such as Iroquois as well as Seneca. As to the names of people, Native American and European alike, the most commonly used spellings are utilized here. Most of these spelling choices come from the scholarship of Fred Anderson, one of the foremost scholars in the field.

The second highly contentious term is “French and Indian War.” Since at least the 1980s, many scholars have pushed for the use of “The Seven Years’ War” to describe the six-

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<sup>14</sup> James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), xi; Seneca Nation of Indians (website), [sni.org](http://sni.org). Also see Charles C. Mann, *1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus*, 2nd ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 2011), 393-398. Mann points out that many scholars have complained that “native American” can mean literally anyone born in, and therefore a native of, the Western Hemisphere. It should also be pointed out that none of the people in question had anything to do with a Florentine man named Amerigo either.

<sup>15</sup> Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 1.

year-long war fought in North America from 1754-1760. While their arguments are well founded – there were indeed many wars fought against the French by the English colonies, and there were also Indians who fought on both sides of the war – the term “Seven Years’ War” is problematic.<sup>16</sup> To begin with, none of the other wars – “King George’s War” vs. “The War of the Austrian Succession,” for example – are called by their European names in the literature discussing North America. The sudden deference to the European name of this war seems odd, and as already noted, the war fought in North America only lasted six years. Finally, and most importantly, to the extent that Americans know anything about the war, they know it as the “French and Indian War.” There is simply no need to cause further confusion. The Seven Years’ War was arguably the first war fought around the world, and yet nobody would accept scholars calling the 1914-1918 conflict the “*Second World War*.”

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In order to understand the war and the role of diplomacy in the conflict, one must first take a step back and view the different forms colonization took and how they shaped cultural interactions and, ultimately, the French and Indian War. From the moment European colonization began in North America, the differences between the colonies and their colonists would prove crucial in shaping future interactions. As Englishmen came to settle in North America, they carried with them a specific set of religious, moral, and economic beliefs and values that directly shaped the development of their colonies and their interactions with the Native people. Their view was markedly different than the French, who operated under a different set of beliefs and economic realities that resulted in a very different colonial world,

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<sup>16</sup> See Jennings, *Empire of Fortune*, xv-xvi; Anderson, *Crucible of War*,

especially as the Indians perceived it. These divergent approaches clashed for over a century before finally waging their final and thunderous battle in the backwoods of Pennsylvania in the 1750s.

Early French settlements exhibited a far lighter touch on the Native American people than English ones. To be clear, this was born out of the economic realities of French colonization rather than out of some altruistic or humanitarian zeal. But those economic realities had a profound impact on how the Indians experienced and perceived colonization nonetheless. According to a Jesuit missionary writing dejectedly in 1636, New France “could aspire to no higher fortune than to be made a storehouse for the skins of dead animals.”<sup>17</sup> The fur trading companies even resisted efforts at the cultural and religious conversion of the Indians because, according to historian James Axtell, it risked turning “good Indian hunters into poor French farmers,” an indication of how much the French valued them as trading partners.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, the French had the benefit of establishing their settlements on land not claimed by any Native American people, as the previous inhabitants of the area had “vanished without a trace,” probably from a combination of disease and warfare.<sup>19</sup> Together, these factors meant that the French had a relatively small impact on the Native Americans around them.

Even when religious zealots in France did succeed in making religious conversion of the non-Christian Indians a priority, they ultimately settled on a system that, while still highly destructive for Native culture and religion, was still markedly less so than English efforts. French Jesuits came to believe that the Indians “possessed innate civility and goodness which needed

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<sup>17</sup> Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France, 1610-1791* (Cleveland: Burrows Brothers, 1897), 9: 133.

<sup>18</sup> Axtell, *Invasion Within*, 36.

<sup>19</sup> Axtell, *Invasion Within*, 43.

only to be plated and polished by Christianity,” and therefore they could be “Christianized” without “Frenchifying them first.”<sup>20</sup> While not everyone in France agreed with the Jesuits, they nonetheless set the tone for much of the French effort in North America. Furthermore, the low population numbers in New France ensured that the impacts of those efforts on the Native people in Canada were smaller than those of the English. The relatively small number of Frenchmen were also dependent upon the Indians for much of their existence, leading to a “greater tolerance of native culture” and a “French readiness to marry Indians,” as opposed to the “ethnocentric disdain of the more balanced English population for such ‘mongrel’ matches.”<sup>21</sup>

This comparatively low-impact, interdependent relationship was nowhere to be found in the English colonies after the first few years. As historian Daniel K. Richter has pointed out, where “missionaries, traders, royal officials, military men, and interpreters accounted for a substantial share of the population” in the French and Spanish colonies, in British North America those groups were a virtually “powerless minority.” Instead of a fur trade based on mutually beneficial exchange, the main economic model was “capitalist agriculture,” which required the constant acquisition of new lands using increasingly more devious and hostile methods to eject the previous and rightful owners. The system, as Richter put it, was “almost entirely antithetical to European-Indian accommodation.”<sup>22</sup> To make matters worse, already by 1700 there were over a quarter of a million English colonists, as opposed to fifteen thousand French, meaning that the impact of the English on their Indian neighbors was bound to be greater.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Axtell, *Invasion Within*, 62-64.

<sup>21</sup> Axtell, *Invasion Within*, 278.

<sup>22</sup> Daniel K. Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 184.

<sup>23</sup> Axtell, *Invasion Within*, 41-42.

Furthermore, the British form of Protestant religion made cultural coexistence even less likely. While French Catholics certainly exhibited a self-righteous air of cultural superiority towards the Native Americans, they eventually settled on the Jesuit method of “Christianizing” without “Frenchifying.” This concept was inconceivable for the British, who, as Axtell glibly put it, were “So confident...of their cultural superiority that they could hear the Indians calling, ‘Come over and help us,’ which request they promptly emblazoned on the Massachusetts colony seal.” In order for those Native Americans to be “helped,” it was obvious to the Protestants that they needed “*Civilitie* for their bodies,” and only after that “*Christianitie* for their soules.”<sup>24</sup> This perspective led to the development of so-called “praying towns,” which served as places for missionaries to isolate their converts and “remake their civil polity in the English image.”<sup>25</sup> This approach generally only succeeded in proving to the Native Americans that their ultimate goal was, according to Axtell, “cultural annihilation, total and uncompromising.”<sup>26</sup>

Unfortunately for the Native Americans, both colonizers brought with them more than just a religious superiority complex. They also brought tools, weapons, and other manufactured goods that revolutionized Native life. Historian Daniel K. Richter argued that Native Americans experienced the effects of the consumer revolution more quickly and fully than even British Americans. Interestingly, Richter also pointed out that the influx of European goods did not result in the destruction of Native culture, but rather the European goods were adapted for Native uses. Furthermore, “Indian customers’ demand for inexpensive, lightweight, easily portable

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<sup>24</sup> William Crashaw, *A Sermon Preached in London before the right honorable the Lord La Warre...Febr. 21. 1609* (London, 1610), quoted in Axtell, *Invasion Within*, 133.

<sup>25</sup> Axtell, *Invasion Within*, 139.

<sup>26</sup> Axtell, *Invasion Within*, 178.



items stretched European technological capabilities to their limits.”<sup>27</sup> Clearly, the exchange was more than one-sided.

Even if the new European goods did not destroy Native culture, they still came at a steep cost: they made the Indians dependent on European traders. According to a colonial official writing in 1761, “A modern Indian cannot subsist without Europeans; And would handle a Flint Ax or any other rude utensil used by his ancestors very awkwardly; So that what was only Conveniency at first is now become Necessity.”<sup>28</sup> As shall be seen in the following pages, the Native Americans’ constant demands that colonial governments provide them with quality trade agents, as well as the predictions of prophets like the Delaware Neolin that the only way to save Indian culture was to shed their reliance on European goods, leave little doubt that the above official was correct in his observation.<sup>29</sup> All of this meant that no matter how much Native Americans may have wanted to sever ties with Europeans, they were forced to seek out accommodation with one imperial power or the other. While the French may have been more accommodating, according to historian Francis Jennings, “The English had developed an industrial and commercial system capable of underselling the French almost everywhere.”<sup>30</sup> Thus, each Native American group was forced to balance the costs of dealing with either imperial partner against the objective of preserving their way of life.

This thesis will show the course that debate took during the French and Indian War in Pennsylvania. Beginning with the tension-filled years prior to the outbreak of hostilities in the

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<sup>27</sup> Richter, *Facing East*, 174-175.

<sup>28</sup> Report of John Stuart to the Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantations on the Southern Indian Department, 9 March 1764, Colonial Office, Colonies General, Class 323, vol. 17, Public Record Office, Great Britain, quoted in Kathryn E. Holland Braund, *Deerskins and Duffels: The Creek Indian Trade with Anglo-America, 1685-1815* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), 30.

<sup>29</sup> See Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 535-537.

<sup>30</sup> Jennings, *Empire of Fortune*, 17.

Ohio Country, followed by the early years of the war in which virtually no effort was made to win Indian allies, the final British victory was made possible only by effective diplomacy and treaty-making with the Native Americans. The struggle for supremacy in the backcountry was ultimately decided by rhetoric and trade goods, not by arms. More than any other factor, the treatment of Native Americans as allies instead of as subjects led to British victory.

Numerous sources demonstrate the significance of how the British treated Native Americans as a crucial factor in their victory. Primary among these are select manuscript documents located at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania and the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia. In particular, the papers of Indian trader Conrad Weiser and colonial secretary Richard Peters provide an intimate glimpse into the closed-door dealings and machinations that moved Pennsylvania's war machine. Additional published primary sources, including letters from British General John Forbes and Benjamin Franklin, and especially the journals kept by Indian trader and land surveyor Christopher Gist, George Washington, and other witnesses, were also crucial.

For a work that is ostensibly about uncovering the agency of Native Americans in the French and Indian War and the critical role they played, all of the sources listed above are from Europeans. There is no denying this glaring deficiency, but it is the reality with which any researcher in this field must contend. With no contemporary written language of their own, only a small number of Native Americans learned to write in the languages of the colonists around them. This means that virtually all of the surviving documentation pertaining to them comes in the form of speeches recorded by Europeans and other scraps of writing sprinkled into other records. There is no denying that there is some liability present in using these sources blindly, as even these "primary" sources are usually second, or more often third-hand accounts presented

via an interpreter. One can also safely assume that the biases of the recorder are present, with an agent from a Virginia-based land speculation company happily recording a speech from a man upset with Pennsylvania, for example.<sup>31</sup> But these are the best and only windows we have to gain some insight into the people involved.

Even with these limitations, much can still be done to pull the rich and colorful stories of the Native Americans involved to the forefront of analyzing the significant role of diplomacy in the French and Indian War

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<sup>31</sup> Christopher Gist, "Christopher Gist's First and Second Journals, September 11, 1750 – March 29, 1752," in Lois Mulkearn ed., *George Mercer Papers Relating to the Ohio Company of Virginia* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1954), 34.



## Chapter 1

### **“Where the Indian’s Land Lay”: Diplomatic Failure in the Ohio Country**

The winter was a hard time to be traveling anywhere in eighteenth-century America, even in a place as beautiful and loaded with game as the Ohio Valley. Christopher Gist knew this well, as he journeyed through the area in service of the Ohio Company of Virginia during not one but two winters. He fell ill on numerous occasions and recorded on 07 January 1752, “We had a good Deal of Snow & bad Weather – My Son had the Misfortune to have his Feet frost bitten.” Thankfully, he reported they still managed to kill “Plenty of Deer Turkeys &c and fared very well.” His journals are full of other references that would make any modern hunter envious, such as “Monday 25 [March 1751]... We killed a Buck Elk,” and “Tuesday 2 [April 1751]...killed a Buffaloe.” They even found what turned out to be the teeth of a wooly mammoth.<sup>1</sup>

But no amount of successful hunting and fresh, roasted meat could alleviate the difficulty of Gist’s journey. There was a darkness hovering over the Ohio Valley, and a storm more destructive than anything the harsh winter could throw at him was building in the towns and villages along the river. Throughout his journey, he encountered Native American people so on edge that even the sight of a compass could send them into a rage, while whisperings of French

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<sup>1</sup> Christopher Gist, “Christopher Gist’s First and Second Journals, September 11, 1750 – March 29, 1752,” in Louis Mulkearn, ed., *George Mercer Papers Relating to the Ohio Company of Virginia* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1954), 25, 28, 35.

comings and goings were everywhere to be found. With so many foreign interlopers in their homeland, the people Gist met were keen to get rid of yet another European who was most likely scheming to take their land. That happened to be exactly why Gist was there, and his fear is palpable in one entry in which he reported, “They began to suspect me, and said, I was come to settle the Indian’s Land, and they knew I should never go Home again safe.”<sup>2</sup>

For Gist, it was not just the difficult winter conditions he had to contend with; it was the frigid atmosphere wrought by the broken diplomatic environment of the Ohio Valley that presented the most danger. As Pennsylvania traders, Virginia land speculators, French military officers, and Iroquois leaders wrestled with each other to try to assert their control of the area, the people who actually lived there were unsurprisingly mostly left out of the discussions. These people were largely refugees who had moved from the east. They were Delawares who had been pushed and cheated out of their homes in eastern Pennsylvania, Shawnees who had similarly lost their homes along the Susquehanna, and remnants of people whose ancestors had lived in the valley but had been conquered and incorporated into the Iroquois tribes. They had all come to the Ohio Valley for the independence it promised them, but now, once again, their homes were in danger of being swept away by imperial ambition and indifference. Gist encountered this sense of trepidation firsthand when an Indian man told him that the Delaware chiefs “the Beaver and Captain Oppamylucah...desired to know where the Indian’s Land lay.”<sup>3</sup> Where indeed.

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<sup>2</sup> Gist, “First and Second Journals,” 10.

<sup>3</sup> Gist, “First and Second Journals,” 39; Fred Anderson, *The War that Made America: A Short History of the French and Indian War* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 19-20.

Gist and the company he was working for would play a major role in plunging the North American continent into war. While much has been written about the outbreak of the French and Indian War in the Ohio Valley, it has generally been framed within the context of the roles the Europeans took to act on the Native inhabitants.<sup>4</sup> While cultural elements are undeniably present in these works, a closer look at the rich cultural factors that shaped the early stages of the war is critical to understanding its resolution, which was brought about by diplomacy and by addressing many of the very issues that were the cause of the war breaking out in the Ohio Valley. In order to understand how victory was achieved by trade goods and promises rather than muskets, it is necessary to first understand how a lack of trade goods, broken promises, and the threat of muskets started the war.

The dramatic acts in the Ohio Valley that would ultimately launch a world war had deep roots into the seventeenth century. The interactions between the colonizers and the colonized had profound cultural and political implications for both groups. In the early phases of colonization, Native Americans clamored for access to European weapons, while the Europeans were eager to gain access to the fur trade. This dynamic led to a situation in which Native people fought to gain or maintain access to trapping areas, markets to trade with Europeans, and the routes in between, while Europeans fought amongst each other for those markets. Historian Francis Jennings observed that the great tragedy of this period was that “tribes rejected the impulse to unite against invading colonials,” and while “the trade bound tribe and colony together, it divided tribe

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<sup>4</sup> See Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000), 22-32; Francis Jennings, *Empire of Fortune: Crowns, Colonies, and Tribes in the Seven Years War in America* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1988), 8-45; Michael N. McConnell, *A Country Between: The Upper Ohio Valley and Its Peoples, 1724-1774* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 61-88.

from tribe and colony from colony.”<sup>5</sup> No group epitomized this struggle more, nor benefitted more from it, than the Five Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy, the Haudenosaunee.

There was more at stake in what came to be called the “Beaver Wars” than just economic gain, however. For tribes who had been ravaged by European diseases, wars against other tribes represented an opportunity to replenish their populations via the practice of taking captives. This practice had a long history in North America and was a key component of traditional “mourning wars.” While these were typically small-scale conflicts prior to European contact, as diseases wreaked havoc on the Native Americans, the need to capture and adopt more replacements into tribes became greater and greater. European weapons increased the devastation of the warfare, and those weapons could only be obtained by trading furs. Suddenly, raiding to steal pelts became a new reason to attack an enemy, increasing the violence of the cycle.<sup>6</sup>

In 1648, the Dutch traders located at Fort Orange near modern-day Albany, New York, became concerned that warfare among various tribes would lead to their primary trade partners, the neighboring Mohawks of the Iroquois Confederacy, being cut out of the trade networks. If that happened, furs from the west would be redirected to the more easily accessible trading centers at French Montreal or Swedish Fort Christina near modern-day Wilmington, Delaware. They decided to reverse their policy of not selling firearms to Native Americans and sold the Mohawks four hundred guns, which they promptly put to use against the epidemic-weakened Hurons who controlled the trade to Montreal. According to historian Francis Jennings, “The

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<sup>5</sup> Francis Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire: The Covenant Chain Confederation of Indian Tribes with English Colonies* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1984), 85.

<sup>6</sup> Anderson, *The War that Made America*, 5-7. For more about the background of the Beaver Wars, see Jennings, “Chapter Six: The Iroquoian ‘Beaver Wars,’” in *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire*, 84-112. For more about the cultural complexities of adoption and captive taking, see James Axtell, “Chapter Thirteen: The White Indians,” in *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 302-327.



great Huron trading system was smashed. The Hurons themselves were scattered in many directions, and tragically many died.” The same would be true of the Eries, Monongahelas, and other tribes living around the Great Lakes and in the Ohio Valley.<sup>7</sup>

While the Iroquois were busy conquering other tribes and incorporating their people into their own tribes through the 1600s, the French had been busy creating a “framework for a non-coercive alliance system” based in the cultural “Middle Ground.” Suffering large numbers of casualties and facing a crumbling strategic situation against these French-allied tribes through many years of fighting, the Iroquois were forced to create the Grand Settlement of 1701. The settlement shaped Iroquoian politics and military strategy – and therefore colonial politics and strategy – all the way through the middle of the French and Indian War. The settlement involved two separate agreements with the French and English, with neither of them knowing about the other. The Iroquois promised the French they would be neutral in wars between the French and English, while at the same time, they promised the English to be their ally, something which they found clever ways out of in the future. Neutrality gave them leverage to play the two empires off of each other. What was ostensibly a peace settlement made to prevent their complete annihilation had become an instrument to build their own power.<sup>8</sup>

Pennsylvania presented the Iroquois with another opportunity to increase their power. The Delawares, Shawnees, and other groups in Pennsylvania were initially treated well by William Penn and his colony. One historian went so far as to argue that Pennsylvania was “the greatest success story in English North America.” The colony avoided war for seventy years following its founding by becoming a “haven for Indians” and buying land at a fair price. But as

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<sup>7</sup> Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire*, 98-99.

<sup>8</sup> Anderson, *The War that Made America*, 8-10.

the relative prosperity of the colony began to attract large numbers of immigrants, tensions began to rise, and the colony demanded more and more land. Pennsylvania secretary James Logan came to understand in the 1720s that the writing was on the wall and that the greatest threat to the largely unarmed, pacifistic colony was its agitated Indian neighbors. Recognizing the Quaker-led colony would never support raising a militia, Logan outsourced the colony's defense to the Iroquois by recognizing them as the "conquerors" of tribes in Pennsylvania. Treating directly with the Iroquois, rather than the various groups of Delawares, Shawnees, and others, also had the convenient benefit of easing "the process of transferring lands from Indian ownership to the Penn family." This arrangement gave the Iroquois "a level of power and diplomatic influence [they] had not seen in nearly a century."<sup>9</sup>

Unable to effectively stand up against the Iroquois and receiving increasingly bad treatment at the hands of Pennsylvania, the Delawares and Shawnees began to make their way west. While some chose to settle along the Susquehanna, many chose to move to the Ohio Valley, where they believed they would be able to exercise their independence from both the Pennsylvanians and the Iroquois. They were joined there by a large number of Mingos, or western Senecas, who were ostensibly part of the Iroquois League. Many were the descendants of "Eries, Neutrals, Monongahelas, and others" who had been integrated into the Iroquois over the course of the previous century. Because of this, they were also interested in escaping "domination by the League." Not initially grasping how badly these people valued their independence, the Iroquois leaders viewed their migration as a beneficial movement of "client

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<sup>9</sup> Anderson, *The War that Made America*, 11-15. It is interesting to note how differently Anderson and Jennings view James Logan. For Anderson, Logan was a forward-thinking and pragmatic policy maker who unintentionally set Pennsylvania on the path to war. For Jennings, he was a greedy, land-speculating rascal.

peoples.” The clients would give the Iroquois a stronger claim to owning the Ohio Country when combined with their conquest of it in the Beaver Wars of the 1600s. The French had promised to recognize the Iroquois claim so long as they kept the English out. The English, of course, wanted in, and traders like George Croghan quickly moved into the area to supply the Ohio Indians and pad their account books.<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile, the Ohio Company of Virginia was skulking into the area, eager to gain access to the valuable land of the valley. The looming conflict was taking shape.

In order to protect their independence, the Delawares, Shawnees, and Mingos living in the Ohio Country required European supplies and trade goods, especially arms and ammunition. To obtain these, they attempted to establish direct ties to the Pennsylvania government. Fearing French retribution for the inevitable increase of English traders that this partnership would bring, the Iroquois acted by installing the Mingo Tanaghrisson as the only person authorized to speak for the Ohio Indians and therefore allowing the Iroquois to control the situation. As Anderson points out, however, Tanaghrisson’s “ability to influence the Ohio Indians depended on building a following among the chiefs who led them,” something which would require yet more European trade goods to use as diplomatic gifts to build relationships. This dependency ironically left him little choice but to turn to the Pennsylvanian and newly arrived Virginian traders to obtain the goods he needed, which in turn “convinced the French...that the Iroquois had indeed lost the ability to keep the Ohio Valley free of English traders and English influence.”<sup>11</sup> The unique challenges of navigating life between three distinct powers had caused the Ohio Indians to make

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<sup>10</sup> Anderson, *The War that Made America*, 19-22.

<sup>11</sup> Anderson, *The War that Made America*, 23-24.

a series of decisions that ultimately left them holding the lit fuse that ignited the French and Indian War.

The Native Americans living in the Ohio Valley did not want war. While independence was always their goal, they went to great lengths to try to work things out with the Europeans. The records are full of accounts of negotiations and treaties in which Indian leaders went out of their way to try to find accommodation with European powers or even to carve out their role *within* those European or colonial empires. But as they learned time and time again, their negotiating partners were almost never operating in good faith. Perhaps the worst offender here was the Ohio Company of Virginia.<sup>12</sup>

The Ohio Company was the 1747 creation of a group of wealthy Virginians. They sent a petition to England “In order to carry on our design of taking up a large tract of 500,000 Acres of Land on the branches of Allagany and settling a Trade with the several nations of Indians according to our Agreement in Company.”<sup>13</sup> The mention of “settling a Trade” with the Indians of the Ohio Valley was certainly no accident: It was intended to provide an air of legitimacy to their undertaking, and its constant reoccurrence in the sources shows that at least on some level they had no other legitimate reason to be there. The people already living in the valley were indeed eager to have regular access to trade goods, but they would have had a lot to say about the 500,000 acres.

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<sup>12</sup> See Gist, “First and Second Journals,” in Mulkearn, *George Mercer Papers*, 7-39; “Extracts From the Treaty With the Indians at Loggs Town in the Year 1752,” in Mulkearn, *George Mercer Papers*, 54-66; George Washington, *The Journal of Major George Washington* (1754; repr., Williamsburg, VA: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1959), 7-8.

<sup>13</sup> “Résumé of the Proceedings of the Ohio Company: October 24, 1747 – May 24, 1751,” in Mulkearn, *George Mercer Papers*, 2.

The basis for the Ohio Company's petition was itself the product of a textbook example of a bad-faith negotiation. The Ohio Company based its claim on the Treaty of Lancaster, signed in 1744 and reaffirmed in 1752. Tensions between Iroquois raiding parties and the European settlers flooding the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia had been building for years, as the warriors used the area to travel to the homes of the rival Catawbas in the Carolinas. These raids provided an outlet for the traditional mourning wars, but the settlers were less than thrilled to have armed Native Americans traveling through what they thought of as their lands. In the winter of 1742-43, the tension finally erupted into violence as a group of settlers attacked an Iroquois party, killing three or four warriors and wounding four more. In the resulting aftermath, a treaty had to be made in order to prevent the outbreak of further violence.<sup>14</sup>

In the treaty, the Iroquois decided to give up their spurious claim to the Shenandoah Valley in exchange for a nice pile of trade goods and currency. This should have been an excellent deal for them, since they had in reality sold the right to something that they did not own.<sup>15</sup> But they had been duped. The deed that the Iroquois signed actually stated that they “renounce and disclaim not only all the right of the said six nations, but also recognize the right and title of our sovereign the King of Great Britain to all the lands within the said colony [of Virginia] as it is now or hereafter may be peopled and bounded by his said Majesty...his heirs and successors.”<sup>16</sup> What the Virginians had conveniently not told the Indians, however, was that their Second Charter from 1609 had granted them all of the land “from the pointe of lande called Cape or Pointe Comfort all alonge the seacoste to the northward twoe hundred miles...and all

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<sup>14</sup> Jennings, *Ambiguous Iroquois Empire*, 354-356.

<sup>15</sup> Jennings, *Ambiguous Iroquois Empire*, 360.

<sup>16</sup> Deed, 02 July 1754, Virginia State Library, Richmond, Colonial Papers, Folder 41, Item 10, quoted in Jennings, *Ambiguous Iroquois Empire*, 361.

that space and circuit of lande lieinge from the sea coaste of the precinct aforesaid upp unto the lande, throughout, from sea to sea, west and northwest.”<sup>17</sup> This breathtakingly vague grant of land would have included most of the midwestern United States, a huge piece of Canada, and all of Alaska.<sup>18</sup> More importantly, however, it included the Ohio Valley.

That is not to say that Virginia could actually claim ownership of the Ohio Valley. Since the Iroquois had no idea that they had just sold it, they did not have any reason to evict the people living there. Furthermore, even had they wanted to, they largely ruled the area in name only. As the details of the treaty began to sink in, the people of the Ohio began to do their best to ignore it. At a treaty at Logstown in 1752, the so-called “Half King” of the Ohio people, Tanaghrisson, told the Virginia commissioners that he understood that the Onondaga Council of the Iroquois had sold land to Virginia and that they were “willing to confirm anything our council has done in regard to lands.” The sticking point, however, was that “We never understood before you told us yesterday that the lands then sold were to extend further to the sunsetting than the hill on the other side of the Allagany hill so that we cannot give you a further answer.” Tanaghrisson then took advantage of the fact that the Iroquois had explicitly denied him the authority to make external treaties, and therefore the Virginians would have to take it up with Onondaga Council if they wanted to actually confirm the deed.<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, the Lancaster treaty gave the Virginians a sense of entitlement to the land of the Ohio Valley.

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<sup>17</sup> “Second Charter of Virginia,” 23 May 1609, Academic Search Complete, <http://ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=21212488&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

<sup>18</sup> Jennings, *Ambiguous Iroquois Empire*, 361.

<sup>19</sup> “Extracts from the Treaty with the Indians at Loggs Town in the year 1752,” in Mulkearn, *George Mercer Papers*, 62.

With their disingenuously obtained land deed in hand, the Virginians quickly set to work trying to find ways to make money on land speculating, and the Ohio Company that they established for that goal would play a major role in igniting the French and Indian War. Briefly, the company was established in 1747 by a small group of wealthy men. The first manager of the company was Lawrence Washington, George Washington's half-brother, a connection that would be critical to future events. In 1749 the company successfully petitioned to receive a grant of "200,000 acres of land in the unsettled part of Virginia west of the Alleghenies." By 1751 they had begun building storehouses and become involved in the Indian trade. They also sent men to survey the land they had been granted, but they inadvertently wound up documenting the build-up to war and the intercultural struggle that was underway.<sup>20</sup>

Christopher Gist, an experienced backcountry traveler and surveyor, was sent by the Ohio Company on two separate trips to the Ohio Country, with the first being in 1750. His 1750 instructions were to "search out and discover the Lands upon the River Ohio," and "particularly to observe the Ways & Passes thro all the Mountains you cross, & take an exact Account of the Soil, Quality, & Product of the Land." While all of this would be standard procedure for a company that just received a huge grant of land, the Ohio Company made it clear with the next section of Gist's instructions that they understood the land was not exactly theirs for the taking. Gist was also to "observe what Nations of Indians inhabit there, their Strength & Numbers, who they trade with, & in what Com'odities they deal." If they actually believed in their deed from Lancaster, they never would have needed this information, but they implicitly understood it was

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<sup>20</sup> Louis Mulkearn, introduction to *Georger Mercer Papers*, xi-xii.

just a pretense. Whether by conquest or trade, the Ohio Company knew they would need to neutralize the current inhabitants of the area.<sup>21</sup>

As seen in Gist's journals, the people of the Ohio Country understood this situation perfectly well. In one entry, Gist stated, "I took an Opportunity to set my Compass privately, & took the Distance across the River, for I understood it was dangerous to let a Compass be seen among these Indians." Merely being seen with a rudimentary surveying device could be met with violence. The suspicion that the Ohio people felt towards this European explorer did not end there, however. A few entries later, Gist noted that while he was in Logstown, "The People in this Town began to enquire my Business, and because I did not readily inform them, they began to suspect me, and said, I was come to settle the Indian's Land, and they knew I should never go Home safe." In order to save himself, Gist said that he "had a message to deliver the Indians from the King, by Order of the President of Virginia... This made them all pretty easy (being afraid to interrupt the King's Message) and obtained me Quiet and Respect among them, otherwise I doubt not they would have contrived some Evil against me."<sup>22</sup>

This respect for the King's messenger reveals a fascinating and tragic nuance of the saga. While the Virginians of the Ohio Company, unscrupulous Pennsylvanians, and the French were all trying to find ways to subjugate the Native Americans, some of those same Native Americans were ready and willing to become allies or even part of the imperial order. Another example of this is an interaction that Gist had with a Delaware man named Nemicotton. The man's complaint reveals that he is willing to live within the bounds of the British Empire, but thus far, the Empire had done nothing to help him. Nemicotton asked Gist, "If You can bring News from

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<sup>21</sup> Gist, "First and Second Journals," in Mulkearn, *George Mercer Papers*, 7.

<sup>22</sup> Gist, "First and Second Journals," 9-10.



the King to Us, why cant you tell Him something from Me?” He then revealed that his father had been granted a piece of land in Pennsylvania, but “The White People now live on these Lands” and refused to pay him anything. Nemicotton hoped Gist would pass along his story to the “great King,” who would “make Mr. Penn or his people give Me the Land or pay Me for it.”<sup>23</sup> Here was a man who had been undeniably cheated – a trader who was present attested to the veracity of what Nemicotton said – and yet he had not turned to violence. Instead, he was trying to reach an accommodation via the government that had been forced upon him. Perhaps there is no better summary of the result than Gist’s dismissive explanation for including the complaint: “This I obliged to insert in my Journal to please the Indian.”<sup>24</sup>

Later on, Gist had another encounter that further demonstrated the struggle the Native Americans living in the Ohio Valley were having to define their place in the world. Gist recorded that on his return home, he was approached by an Indian man who “spoke good English.” In Gist’s words, the man said, “Their Great Men the Beaver and Captain Oppamylucah,” who were Delaware chiefs, “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.” Gist had been asked this very same question by Oppamylucah himself on the first part of his journey, but he candidly admitted, “I was at a Loss to answer Him as I now also was.”<sup>25</sup> Gist was stumped because it was a remarkably basic question: Where *did* the Indians’ land lay? Though the Europeans went

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<sup>23</sup> Gist, “First and Second Journals,” 34.

<sup>24</sup> Gist, “First and Second Journals,” 34. One must wonder if Gist had special interest in recording an incident that showed Pennsylvania in a bad light, and whether he chose to record this incident but not others that would have made Virginia look bad, etc. Alas, as noted in the introduction this is often the closest we can come to the actual words of Native Americans.

<sup>25</sup> Gist, “First and Second Journals,” 39.

through all the motions of following diplomatic protocols, they nevertheless continued to act contrary to their word and to disregard Native Americans whenever they were an inconvenience.

This reality makes the response that Gist's friend apparently made to the Indian man seem farcical. Gist's travel companion told the man, "We are all one King's People and the different Colour of our Skins makes no Difference in the King's Subjects." He also told them, "If you will take Land & pay the Kings Rights You will have the same Privileges as the White People have, and to hunt You have Liberty every where." Apparently, this response was so startling that the Indian man had to go home and tell the "great men." When he returned two days later, Gist said, "The great Men bid Him tell Me I was very safe that I might come and live upon that River where I pleased – That I had answered Them very true for We were all one Kings People sure enough."<sup>26</sup> Here was an example of backcountry diplomacy carried out with an eloquent flair and a touching amount of sincerity.

Of course, this is one of those many times where not actually having the words of the Native Americans in question is deeply problematic. Did the two Delaware leaders and the unnamed man genuinely believe the Englishman's flowery speech about equality? Did they *want* to believe him but have some trepidation about his truthfulness or whether he could even speak for all the English? Were there heated debates over these questions in which the leaders fought over these very questions and what their course of action should be? Or, more to the point, was their alleged response nothing more than the construction of an Englishman who had a multitude of reasons to want to make it seem like the Ohio Company's settlement of the Ohio was not only legitimate but welcome? Unfortunately, these questions will never be able to be answered

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<sup>26</sup> Gist, "First and Second Journals," 39.

definitively. Nonetheless, the actions of the Delawares living in the Ohio Country in the coming years make it clear that Gist's story was probably nothing more than fanciful fiction.

The fiction proved to be supremely palatable for the Virginians, as seen in their instructions to Gist for his second journey into the Ohio Country in 1752. While they instructed him on his first journey to focus on surveying the land to find the best sites for settlements, they framed his second journey in a more diplomatic light. Gist was given power as an "Agent for the Ohio company" in order to invite all of the relevant Native American leaders to a treaty at Logstown. He was to give them the good news that "his Majesty has been graciously pleased to grant" to the Ohio Company "a large quantity of land on the river Ohio." As though this news would not be pleasing enough to the Indians, the king also encouraged "all his Majesties subjects to make settlements and carry on an extensive trade and commerce with their brethren the Indians and to supply them with goods at a more easie rate than they have hitherto bought them." While that would have probably been agreeable to Native Americans who needed trade goods to sustain themselves, their ears would have perked up at the idea of the English settling in the area. The Ohio Company had a preemptive response to their objections: It was just too expensive and difficult to carry the goods from where they were now to the people on the Ohio.<sup>27</sup>

The Ohio Company also outlined the humanitarian necessity for nearer settlements while also providing suspiciously confident justification for it. Beyond expense, the distance made them unable "to supply their brethren the Indians at all times when they are in want," and therefore, it was "absolutely necessary immediately to settle and cultivate the land his Majesty has been pleased to grant them." The Ohio Company revealed a lot of hidden anxiety about the

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<sup>27</sup> "Instructions Given Christopher Gist Gent. By The Ohio Company April 28, 1752," in Mulkearn, *George Mercer Papers*, 52-53.

legality of this endeavor, however, arguing, “Which to be sure they have an indisputable right to do as our brethren the six nations [the Iroquois] sold all the land to the westward of Virginia at the treaty of Lancaster.” Yet in that same sentence, they acknowledged that their settlements will probably have a negative impact on the Delawares living in the area by making “the game scarce or at least drive it further back.” As such, they were “willing to make them some further satisfaction for the same and purchase of them the land on the East side the river Ohio and Allagany...providing the same can be done at a reasonable rate.” The Virginians felt they had an “indisputable right” to the land, but just in case they did not, they were willing to buy it again...as long as it was cheap.<sup>28</sup>

The authors of Gist’s instructions then leaned into the fictional world of peace and equality noted above. They told Gist to “convince our brethren the Indians how desirous we are of living in strict friendship and becoming one people with them” and that he was “hereby empowered and required to acquaint and promise our brethren...that if any of them incline to take land and live among the English they shall have any of the said Companys lands upon the same terms and conditions as the white people do.” Furthermore, the Native Americans would “enjoy the same privileges which they do.”<sup>29</sup> Here was the kind of accommodation that Nemicotton had been seeking from the Pennsylvanians via the king, but it was being offered like a post-mortem bandage. The confusing logic of the Virginians made it seem as though the Indians living in the Ohio Country were already royal subjects, but could choose to be royal subjects; their land was already the king’s, but they could choose to sell it to the king.

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<sup>28</sup> “Instructions Given Christopher Gist,” 53.

<sup>29</sup> “Instructions Given Christopher Gist,” 53.

For once, there is actually a decent opportunity to see how the Native Americans felt about this bill of goods they were being sold. The minutes from the Logstown Treaty of 1752 provide a fascinating glimpse into the mindset of the Indian leaders who spoke there and how intercultural diplomacy was carried out. To be fair, these are still ultimately records written by English speakers, based on what they were told by interpreters, and therefore not the actual words of the Native Americans themselves. Nonetheless, the relatively public nature of these treaties means the records of them are probably more reliable than a backcountry anecdote written with nobody to contradict it, like Gist's story. Even here, however, there are scandalous examples of doctored public records to contend with, but they seem to be the exceptions that prove the rule.<sup>30</sup>

The very fact the meeting took the form of a treaty indicates this was ostensibly a meeting between sovereign people. The English continued to keep up the pretense of interacting with the Delawares, Shawnees, and Mingos living in the Ohio Valley as allies, and yet they also continued to disregard them at every turn and to make demands of them that were far beyond the pale for an ally. The Indians recognized this, of course, but they also felt vulnerable, and the *realpolitik* of their situation dictated that they had to try and continue negotiating for the best deal they could. With the French closing in from one side and land-hungry Englishmen coming from the other, all while the distant Iroquois League tried to exercise a largely fictional control over them, the Ohio Indians had no choice but to put on their best face and see what they could salvage.

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<sup>30</sup> See Appendix B, "Documents of the Walking Purchase," in Jennings, *Ambiguous Iroquois Empire*, 388-397.

The treaty began with the usual exchanging of salutations and giving of strings of wampum in order to open eyes and hearts. The commissioners of Pennsylvania and Virginia gave a string to the Indians in order to assure them of their “hearty inclinations to live in friendship” with them. After this moment, however, the treaty began to break down, with several days passing with not much happening. Some Shawnese chiefs were threatening to leave when suddenly someone reported “a vessel with English colours was coming down the river, which proved to be the half king [Tanaghrisson] with a chief from the Onandago council.” Tanaghrisson’s grand entrance saved the treaty, and he and the commissioners were able to get down to business.<sup>31</sup>

The most pressing issue Tanaghrisson and the commissioners tried to hammer out was the already discussed Treaty of Lancaster and its misunderstood boundaries. But while they grappled with that topic, the Ohio Indians also discussed other issues that reveal their dire predicament. The French were becoming a looming menace for the freedom-seeking Ohio Valley inhabitants, and they turned to the English standing before them to see what help they would offer. Some requests were fairly basic, like when the commissioners noted, “The Indians desired to have their guns and hatchets mended which was complied with.” In a similar vein, a few days later, “The half king with a string of wampum informed the Commissioners that one Frazer a blacksmith at the town of Venango threatened to remove that they did not desire he should leave them.” A similar request had been made to Gist by a Miami chief the year before, who told him, “Brothers We hope that You will order a Smith to settle here to mend our Guns

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<sup>31</sup> “Extracts from the Treaty with the Indians at Loggs Town in the Year 1752,” in Mulkearn, *George Mercer Papers*, 54-56.

and Hatchets.” Clearly, the Ohio Indians understood that if warfare broke out, they were going to need European support to keep their weapons serviceable and in the fight.<sup>32</sup>

Other people turned to economic matters, with some appearing so brazen as to seem like nothing more than profiteers, a fine American tradition. The commissioners reported, “A [Shawnee] chief told us that the Piques were upon the poise whether they should return to the French or continue steady to the English and wanted to see what encouragement the latter would give them.” The very next day they were given a present of “fine cloaths.” Of course, the colonists were just as eager to provide economic incentives. Returning to the argument about the planned settlement in the Ohio Valley, they argued that “our people will be able to supply you with goods much cheaper than can at this time be afforded.” Those cheaply made British industrial goods were once again being wielded as a diplomatic carrot.<sup>33</sup>

The problem for Tanaghrisson and the Delawares, Shawnees, and Mingos he was leading was that they knew they needed access to those trade goods but recognized that the discussions were simply a pretense for getting Indian approval for a settlement in their territory. As such, Tanaghrisson crafted a line that beautifully gave the Virginians permission to build on the Ohio while simultaneously withholding permission for them to build a full-on settlement. He began by buttering up the commissioners and gave them credit for revealing to the Indians that the French simply wanted to cheat them out of their lands. Tanaghrisson then conceded that having the English closer would make it easier and faster to get supplies and support. He concluded, “We therefore desire our brothers of Virginia may build a stronghouse at the fork of Monongahela to keep such goods powder lead and necessaries as shall be wanting and as soon as you please.” He

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<sup>32</sup> “Loggs Town,” 56, 63; Gist, “First and Second Journals,” 23.

<sup>33</sup> “Loggs Town,” 56-57.

wanted a “stronghouse” to supply trade goods, not a town or even a fort. He also included one final diplomatic flourish that further established the sovereignty of the Native Americans, stating, “As we have given our cousins the Delawares a king who lives there we desire you will look on him as a chief of that nation.” While Tanaghrisson was paying lip service to British hegemony, he was taking care to support the fiction as little as possible.<sup>34</sup>

British hegemony was not the only power being paid lip service at Logstown, however, as the Iroquois-appointed “Half-King” of the people of the Ohio Valley also took the opportunity to try to reassert Iroquois-dominance over the people there. In an earlier part of the treaty, Tanaghrisson “spoke to the [Shawnees] and told them that he took the hatchet from them and tied them with black strings of wampum to hinder them from going to war against the Cherokees.” He similarly admonished the Delawares for making speeches in favor of peace but then allowing “your young men to go to war against the Cherokees which was very wrong...I take the hatchet from you, you belong to me and I think you are to be ruled by me and I (joining with your brethren of Virginia) order you to go to war no more.” Later events leave no doubt that Tanaghrisson had no real power over the Delaware and Shawnees, but keeping up appearances, especially in front of the colonial governments, was vital for the Iroquois.<sup>35</sup>

The treaty wound down after Tanaghrisson’s request for the strong house. The commissioners bemoaned his only partial granting of their request because they “imagined the Indians had given up the lands upon that river, but they only meant ground sufficient for the fort to stand upon.” At some point, perhaps in a private meeting, the Virginians argued that a fortified trading post would never be able to support itself and would require more settlers to farm and

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<sup>34</sup> “Loggs Town,” 62-63.

<sup>35</sup> “Loggs Town,” 61.



supply it with food. Tanaghrisson addressed this concern to the commissioners by promising, “We will take care that there shall be no scarcity of that kind.” He also could not help but take a cultural jab at the commissioners, continuing, “Altho’ in all our wars we don’t consider provisions, for we live on one another but we know it is different with our brethren the English.” He then fell back on his argument that he did not have the authority to grant the Virginians any more land than what was needed for the strong house. The Virginians would have to wait to hear back from Onondaga for that.<sup>36</sup>

The English took a cultural jab of their own before the treaty ended, one which was potentially even more sinister and dangerous for the Native Americans than the building of the settlement. Virginia’s commissioners had been instructed that “As the Instructions of the Indians in the principles of Christian Religion hath been the Subject of the prayers, & utmost endeavors of many pious men,” they were to inquire about sending a teacher among the Indians. At the treaty, the commissioners told their audience, “The advantages of an English education are greater than can be imagined by them who are unacquainted with it.” English education told them of ancient societies and their great men, and the commissioners even dusted off the Black Legend, stating their education taught them of “the first time the Spaniards came to [the New World] how cruelly they used the Indians then wholly ignorant of fire arms.” Unfortunately, the Native Americans’ response to this sales pitch is missing.<sup>37</sup>

One final impact of the treaty was to rattle the Pennsylvanians. Secretary Richard Peters wrote an anxious letter to his trusty interpreter Conrad Weiser after finding out about the deal in

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<sup>36</sup> “Loggs Town,” 65.

<sup>37</sup> “Loggs Town,” 65-66; Instruction to the commissioners from *Virginia Magazine* 13, 151-152, quoted in Mulkearn, *George Mercer Papers*, 563n340.

February 1753. He wrote that his source told him about the selling of the “Lands to the Setting of the Sun” to the Virginians and told Weiser, “I believe this is not true, pray inform me whether it be or no.” He also knew about the Ohio Indians’ desire for a trading post but not a settlement, but still felt “the Virginians are attempting to settle the Mohongialo [Monongahela] Lands tho’ against the Inclinations of the Indians.” Later in the letter, he gleefully reported to Weiser that the “Ohio Indians expressly declared they would not treat with the Virginians, unless it was agreeable to the governor of Pennsylvania...and when the Indians offered to them to build a Fort or Strong House, it was to them and the Governor of Pennsylvania in conjunction, and not to the Virginia Government alone.” Losing one diplomatic battle, Peters was quick to grasp at the next straw.<sup>38</sup>

From this one treaty meeting, much of the tinder that would ignite the war can be seen. For the Ohio Indians, there was the ever-present fear of others coming to take their land, which they had to balance against their need for trade goods and weapons. The Iroquois were desperate to maintain the appearance of control and to maintain their neutrality with both the English and the French. For the Virginians, there was an incredible desire to gain access to what seemed like the El Dorado of land speculating, the Ohio Valley, and a willingness to seize onto any scrap of legitimacy in the endeavor that they could. While less obvious, the Pennsylvanians could also be seen monitoring the encroachments of the rival Virginians into territory they were just as eager to claim. Permeating through everything else, however, was a deep anxiety over what the French would do.

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<sup>38</sup> Richard Peters to Weiser, 06 Feb 1753, vol. 1, p. 38, Conrad Weiser Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.



## Chapter Two

### **“If You Settle Here, It is the Way to Make Us All Perish:” The French Invasion of the Ohio Valley**

“Why on earth did I agree to do this again?” had to be a thought going through Christopher Gist’s mind as he lay on an island in the Allegheny River, shivering and trying to warm his frost-bitten fingers on the night of 29 December 1753. The man he was traveling with, a twenty-one-year-old Virginia militia major named George Washington, had managed to fall off their raft during their attempted crossing of the river that day. Washington was trying to use his “setting pole” to stop the raft so a chunk of ice could pass when all of a sudden, “the Rapidity of the Stream threw it with so much Violence against the pole” that he was launched into the water. The future president managed to save himself only by grabbing onto one of the logs of the raft. Unable to make it to the far shore, the pair had to camp on an island.<sup>1</sup>

Even before Washington’s icy plunge, the journey had gotten off to an inauspicious start. Agreeing to yet another winter journey, Gist had managed to get only eight miles from home on 14 November before a messenger chased him down and delivered a note from his son. The son

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<sup>1</sup> George Washington, *The Journal of Major George Washington* (1754; repr., Williamsburg, VA: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1959), 21-22; Christopher Gist, “1753,” in William M. Darlington, ed., *Christopher Gist’s Journals with Historical, Geographical and Ethnological Notes and Biographies of his Contemporaries* (Pittsburgh: J. R. Weldin, 1893), 86.

“lay sick at the mouth of Conegocheague,” a stream that empties into the Potomac River. Gist was torn, “But as I found myself entered again on public business, and Major Washington and all the company unwilling I should return I wrote and sent medicines to my son.” From there, the travelers had been battered by terrible weather, with Washington noting in his journal, “From the first Day of December to the 15<sup>th</sup>, there was but one Day but [sic] it rained or snowed incessantly and throughout the whole Journey we met with nothing but one continued Series of cold wet Weather.”<sup>2</sup>

Of course, the weather was not the only coldness they had to contend with. There had been the usual strained interactions with the Ohio Indians that Gist had no doubt become accustomed to, and they also had to deal with Frenchmen who were less than thrilled to see them. But none of that topped what had happened just two days prior, on 27 December, as Gist and Washington passed by the charmingly named “Murdering Town.” Here they met a man who recognized Gist and called him by his “Indian name, and pretended to be glad to see me.”<sup>3</sup> After explaining where they were trying to go, the man agreed to guide Gist and Washington. At one point, the man offered to carry Washington’s gun for him, and when Washington refused, “The Indian grew churlish, and pressed us to keep on, telling us that there were Ottawa Indians in these woods, and they would scalp us if we lay out.” Gist began to have misgivings about the man, and as they got closer to where the man said his cabin was, “The Indian made a stop, turned

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<sup>2</sup> Gist, “1753,” 80; Washington, *Journal of Major George Washington*, 22-23.

<sup>3</sup> Gist had received his Indian name, “Annosanah,” on his first journey for the Ohio Company. He noted in his journal entry for Christmas day 1750 that he “had intended to read Prayers,” but the “White Men” in the town “refused to come.” Interpreter Andrew Montour invited “several of the well disposed Indians,” and translated the prayers for them. The Indians were so well pleased with hearing the message they gave Gist the name, which was the “Name of a good Man that had formerly lived among them” and asked him to live among them. He thanked them for the name, but ironically declined their invitation to live among them. Christopher Gist, “Christopher Gist’s First and Second Journals, September 11, 1750 – March 29, 1752,” in Louis Mulkearn, ed., *George Mercer Papers Relating to the Ohio Company of Virginia* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1954), 12.

about; the Major saw him point his gun toward us and fire.” Neither were hurt, and they captured the man. Gist was less than thrilled with Washington’s handling of the situation, and he said, “I would have killed him; but the Major would not suffer me to kill him.” After employing a strange ruse to get the man to go to his cabin, Gist and Washington walked through the night to get away from him.<sup>4</sup>

Gist must have replayed the event over and over in his mind as he shivered on the island that night. They had ostensibly accomplished their mission: they had delivered Virginia Governor Robert Dinwiddie’s letter to the French commander of newly built Fort LeBoeuf, in which Dinwiddie demanded that the French leave. Poised at an entry point into the Ohio Valley, the French had built the fort as part of a plan to keep the British out of “their” valley. But Gist must have known how futile the mission was, and the incident with the Indian man showed how much the situation had further devolved in the valley. But this was what diplomacy looked like in the backwoods, and Gist knew what he was getting into when he agreed to participate in the last major diplomatic effort before the shooting started.<sup>5</sup>

While none of those thoughts would have provided much warmth for Gist, he was a seasoned backwoods traveler at this point. He noted laconically after shivering through the night, “The cold did us some service, for in the morning [the river] was frozen hard enough for us to pass over on the ice.”<sup>6</sup> The British could not find a similar way to capitalize on the frosty diplomatic situation settling into the Ohio Valley, even as the French continued to bluster and

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<sup>4</sup> Gist, “1753,” 84-85; Washington, *Journal of Major George Washington*, 21.

<sup>5</sup> Gist, “1753,” 84-85; Washington, *Journal of Major George Washington*, 3; Dinwiddie to Commandant of the French Forces on the Ohio, 31 Oct 1753, in *Journal of Major George Washington*, 25-26. For more information on the French invasion in general see Donald H. Kent, *The French Invasion of Western Pennsylvania*, 2nd ed., (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1981).

<sup>6</sup> Gist, “1753,” 86.

leave the Ohio Indians out in the cold. Turning their backs on a long tradition of treating the Indians as allies, the French opted instead to try to exert their will on the Indians. With the English pouring in on one side and the French streaming in on the other, the Ohio Indians were left feeling like they too were trapped on a frigid island in the Ohio Valley.

Prior to building the forts that prompted Gist's and Washington's death-defying journey, the French had largely kept their hands off the middle portions of their North American Empire in general, and the Ohio Country especially. In fact, it was mostly an empire in name only and functioned far more like a network of trade partners. The French maintained small trading posts at places like Detroit and were content to keep settlements in the Mississippi Valley. Things began to change rapidly when the War of Austrian Succession came to North America in 1744, where it was known as King George's War.

Pennsylvania traders like George Croghan had followed the Shawnees and Delawares on their migration from Pennsylvania to the Ohio Country. They saw an opportunity in the supply difficulties faced by French traders because of the war and began enlarging their trade. Tribes and towns who had been loyal trading partners to the French suddenly found themselves having to decide between going without vital supplies or trading with a different European partner. Many chose the latter, and the French saw an immediate threat to their inland empire. They feared a strong English presence on the Ohio River could sever the connection between Canada, the Great Lakes, and the Mississippi settlements.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Fred Anderson, *The War that Made America: A Short History of the French and Indian War* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 20-22. King George's War is a historiographic desert, despite the chain of events it kicked off. Anderson provides a brief overview in the pages noted here. Michael N. McConnell does a good job of discussing the war as it impacted the Ohio Country in "Chapter Four: Warriors from 'Ohio,'" in *A Country Between: The*

In response, the French committed a series of well-covered and, at times, shockingly violent acts to assert their dominance over the area. These acts have generally been discussed by historians as being vivid examples of a colonial power trying and failing to assert its control over the Native people. There has also been much discussion of the diplomatic situation that led to the French taking the course of action that they did. Historian Francis Jennings noted that their claim to ownership of the area by “right of discovery” by Sieur de La Salle in the seventeenth century was just as bogus as the British claim to owning it via the “‘right’ of vicarious conquest through the agency of the Iroquois,” which in turn was based on the Iroquois’ spurious claim to the area. More importantly, Jennings quipped, “‘Rights’ were the cards played with by diplomats when they lacked secure possessions and these diplomatic fictions haunt our histories.”<sup>8</sup> Even with this insight, however, there is more to be said about those diplomatic fictions and the missed opportunities they created for the British and the tragedy they caused for the Ohio Indians, all of which shaped the early part of the French and Indian War.

The French had not necessarily left the Ohio Valley unoccupied out of respect for its Native American inhabitants. Instead, numerous documents reveal that they feared the illegal trade that would spring up from the mingling of French and British traders. Here once again, the militant might of cheap British trade goods came to shape diplomacy and policy in North America. Governor General Marquis de La Jonquiere wrote to the Minister of the Marine in

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*Upper Ohio Valley and Its Peoples, 1724-1774* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 61-88.

Otherwise, there are a handful of articles covering specific aspects of the war, such as Jessica Choppin Roney, “‘Ready to Act in Defiance of Government:’ Colonial Philadelphia Voluntary Culture and the Defense Association of 1747-1748,” *Early American Studies* 8, no. 2 (2010): 358-385.

<sup>8</sup> Francis Jennings, *Empire of Fortune: Crowns, Colonies, and Tribes in the Seven Years War in America* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1988), 50-51. See also See Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years’ War and the Fate of Empire in British North America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000), 26-29; McConnell, *A Country Between*, 61-112; Matthew C. Ward, *Breaking the Backcountry: The Seven Years’ War in Virginia and Pennsylvania, 1754-1765* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003), 29-31.



1749, stating, “We must establish one or more trading posts on the Belle Riviere [the Ohio River],” even though “These posts might have the inconvenience of making contraband trade easier...this ought to be risked.” Similarly, the Marquis de La Galissoniere, who served as acting governor before La Jonquiere, wrote in 1750 that the “River Oyo” would “perhaps today be full of French settlements, had not the Governors of Canada been deterred from establishing permanent posts there by the apprehension that a contraband trade between the French traders and the English would be the consequence.”<sup>9</sup> As Pennsylvania traders and Virginia land speculators began to skulk into the valley, however, smuggling became less of a concern. The French had to find a way to overcome the weak position they had left themselves in.

One of the ways the French tried to tackle their weak position was by sending Captain Pierre-Joseph de Céloron de Blainville on a famously futile expedition through the Ohio Country in 1749. Along the way, Céloron buried lead plates at important creek and river junctions “as a monument of the renewal of possession which We have taken of the said River Ohio...and of all the Lands on both sides as far as the sources of the Said Rivers, as enjoyed or ought to be enjoyed by the preceding Kings of France.” The inscription on the plates concluded by saying their claims had been maintained by “Arms and by Treaties” and listed several treaties made with England.<sup>10</sup> What practical use these plates were supposed to serve is left up to the imagination, especially since they neither mention nor would have meant anything to the people who actually possessed the land.

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<sup>9</sup> Marquis de La Jonquiere to the Minister of the Marine, 20 Sep 1749, in Sylvester K. Stevens and Donald H. Kent, eds., *Wilderness Chronicles of Northwestern Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical Commission, 1941), 26-27; Marquis de La Galissoniere, “Memoir of the French Colonies in North America by the Marquis de la Galissoniere,” in Stevens and Kent, *Wilderness Chronicles*, 28.

<sup>10</sup> “The ‘Stolen’ Celoron Plate,” Stevens and Kent, *Wilderness Chronicles*, 24-25.

What the lead plates and Céloron's journey did exceedingly well, however, was anger the Native Americans he encountered. Many inhabitants of the Ohio Valley had migrated west to escape the control of one colonial power and were doing their best to ignore the Iroquois' claim to power. Now there was yet another entity trying to take control of their lives. While French attempts to control their land probably would have had minimal effect, the attempted expulsion of the English traders they now relied on had a direct impact on their well-being. Céloron threatened every trader he saw and wrote a letter to Pennsylvania governor James Hamilton in which he remarked, "I have been much surprised to find traders belonging to your government in a country to which England never had any pretension." He concluded with a line that would have made any mafia don proud, saying, "I know that our Governor in chief would be very sorry to have recourse to any violence, but his orders are very strict not to suffer any foreign traders within his government."<sup>11</sup>

Naturally, these threats and the accompanying lead plates did not stop Pennsylvania traders from operating in the area. A few years later, shortly after the Treaty of Logstown in 1752, a French métis officer named Charles-Michel Mouet de Langlade decided to use a different form of lead to settle the issue. George Croghan had established a thriving trading post at the town of Pickawillany, located in what is now western Ohio on the Great Miami River. Croghan had succeeded in luring many Miamis away from trading with the French. In response, Langlade led a group of allied Chippewas and Ottawas from Detroit and attacked the town. They managed to capture a chief who had recently become so firmly attached to the British that the traders called him "Old Briton." The French-allied warriors killed Old Briton and then roasted

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<sup>11</sup> Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 26-27; Captain Céloron de Blainville to Governor Hamilton, 06 Aug 1749, in Stevens and Kent, *Wilderness Chronicles*, 25-26.

and ritually consumed his flesh after similarly boiling and eating the heart of a slain British trader. This piece of backwoods diplomacy caused fear and panic to ripple from the smoking ruins of Pickawillany, and the Ohio Country was finally cleared of Pennsylvania traders.<sup>12</sup>

This unprecedented attack on a peaceful village should have been a windfall for British diplomatic efforts. Pennsylvania secretary Richard Peters wrote to interpreter Conrad Weiser in February 1753 to tell him that another interpreter, Andrew Montour, was in Philadelphia on his way to Onondaga from Virginia. The Miamis had approached Virginia on account of “the late warlike Proceedings of the French, and desire the aid of his majesties subjects.” Virginia’s response must have made the Miamis roll their eyes, as the governor told them he would be happy to help but needed the approval of the Iroquois. The time delay alone would have been infuriating, with a messenger having to make the long journey between Virginia and upstate New York and then return. But on top of that, the Miamis were having to wait for their affairs to be settled by a confederacy that had even less claim to speak for them than they had to speak for the people living further east in the Ohio Valley. These eager allies would have to look to other solutions.<sup>13</sup>

The Grand Settlement of 1701 can also be seen operating silently below the surface of the situation. As part of the settlement, the Iroquois had agreed to remain neutral in any wars with France, and this part of the agreement was kept secret from the British. In his letter to Weiser, Peters also noted, “After this hostile Proceeding, all the Twightwees [another name for the Miamis] sent to the Six Nations their Complaints and Requests of Aid to punish and avenge

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<sup>12</sup> Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 28-29.

<sup>13</sup> Richard Peters to Weiser, 06 Feb 1753, vol. 1, p. 38, Conrad Weiser Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. Hereafter CWP.

themselves of the French, but as yet have received no Answer.” While it is a matter of speculation, it is probable that the Miamis had not received an answer because the Iroquois could not give permission for the attack and also could not reveal *why* they could not give it. Lacking the strength to stand on their own and not seeing any likelihood of getting help from either the Virginians or the Pennsylvanians, the Miamis had no choice but to make peace with the French and fall back into their orbit.<sup>14</sup>

Unfortunately for the French, Pennsylvania traders were not the only outside force they were dealing with. The Ohio Company of Virginia was eager to push forward and establish their trading post in the Ohio Valley after having been invited to do so by Tanaghrisson at the Treaty of Logstown in 1752.<sup>15</sup> As a launching point into the valley proper, the Ohio Company built a storehouse where Red Stone Creek joins the Monongahela River, just thirty-seven miles upstream of the soon-to-be-famous Forks of the Ohio River. The “Red Stone Fort” convinced the French they would have to take far stronger action to control the Ohio Country. Raids and lead plates were not going to be enough: fortifications and soldiers were the next steps.<sup>16</sup>

A more astute diplomat than the man who took command of New France in 1752, Ange Duquesne de Menneville, marquis de Duquesne, would have noticed that military force was probably not necessary. Tanaghrisson only gave permission for the Virginians to build a trading post on the Ohio because he knew the people he was supposed to be leading desperately needed access to those goods, and he himself required access to diplomatic gifts to distribute to other leaders in order to maintain his position. The French had proven themselves at times to be

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<sup>14</sup> Richard Peters to Weiser, 06 Feb 1753, vol. 1, p. 38, CWP; Anderson, *The War that Made America*, 34.

<sup>15</sup> See “Extracts from the Treaty with the Indians at Loggs Town in the Year 1752,” in Mulkearn, *George Mercer Papers*, 62-64.

<sup>16</sup> Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 29-32.

incapable and, at other times, unwilling to supply those goods. As such, Tanaghrisson cut the best deal he could, despite knowing those Virginians most assuredly had a desire for land. The obvious solution would have been for the French to set up their own trading posts and push the British out that way. While they still would have had to compete against cheaper British goods, they would have had the advantage of not having a reputation as land snatchers and treaty breakers. Instead, Duquesne was a military man and saw only a military solution.<sup>17</sup>

Sadly, Duquesne's predecessor Charles Le Moyne de Longueuil, Baron de Longueuil, was a native-born Canadian who had understood the diplomatic solution perfectly. In October 1752, a high-ranking official in New France, Intendant Francois Bigot, wrote the Minister of Marine in France and updated him on the year's happenings. Bigot reported that Longueuil had intended to only send an expedition to pacify the Miamis and so "leave the Belle Riviere at peace, having a special respect and consideration for the Iroquois who dwell there." This last part was most likely an allusion to the Grand Settlement of 1701 and the agreement the French had with the Iroquois to not interfere in the Ohio Valley as long as the Iroquois remained neutral towards them. Bigot, however, felt "the Belle Riviere was the source of all the troubles which prevailed among the savages; that the English ruled and traded in a land which belonged to France, and whose possession was necessary to us for our communication with the Mississippi." Bigot reflected the more militaristic mindset that was developing in New France, or he at least saw an opportunity to ingratiate himself with the leaders of that movement.<sup>18</sup>

Given all of the bluster over "rights of conquest" and contrivances to claim ownership of the Ohio Valley committed by all parties, Longueuil's response to Bigot was remarkably

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<sup>17</sup> Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 29-32.

<sup>18</sup> Bigot to the Minister, 26 Oct 1752, in Stevens and Kent, *Wilderness Chronicles*, 40.

pragmatic and sincere. Bigot told the minister that Longueuil had answered his diatribe against the British on the Ohio “very sharply” by stating, “The English were trading there before us; that it was not just to chase them out; that at most the river belonged to the Iroquois; and that we had only to supply all their needs, as the English were doing, for these last to withdraw of their own accord, when they saw they could not earn a living there.” Bigot naturally told the minister, “I was, I must say, Monsigneur, surprised and startled by this reply, and I assured him firmly that I understood that the Belle Riviere belonged to France.” Longueuil’s “startling” reply called into question the very legitimacy of France’s presence in the Ohio Valley.<sup>19</sup>

If this conversation between Bigot and Longueuil actually took place and was not simply the construction of a man trying to ingratiate himself with the new faction by discrediting the old, it reveals a remarkable division in French leadership between native-born Canadians and those from the old world. It also reveals a tantalizing historical “what-if” in which Longueuil stayed in office and executed this policy purely based on trade. Would the French and Indian War have happened at all? Would the Native Americans living along the Ohio River have managed to hold on to their land? Bigot presented a very different version of this “what if” scenario to the minister, opining, “If the government had been in the hands of these gentlemen for another year... Wars with the savages would have occurred as often as possible. For this reason there would have been immense expense in the upper country, as each war would have produced bills beyond what these forays would have legitimately incurred.” The relative cheapness of providing trade goods instead of fighting a war did not factor into Bigot’s equation. Alas, Longueuil was simply filling in following the death of the previous governor until the

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<sup>19</sup> Bigot to the Minister, 26 Oct 1752, in Stevens and Kent, *Wilderness Chronicles*, 40.

already-appointed Duquesne arrived. But there can be little doubt which option the Ohio Indians would have preferred.<sup>20</sup>

Had Intendant Bigot known how close the French would come to disaster during their 1753 invasion of the Ohio Valley, he would not have dismissed the diplomatic option so quickly. In fact, already in 1754, he wrote, “that, after full reflection, it would have perhaps been better to be satisfied with passing along the Belle Riviere and seizing the English traders, without establishing posts there and without making the great stir there which the expedition produced.”<sup>21</sup> The plan had been to build four forts, stretching from Lake Erie to the Forks of the Ohio. The campaign proved incredibly costly for the French and had to be halted prematurely with only two forts built, Presque Isle and LeBoeuf, as disease and exhaustion whittled the two thousand men who had left Montreal in the spring down to only eight hundred fit for duty in the fall. While the French were assailed by every hardship the backcountry could throw at them, which also included a drought that made water travel impossible, they were left alone by the people whose home they were invading.<sup>22</sup>

The Native Americans’ lack of response reveals how divided they were. Many were eager to finally have access to the trade goods they so desperately needed. As French progress ground to a halt and it became clear they were not going to be able to go further in 1753, a French Indian agent located downstream of Fort LeBoeuf recorded a touching speech that was delivered to him by a local group of Iroquois men. The Indians said of all the soldiers who had died, “It is not only you who lose them. We, too, grieve for them.” Their reason for grieving was

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<sup>20</sup> Bigot to the Minister, 26 Oct 1752, in Stevens and Kent, *Wilderness Chronicles*, 40.

<sup>21</sup> Guy Frégault, *Francois Bigot, Adminstrateur Francais*, (Montreal: n.p., 1948), 72; quoted in. Kent, *French Invasion*, 12n23.

<sup>22</sup> Kent, *French Invasion*, 64. This is the best source for a full overview of the campaign.

perhaps more pragmatic than their touching line would indicate, however. The Indians continued, “My father, for a long time you have promised to come and comfort us, and take care of us and our children...Be mindful, my father, that you have driven off all the English, and that your children will be in a pitiable state if they do not see you here.”<sup>23</sup> It would be a long, hard winter without clothes, blankets, or ammunition to hunt with.

Others found access to goods in ways different from the normal bartering exchange. Some carried items across the grueling portage routes at Niagara and the road between Fort Presque Isle and Fort LeBoeuf, or brought horses to hire for the purpose, in exchange for goods. The Native Americans living around Niagara had often served in this role in the past, to the point they complained about soldiers taking their work when the main body of French troops pushed through. The soldiers even had the gall to demand to be paid the same rate as the Indians for carrying goods, and their commander shockingly agreed in order to prevent delays. This is a fascinating example of how dependent both groups had become on each other and of the diplomatic wranglings that could cut across the cultural divide.<sup>24</sup>

Some of the Indians working the portages took a slightly less diplomatic approach to obtain the goods they needed: they simply walked off with them. French commanders found this to be a common and infuriating problem, with one example being the commander of the forward part of the expedition, Captain Paul Marin de La Malgue. He wrote in an undated letter, “The Indians have carried off our blankets, and especially the white ones... so that I do not have any

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<sup>23</sup> Joncaire to Marin, 19 Oct 1753, in Fernand Grenier, ed., *Papiers Contrecoeur et autres documents concernant le conflit anglo-français sur l'Ohio de 1745 à 1756* (Quebec: Université Laval, 1952), 76-77, quoted in Kent, *French Invasion*, 65.

<sup>24</sup> Kent, *French Invasion*, 29.



left to supply the posts.”<sup>25</sup> This was not the usual stealing of government goods for profit that is so prevalent around military operations even today. The thieves in question would have had nowhere to sell their ill-gotten goods, and when coupled with their well-documented need for manufactured goods, these utilitarian items were being tactically acquired for their own use.

The only Native American who presented any opposition to the French, beyond theft, was Tanaghrisson, and he highlighted the issue of trade goods as part of the problem. He came to Fort Presque Isle in September 1753 and demanded a meeting with Marin. In the subsequent council, he related a story in which a few years before, the Indian agent Joncaire had come to the area “with much merchandise which he distributed as he pleased, after which he said that he had acquired the land as far as the Riviere au Boeuf [French Creek], and that troubled me.”

Tanaghrisson feared this was going to happen again, saying, “We were told that you were coming with quantities of goods, just as M. de Joncaire came before, and that you were coming to take pity on your children. We think that when you have dressed us up, you will say that the land has been paid for.”<sup>26</sup>

Tanaghrisson had laid bare the debilitating conundrum the Ohio Indians found themselves in. They were dependent on Europeans to obtain necessary manufactured goods, but this dependence made it difficult for them to resist encroachments on their land. This same fact had caused him at Logstown to have to evade the question of the land sale from the Treaty of Lancaster while still giving the Virginians permission to build a trading post. Tanaghrisson used that very concession, albeit perhaps a bit untruthfully, to try to sway Marin. He asked him to

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<sup>25</sup> Letter from Marin, undated, Archives du Séminaire de Québec, V-V, 5:60:11, quoted in Kent, *French Invasion*, 62.

<sup>26</sup> Council Held by the Sonontouans, 02 Sep 1753, in *Papiers Contrecoeur*, 53-58, quoted in Kent, *French Invasion*, 47-48.

cease building forts and said, “We have told our brothers the English to withdraw. They have done so, too. We shall be on the side of those who take pity on us and who listen to us.” After giving strings of wampum, he made a passionate request that was remarkably similar to the concession he made at Logstown, saying, “We therefore ask you, my father, to take pity on our children and those to come, seeing that, if you settle here, it is the way to make us all perish. We ask you only to send there what we need, but not to build any forts there.” Sadly, Tanaghrisson’s prediction was more accurate than he could have ever known, and his threat to “strike at whoever does not listen to us” fell on deaf ears.<sup>27</sup>

Marin’s response showed that the French had no interest in trying to negotiate with the Ohio Indians any further and that they viewed them only as subjects or potential enemies. He told Tanaghrisson, “His Majesty has ordered these establishments in order to be assured of the faithfulness of his children, and His Majesty leaves them complete freedom to go and trade their furs wherever they think best.” The seeming contradiction in this sentence is easily explained by the incredibly difficult journey that would have been required to go and trade with either the Pennsylvanians or Virginians in their own territories. His “children” would have no choice but to be “faithful” if the only places to trade on the Ohio River were French. Marin continued with a piece of rhetoric devoid of diplomatic finesse, blustering, “I despise all the stupid things you said.” Marin also implied that Tanaghrisson was only speaking for himself, and that the other Ohio Indians “take pity on their women and children,” and therefore support the French. Finally, he threatened Tanaghrisson by saying, “if there are any persons bold enough to set up barriers to hinder my march, I shall knock them over so vigorously that they may crush those who made

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<sup>27</sup> Council Held by the Sonontouans, 02 Sep 1753, in Papiers Contrecoeur, 53-58, quoted in Kent, *French Invasion*, 49.

them.”<sup>28</sup>This was the rhetorical parallel of the entire French campaign: paying lip service to caring about the well-being of the people living on the Ohio River while simultaneously disregarding their autonomy.

Unfortunately for Tanaghrisson, Marin had perfectly read his situation, as he was indeed acting on his own. As seen above, most of the inhabitants were more or less happy to have access to trade goods again. Most of them had a grudge against the English colonists who had so recently kicked them out of their homes, which no doubt made them more willing to tolerate the French. There was also a pragmatic angle for some, as shown by a Shawnee who spoke to Marin the next day and said he did not agree with Tanaghrisson because “We think much better...all the more because we are not capable of resisting and because we take pity on our women and children.”<sup>29</sup> For them, there was nothing to be gained by fighting the establishment of these forts, and at least the French were not bringing settlers and land speculators in tow.

Even the Iroquois, who generally tried to at least appear to support the British, and who Tanaghrisson ostensibly represented in the Ohio Valley, had made peaceful overtures to the French. Of course, from the bombastic Duquesne’s point of view, this was because of his god-like strength. He wrote that his march had “made a considerable impression on the Indians,” and many had “presented themselves all trembling before me, and told me that they were aware of my power by the swarm of men they had passed, and [begged me] to have pity on them, their wives and children.” Word of this reached the Iroquois, “and the only step they have taken has been to send the Ladies (Dames) of their Council to Sieur Marin, to inquire of him, by a Belt,

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<sup>28</sup> Council Held by the Sonontouans, 02 Sep 1753, in *Papiers Contrecoeur*, 53-58, quoted in Kent, *French Invasion*, 50.

<sup>29</sup> Speech of the Cha8oinons, 04 Sep 1753, in *Papiers Contrecoeur*, 61-62, quoted in Kent, *French Invasion*, 51.

whether he was marching with the hatchet uplifted or to establish tranquility.” Marin responded that he would use the hatchet only if necessary, and according to Duquesne, “They answered that they would not meddle with my affairs, and that they would look quietly on, from their mats, persuaded, as they were, that my proceedings had no other object than to give a clear sky to a country which served as a refuge for assassins who had reddened the ground with blood.”<sup>30</sup>

While Duquesne’s version of events is undoubtedly a fabrication, Tanaghrisson’s actions indicate that the spirit of what Duquesne had said was true. At the beginning of the council with Marin, Tanaghrisson told him, “The river where we are belongs to us warriors. The chiefs who look after (public) affairs are not its masters. It is a road for warriors and not for these chiefs.” This was a bold assertion of autonomy by Tanaghrisson, as he was arguing that the Onondaga Council had no right to make decisions for the warriors living in the Ohio Country. The Delawares, Shawnees, and others living in the Ohio Valley would have doubtlessly cheered at this assertion that the council had no right to speak for them, but they also would have said the same about Tanaghrisson himself. The fact Onondaga had accidentally sold the Ohio Country to Virginia certainly did not win them any points either. Regardless, Tanaghrisson had to make this distinction because he knew the Onondaga Council had decided not to confront the French.<sup>31</sup>

The only Native American allies Tanaghrisson had outside of his small circle of supporters were too far away to be of any help. Virginian “Colonel” William Fairfax wrote to William Trent, the man who would soon be responsible for building the Ohio Company fort on the Forks of the Ohio, and told him that Christopher Gist had recently spoken with some of the

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<sup>30</sup> Duquesne to the Minister, 20 Aug 1753, in Stevens and Kent, *Wilderness Chronicles*, 50-51.

<sup>31</sup> Council Held by the Sonontouans, 02 Sep 1753, in *Papiers Contrecoeur*, 53-59, quoted in Kent, *French Invasion*, 47-48.

southern tribes about the French activities. After telling them that, in Fairfax's words, "The French had come, in a warlike manner, to dispossess the Ohio Indians, and settle themselves," the "Chickasaws, Cherokees, Catawbas, and Creeks" had "answered him that they would heartily join the Six Nations, to drive the French back to Canada, having also cause to strike them."<sup>32</sup> Given that several of those tribes had been long-standing enemies of the Six Nations and that the Six Nations themselves were unwilling to openly oppose the French, their offer was of no help to Tanaghrisson.

One has to feel sympathy for Tanaghrisson and the situation he found himself in. Having been put in a difficult, perhaps impossible, leadership position from the beginning by the Iroquois and British who conducted business through him, he had struggled to gain the confidence of the people he was trying to speak for. He then had to try and find a tolerable solution for his people to obtain trade goods so that he himself could get goods to distribute to other leaders to gain support. As such, he was forced into making a deal with the British at Logstown and to allow them to build a storehouse in his territory, knowing full well they would try to use it as a toe hold to settle the whole area. But they had shown themselves to be the only reliable source of goods. Having backed the British colonists, however, he was left in yet another impossible position as France launched an unprecedented and aggressive, but surprisingly popular, invasion of the Ohio Valley in 1753. Lacking support from anywhere else, Tanaghrisson had no choice but to turn to the Virginians he had begrudgingly hitched himself to. The records show that Virginia did supply guns, powder, and ammunition at least.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Fairfax to Trent, 1 Sep 1753, in *The Case of the Ohio Company, Extracted From Original Papers*, 12; printed in facsimile form in *George Mercer Papers*. The original publication information is unclear.

<sup>33</sup> For more on Tanaghrisson's back story, see McConnell, *A Country Between*, 75-76. For more on the specific incidents mentioned, see Chapter 1 of this paper. Weapon and ammunition supply, "Governor Dinwiddie's directions

Tanaghrisson participated in the final diplomatic attempt to get the French to leave in November and December of 1753. He joined George Washington and Christopher Gist on the journey that, on the surface, was as futile as Céloron's lead plates had been. Washington was sent by Virginia's Lieutenant Governor Robert Dinwiddie to deliver a letter to the French commander in the Ohio Valley. In the letter, Dinwiddie explained that the "lands upon the river Ohio, in the western parts of the colony of Virginia, are so notoriously known, to be the property of the crown of Great Britain" that he was shocked to hear of the French building forts there. In response, he stated that "in Obedience to my Instructions, it becomes my Duty to require your peaceable Departure."<sup>34</sup> After setting out on Halloween of 1753, Washington met Gist at Wills Creek on 14 November, and the pair continued to Logstown. They were joined on their trip to Logstown by the Delaware leader Shingas, whose decision to join them indicates where he stood on the coming conflict.<sup>35</sup>

When Tanaghrisson finally met with Gist, Washington, and Shingas at Logstown, he recounted his version of his meeting with Marin at Presque Isle. It is fascinating to note the differences between the two versions of the meeting. Setting aside the ever-present problem of trusting the copying skills of European writers, working through translators, and probably recording after the fact, Tanaghrisson's version that he presented to Washington contains much stronger language. He recounted how he told the French commander, "If you had come in a peaceable Manner, like our Brothers the English, we should not have been against your trading

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to Mr. Gist concerning the Indians July 10, 1753," in Mulkearn, *George Mercer Papers*, 286; N. Walthoe to William Trent, 26 Sep 1753, in *Case of the Ohio Company*, 13.

<sup>34</sup> Dinwiddie to the Commandant of the French Forces on the Ohio, 31 Oct 1753, in Washington, *The Journal of Major George Washington*, 25-26. While he certainly had official reason for doing this, he was also a shareholder in the Ohio Company, meaning he was also personally vested in kicking the French out. See "Résumé of the Proceedings of the Ohio Company October 24, 1747- May 24, 1751," in Mulkearn, *George Mercer Papers*, 5.

<sup>35</sup> Washington, *Journal of Major George Washington*, 3-5.

with us, as they do; but to come, Fathers, and build great Houses upon our Land, and to take it by Force, is what we cannot submit to.” He then continued with the famous passage about living “in a Country between,” and being “not afraid to discharge you off this Land.”<sup>36</sup> Was this simply recording bias, in which the French were keen to minimize Tanaghrisson and his opposition, while Washington had an interest in making him appear stronger? Perhaps, but it seems equally likely that two months of stewing had made Tanaghrisson wish he had punched up his language more. But without having his own thoughts recorded by himself, it is impossible to know.

After meeting with Washington, Tanaghrisson asked him to stay at Logstown for a few days so that he could gather his chiefs at a council. His goal was to collect French wampum belts that had been given to the different tribes, so he could return them to the French. This was a powerful diplomatic gesture, in effect representing the cancellation of any treaties or agreements the belts represented. Unfortunately, his inability to get the other leaders to join him with their belts was an equally symbolic gesture that foreshadowed what was to come. Tanaghrisson told Washington, “I intend to send a Guard of Mingo’s, Shannoahs, and Delawares, that our Brothers [Washington and Gist] may feel the Love and Loyalty we bear them.” But after several days of stalling, it was finally resolved that “only three of their Chiefs, with one of their best Hunters, should be our Convoy: The Reason which they gave for not sending more, after what had been proposed...was, that a greater Number might give the French suspicions of some bad design, and cause them to be treated rudely.”<sup>37</sup>

This weak excuse was clearly meant to cover up the fact that they had not been able to get enough people to support Washington and his mission, which can be viewed as a public

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<sup>36</sup> Washington, *Journal of Major George Washington*, 3-7.

<sup>37</sup> Washington, *Journal of Major George Washington*, 10, 13.

opinion poll. This difficulty speaks to the fractured support that Tanaghrisson himself had and also of the emerging split between those who supported backing the French and those who wished to support the British or even remain neutral. Shingas himself had gone back to his village to try to collect people for the journey, along with their French wampum belt, but “could not get in his Men.” This was ostensibly because they were out hunting but was probably because they did not want to join. Washington accused Shingas of cowardice because Shingas claimed he was “prevented from coming himself by his Wife’s Sickness (I believe, by Fear of the French).” More likely, Shingas had been persuaded by his people not to return and be seen with the Virginian. Washington further displayed his naivety when it came to Indian politics and diplomacy by stating after the excuse of not wanting to send too big of a party that “I rather think they could not get their Hunters in.”<sup>38</sup> He was right about it being a poor excuse, but he misread a crucial detail.

The unexpectedly small diplomatic mission made its way north and arrived at the former home of John Frazier at Venango on 4 December. Frazier was the blacksmith who had left the area that Tanaghrisson had mentioned at the Treaty of Logstown. Tanaghrisson had asked for someone to take over his place and fill his vital role, but instead, the French Indian agent Captain Joncaire had occupied the buildings. Joncaire told Washington they would need to go on and see the new commander at Fort LeBoeuf, Jacques Legardeur de Saint-Pierre, in order to deliver Dinwiddie’s letter. In the meantime, bad weather kept the party at Venango.<sup>39</sup>

Washington was surprisingly sensitive to limiting French access to Tanaghrisson, given Tanaghrisson’s record of being very opposed to the French. Also surprising, given that fact, is

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<sup>38</sup> Washington, *Journal of Major George Washington*, 12-13.

<sup>39</sup> Washington, *Journal of Major George Washington*, 13.



how eager the French were to try to talk to him one more time. “Joncaire sent for the Half-King [Tanaghrisson]” and was upset Washington had not brought him in before. Washington admitted knowing Joncaire was an Indian agent, and he had “lately used all possible Means to draw them over to their Interest; therefore I was desirous of giving no Opportunity that could be avoided.” Despite what Washington may have wanted, however, he did not have the power to control Tanaghrisson, and he should have realized he had nothing to worry about. In fact, Washington recounted later on that Tanaghrisson told him, “He desired I might not be concerned, for he knew the French too well, for any Thing to engage him in their Behalf.”<sup>40</sup>

The French then applied one of the most powerful diplomatic tools they had: alcohol. Washington reported that as soon as they saw Tanaghrisson and the handful of Indians with him, they “made several trifling Presents, and applied Liquor so fast, that they were soon render’d incapable of the Business they came about, notwithstanding the Caution that was given.” Ironically, it was not just the Native Americans that fell victim to alcohol, as Washington had also reported the night of their arrival at Venango that the French officers had “dosed themselves pretty plentifully with wine,” which “soon banished the Restraint which at first appear’d in their Conversation, and gave a License to their Tongues to reveal their Sentiments more freely.” They then proceeded to spill all sorts of information to Washington. The liquor seems to have not had the desired effect on Tanaghrisson, however, as it merely delayed business until he was sober the next day.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Washington, *Journal of Major George Washington*, 13-15, 20; For the request to replace Frazier at the Logstown Treaty see “Extracts from the Treaty with the Indians at Loggs Town in the Year 1752,” in Mulkearn, *George Mercer Papers*, 63.

<sup>41</sup> Washington, *Journal of Major George Washington*, 13-15.

Washington had tried to get Tanaghrisson to save his message for the ranking French officer at Fort LeBeouf, but Tanaghrisson refused. He argued that the council fire had been kindled at Venango in the past, and therefore he was beholden to meet there. Furthermore, Joncaire was the sole person in charge of Indian affairs. At the council meeting, Tanaghrisson tried to perform the highly symbolic act of returning his French wampum belt, but Joncaire cleverly refused to receive it by suddenly agreeing with Washington, saying he “desired him to carry it to the Fort to the Commander.” So to the commander they went.<sup>42</sup>

Washington met with the French Captain Saint-Pierre and got his response to Dinwiddie’s letter. Unsurprisingly, Saint-Pierre responded to Dinwiddie’s request that he leave by saying, “I do not think myself obliged to obey it.” With that done, the French continued to try to win over Tanaghrisson, with Washington complaining that the French commander “was exerting every Artifice that he could invent to set our own Indians at Variance with us, to prevent their going ‘til after our Departure: Presents, Rewards, and every Thing that could be suggested by him or his Officers.” The commander promised them “a Present of Guns, &c. if they would wait ‘til the Morning” after Washington and Gist were going to leave. While Washington was able to get Tanaghrisson to leave Fort LeBeouf at the same time as him, he was ultimately held up at Venango, while other factors caused the party to further split up, leaving Gist and Washington on their own for the remainder of the return journey, to include their frigid night on the island.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Washington, *Journal of Major George Washington*, 15.

<sup>43</sup> Washington, *Journal of Major George Washington*, 18-21; Saint-Pierre to Dinwiddie, 15 December 1753, in *Journal of Major George Washington*, 27-28.

It was probably for the best that Tanaghrisson was not with Washington at the end of the journey. Washington wrote in one of his last entries on 6 January 1754 that he “met 17 Horses loaded with Materials and Stores for a Fort at the Forks of Ohio, and the Day after some Families going out to settle.”<sup>44</sup> Here was the unequivocal proof that Tanaghrisson was wrong: the English had not left when he asked them. They had leveraged his agreement at the Treaty of Logstown for everything it was worth and more and had every intention of settling on the Ohio River despite his wishes. No amount of diplomatic language could change this reality. While Tanaghrisson remained in the north protesting the French invasion at the northern end of the Ohio Valley, Washington casually reported the beginning of the English invasion on the southern end. No wonder the Ohio Indians were divided on how to respond.

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<sup>44</sup> Washington, *Journal of Major George Washington*, 22.

### Chapter 3

## **“He Looked Upon Us as Dogs:” Braddock, Washington, and the British Betrayal of the Ohio Indians**

As Conrad Weiser set pen to paper on 15 March 1754, he created a perfect snapshot of the tensions, difficulties, and dread that had crept into the backwoods of Pennsylvania on account of the French invasion. The trusty old interpreter began by telling Pennsylvania secretary Richard Peters that there was simply no way he could make a trip to the Iroquois capital of Onondaga in the middle of March. Peters had clearly been pestering him to make the trip, probably because he was desperate to try and see how the Six Nations were going to respond to the French. Weiser told him, “Sir I am greatly surprised with your proposal of my making a journey to Onontago in this ensuing Spring Season, pleased to let me tell you at once, that it is impossible for me to perform it.” He explained the trip would be impossible because all the rivers he would have to cross would be “full of Water, and will continue so till about the middle of May, and there is neither Boat, Canoe or Ferry.” He admitted that he had made the winter journey almost twenty years ago, and another interpreter Andrew Montour made the journey the year before, but he “Suffered Extramly...and he is a Young Man and in the best of his time, when I am old and Infirm.” He concluded darkly, but perhaps with a smirk on his face, “I could

seek nor Expect nothing from a journey to Onontago, now [other] than my grave, or feeding the Wolves and Bears with my Body.”<sup>1</sup>

The difficulties Weiser laid out once again highlight just how difficult physically going to interact with people could be in eighteenth-century America. Christopher Gist had experienced these exact same hardships on multiple occasions, but there was in many ways more at stake for Weiser. Here was a critical diplomatic issue that needed to be explored and resolved, but the talks would have to wait for months. Weiser, however, felt it was more prudent to wait until after the planned treaty meeting at Albany anyway. The treaty was planned for early summer, and he argued that even if he managed to get up to Onondaga, they would “put me off till the Treaty.” Diplomacy could move remarkably slowly sometimes, and there was no reason to rush it, no matter how much was at stake.<sup>2</sup>

But then Weiser revealed that maybe this planned trip to Onondaga had nothing to do with military security and the impending war. Instead, this was just business as usual: land speculating. Rather than seeking out assurances of how the Iroquois were going to act towards the French, he was seeking to confirm a 1749 deal for “obtaining the lands on Juniata [River].” He hoped he could convince Onondaga to negotiate with him for the land “rather than to leave us to deal with the Ohio Indians for it.” He even speculated lustily, “I may perhaps fall in with some greedy fellows for Money, that will undertake to bring things about to our wishes.” Unfortunately, he suspected a different colonial official was “in our way as to land affairs.” Even worse, he had to make a trip to the Wyoming Valley of Pennsylvania, the land around the North

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<sup>1</sup> Weiser to Richard Peters, 15 March 1754, vol.1, p. 44, Conrad Weiser Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. Hereafter CWP.

<sup>2</sup> Weiser to Peters, 15 March 1754, CWP.

Branch of the Susquehanna, to warn them “of the rashness of the new England People to propose to settle on Wyomink.” Here was one of Pennsylvania’s best diplomats, and on the verge of the outbreak of a world war, he was squabbling with other colonists about who could have what Indian land and why. Unfortunately, Weiser was not unique in this, as the only meaningful thing that would come out of the Albany Congress later in 1754 would be infuriating land-snatching deals.<sup>3</sup>

Even if it was business as usual for colonial land speculators, the Native Americans with whom they were dealing were evidently far more aware of the precipice North America was being nudged towards. Weiser complained to Peters that despite all his schemes, “Everything lies in such a confusion, that I am quite Perplexed in my Mind, and do not know how to act in Indian Affairs any more, they are apostates as to their Old Natural principle of Honesty, and become Drunkards, Rogues, Thieves and Liars.” He hoped the upcoming treaty would do something to fix the situation. Weiser, a seasoned interpreter who was among the more sympathetic to the Indians, failed to even acknowledge the French and English elephants that were smashing through the Indians’ living room. Only in the last paragraph did he indicate that he was indeed feeling the gravity of the situation and that he was grappling with a fatalistic sense of dread that foreshadowed the impending disasters that would befall British military efforts: “Things begin to go against me; but patience for a little while, It wont be long before we will both be Summon’d I hope to a better place. Rest before labour is nonsense. Pardon my scribbling who am, Sir, Your very humble Servant Conrad Weiser.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Weiser to Peters, 15 March 1754, CWP; For more on the Albany Congress see Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years’ War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000), 78-85.

<sup>4</sup> Weiser to Peters, 15 March 1754, CWP.

Weiser was right to be so fatalistic: The next few years would be a string of unmitigated disasters in Pennsylvania. He would have to wait a while for the “better place,” though, and as such, he had to deal with the aftermath of first George Washington’s embarrassment by the French in July 1754 and then the even more disastrous and humiliating defeat suffered by the British regulars under General Edward Braddock in July 1755. Both of these events have been well covered by historians and have rightfully been viewed as major turning points in colonial and Native American relations. In the case of Washington, the narrative has generally been the story of a naïve young officer who refused to listen to the more experienced warriors around him, like Tanaghrisson, and caused them to abandon the British. This remains a valid interpretation of events, but it is clear that Washington was at least sensitive to how important Native Americans would be to the success of his mission. Historian David Dixon has even made a compelling case that after the Ohio Indians “abandoned” Washington, they worked behind the scenes to help him in an attempt to maintain the balance of power between the French and English in the Ohio Valley.<sup>5</sup>

For Braddock, the historiography essentially from the day after his defeat until now has been a continuous string of condescending comments about his arrogance and bluster towards the Indians being the cause of his death and defeat. Historian David L. Preston recently reexamined this understanding and came to the conclusion that Braddock, like Washington, was

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<sup>5</sup> For the traditional interpretation of Washington’s interactions with the Ohio Indians see Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 50-65; Francis Jennings, *Empire of Fortune: Crowns, Colonies, and Tribes in the Seven Years War in America* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1988), 66-67. For the argument that the Ohio Indians continued to help Washington see David Dixon, “A High Wind Rising: George Washington, Fort Necessity, and the Ohio Country Indians,” *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 74, no. 3 (2007): 333-353.

sensitive to the importance of Native Americans to his campaign, but the situation had already become so irrevocably tainted by the colonists that he was doomed to failure. As seen in previous chapters, there is no question that the diplomatic situation in the Ohio Valley was indeed a mess. Broken treaty agreements and bad faith negotiations had compounded to infuriate the Indians. But it seems Preston may have gone too far in supposing that Braddock was genuinely concerned with Indian diplomacy, as shall be made clear.<sup>6</sup>

In both cases, it remains important to seek out the opinions and thoughts of the Native Americans themselves. Many of these works have focused on how the decisions of the Ohio Indians impacted Braddock and Washington rather than the other way around. When viewed from their perspective, it becomes clear that Washington's and Braddock's respective defeats were just as devastating for their own interests as they were for the English. With the balance of power in the Ohio Valley destroyed the Ohio Indians had to decide which of the two evils they preferred.

Their first option was to tolerate French occupation and be forced to deal with the French-allied warriors from the upper Great Lakes, whose treatment of the Ohio Indians in many ways resembled the treatment they had suffered at the hands of the Iroquois. Their second option was to support the British colonies, who had repeatedly made it crystal clear that they intended to settle on their land and who continued to support the aggravating myth of Iroquois hegemony over them. Also, those who chose to support the British had to uproot their families and move a

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<sup>6</sup> For the traditional interpretation of Braddock's interactions with the Ohio Indians see Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 94-96; Jennings, *Empire of Fortune*, 151-157; Michael N. McConnell, *A Country Between: The Upper Ohio Valley and Its Peoples, 1724-1774* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 119-121. For a contemporary's account of Braddock's ill treatment of, and resulting trouble from, the Indians see Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography and Other Writings*, ed. Kenneth Silverman (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), 141-143. For the rehabilitation of Braddock's reputation see David L. Preston, *Braddock's Defeat: The Battle of the Monongahela and the Road to the Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).



great distance to the east in order to have protection from French reprisals. What seemed to no longer be an option was the independence they had so desperately craved, due in large part to the spectacular, back-to-back defeats the British experienced in 1754 and 1755. It is sadly ironic that the event that precipitated those defeats was the calculated but desperate act of Tanaghrisson, “Half-King” of the Ohio Indians.<sup>7</sup>

At the end of January 1754, Virginia Governor Dinwiddie commissioned William Trent as a militia captain and ordered him to build a fort at the Forks of the Ohio. Dinwiddie ordered him to “keep possession of his Majesty’s lands on the Ohio, and waters thereof, and to dislodge and drive away, and in case of refusal and resistance, to kill and destroy, or take prisoners,” anyone who was not British and tried to “take possession of lands on the said river Ohio.”<sup>8</sup> He also gave orders for Washington to raise one hundred men and join Trent. Everyone could sense that the race was on and that the French would be coming.<sup>9</sup>

Nobody felt the time crunch more than Tanaghrisson. Having bound himself to the British, everything was riding on their ability to hold back the French. He met with Trent and Christopher Gist on 17 February and was reported to have “laid the first log and said that the fort belonged to the English & them and whoever offered to prevent the building of it, they, the

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<sup>7</sup> See Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University, 1991), 240-245.

<sup>8</sup> *The Case of the Ohio Company, Extracted from Original Papers*, 14-15, printed in facsimile form in Louis Mulkearn, ed., *George Mercer Papers Relating to the Ohio Company of Virginia* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 1954).

<sup>9</sup> Doug MacGregor, “The Shot Not Heard Around the World: Trent’s Fort and the Opening of the War for Empire,” *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 74, no. 3 (2007): 365-366.

Indians, would make war against them.”<sup>10</sup> The Delawares living near the fort seem to have not been hostile towards it being built because as Trent ran low on food, he was able to trade with them for meat. He was still not able to get enough food, however, and began to wonder where Washington was with their resupply. Tanaghrisson was also concerned about how long Washington was taking, and according to Trent, he complained it “seemed as if the English did not intend to assist them else they would have had their men out before this.”<sup>11</sup> On 17 April, Washington reported meeting Gist, “who had been sent from [Ohio] on express by the Half King in order to find out when the English could be expected there.” Gist explained to him that “the Indians are very angry at our delay, and that they threaten to abandon the country; that the French are expected every day,” and the fort was not ready.<sup>12</sup>

Much to Tanaghrisson’s chagrin, the French made it to the fort before Washington. With Trent having left to try to obtain supplies, the fort and its construction were left to the supervision of Ensign Edward Ward. Ward reported that the French had shown up on 17 April, the very day Gist met with Washington. The French commander, Captain Claude-Pierre Pecaudy

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<sup>10</sup> “Deposition of Ensign Edward Ward,” 30 June 1754, in Kenneth P. Bailey, *The Ohio Company Papers, 1753-1817: Being Primarily the Papers of the “Suffering Trader’s” of Pennsylvania* (Ann Arbor, MI: Edwards Brothers, Inc., 1947), 28, quoted in MacGregor, “Trent’s Fort,” 366.

<sup>11</sup> William Trent, “Critique,” c. 1757, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, 4, quoted in MacGregor, “Trent’s Fort,” 367.

<sup>12</sup> Donald H. Kent, ed. and trans., “Contrecoeur’s Copy of George Washington’s Journal for 1754,” *Pennsylvania History* 19, no. 1 (1952): 10. This source has an incredibly convoluted provenance. Washington’s original journal was captured by the French after his surrender at Fort Necessity. Following this it was brought back to New France, translated into French, and a copy was sent back to France and published as proof of British hostility. This version had largely been dismissed by historians and Washington himself as being propaganda. Meanwhile, a second copy was sent by Duquesne to Contrecoeur, the eventual commander of Fort Duquesne, as a piece of intelligence to understand British intentions and the dispositions of the Indians in the area. This version was discovered in an archive in Quebec. Donald H. Kent made a compelling argument that this version of the document is completely legitimate, if for no other reason than it would make no sense to send a propagandized version of the document to a military commander to influence his decision making. Of course, being twice translated, once into French and then back into English, there are doubtlessly errors. Nonetheless, Kent felt it was a reliable source and I see no reason to disagree. For more on the provenance of the document, see the above, 1-9.

Contrecoeur, surrounded the fort and told Ward he had one hour to surrender. Ward noted that he only had forty-one men, “wherof only Thirty three were Soldiers,” compared to the French, who he “judg’d to be about a Thousand.” The outcome was never in doubt.<sup>13</sup>

Tanaghrisson became the de facto commander, and he did everything he could think of to delay the inevitable. In his later deposition on the event to Dinwiddie, Ward reported that during that hour, he spent half of it “with the Half King, who advised him to acquaint the French he was no Officer of Rank or invested with powers to answer their Demands and requested them to Wait the Arrival of the principal Commander.” Contrecoeur would have none of it and told Ward when he met with him that “he should not wait for an Answer from any other person, And absolutely insisted on his determining what to do that Instant, or he should immediately take Possession of the Fort by Force.” Ward surrendered “with Liberty obtained to march off,” but Tanaghrisson “stormed greatly at the French at the Time they were obliged to march out of the Fort and told them it was he Order’d that Fort and laid the first Log of it himself.” Unsurprisingly, “The French paid no Regard to what he said.”<sup>14</sup>

Ward understood that surrendering had potential diplomatic consequences in the eyes of the other Ohio Indians. He reported in his deposition that he had only stayed at his hopeless post as long as he had so it could not be said that “the English had retreated like Cowards before the French Forces Appeared.” Abandoning the fort would have given “the Indians a very indifferent opinion of the English ever after.”<sup>15</sup> Now that burden of judgment fell on Washington, who

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<sup>13</sup> “Ensign Ward’s Deposition,” 7 May 1754, in William M. Darlington, ed., *Christopher Gist’s Journals with Historical, Geographical and Ethnological Notes and Biographies of his Contemporaries* (Pittsburgh: J. R. Weldin & Co., 1893), 275-276; MacGregor, “Trent’s Fort,” 367-368.

<sup>14</sup> “Ensign Ward’s Deposition,” 277-278.

<sup>15</sup> “Ensign Ward’s Deposition,” 277-278.

reported meeting Ensign Ward on 20 April as he was marching south following his surrender. Ward told him what had happened at the fort and that “the Indians still remain firmly attached to our interests.” He did not say *which* Indians, however, and considering Ward “had brought two young men of the Mingo nation” so they could see Washington was indeed marching, he probably meant simply Tanaghrisson and his followers. That attachment, however, was going to depend on how Washington responded.<sup>16</sup>

Ward also delivered a powerful and emotional speech from Tanaghrisson to Washington, a speech also intended for the governors of Virginia and Pennsylvania. Tanaghrisson made explicit the diplomatic importance of this campaign for future relations. He began by saying, “My brothers the English, the bearer will let you know how we have been treated by the French... We are now ready to attack them, and are waiting only for your aid. Take courage and come as soon as possible, and you will find us as ready to fight them as you are yourselves.” He continued somewhat cryptically, “If you do not come to our aid soon, it is all over with us, and I think that we shall never be able to meet together again. I say this with the greatest sorrow in my heart.” Was this a warning that if the English did not support him now, he would break off relations, something that would be painful for him? Or was he being fatalistic and saying that without English help, he would likely be killed? Either way, he concluded with a personal message for Washington, “I am ready, if you think it proper, to go with these two young men to meet the two governors, for I no longer depend on those who have been gone so long without returning or sending word.”<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Kent, “Washington’s Journal,” 11-12.

<sup>17</sup> Kent, “Washington’s Journal,” 11-12.

The implication of British military failure was also apparent to others. Conrad Weiser wrote a document sometime in 1754 succinctly titled, "What would be the consequences of the French being permitted to continue Masters of the Ohio." In it, he opined, "The Indians do not love the French, but fear them and would the English act like soldiers, they would rather join with the English." Because the document is simply dated "1754," it is unclear if it was written before or after Washington's campaign. Regardless, Weiser disparaged the British war effort by saying, "But if we go on as we have done hitherto, those Indians that have no connections with the English but have acted as neuter, will Totally join the French [, while] those that are in connections with us must leave us and go over to the French."<sup>18</sup> Military losses would lead to diplomatic losses, something the British colonists could ill afford with an already short list of allies.

As Washington continued to march towards the French, he received a report from Gist that the French had sent around fifty men to Gist's home. Apparently, "The French had made much inquiry at Mr. Gist's on the subject of the Half King." Washington chose to do something with this information that perhaps would not have held up to the standards of honesty for which he would later become so well known. He wrote, "I did not fail to let some young men know about this, who were in our camp, and this had the effect I wanted. *I made them understand that the French wanted to kill the Half King.*" Whether the French really were trying to kill him or not, the ploy had the intended effect because "Immediately they offered to chase after the French

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<sup>18</sup> Conrad Weiser, "Conrad Weiser's Thoughts of the French Encroachments," 1754, Manuscript Papers on the Indian and Military Affairs of the Province of Pennsylvania 1737-1755, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, 273. Hereafter IMA. One of Weiser's gloom-and-doom scenarios involved the corruption and uprising of the Germans and other "papists will all go over to the French."

with our men.”<sup>19</sup> Washington was willing to do and say whatever it took to get support from the Indians, for now.

That very same day, 27 May, Washington received a letter from Tanaghrisson that was to change not only Washington’s life but also the trajectory of the history of North America. Tanaghrisson told Washington that he “had seen along the road the tracks of two men which went down into a gloomy hollow and that he imagined that the whole party was hidden here.” Here again, Tanaghrisson can be seen exercising a strong military influence upon the completely inexperienced British officers he was working with, steering them in the direction he wanted them to go. Washington, despite receiving the letter around eight in the evening, “began to march through a heavy rain, with the night as black as pitch and by a path scarcely wide enough for a man.” They arrived around sunrise at Tanaghrisson’s camp, and “after holding council with the Half King, we decided to strike jointly.”<sup>20</sup> Just as Tanaghrisson had intended.

What happened next is one of those highly debated events in American history, about which the full truth will never be known. Conflicting reports and the high stakes of the event, to say nothing of the sacred reputation of America’s first beatified hero, have conspired to make it impossible to know exactly what happened. But, for the purposes of this work, the implications of the event and the Native American response to it are the important part, and as such, a quick summary will suffice.

On the morning of 28 May 1754, Washington and his men crept through the woods, led by Tanaghrisson and his men. Arriving at the French encampment, they were able to surround the French unnoticed while the Frenchmen were emerging from their shelters and rubbing the

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<sup>19</sup> Kent, “Washington’s Journal,” 20. Italics original.

<sup>20</sup> Kent, “Washington’s Journal,” 20-21.

sleep from their eyes. It is unclear whether the French spotted the British and fired first or vice versa, but there was a brief exchange of musketry that lasted less than fifteen minutes. Some Frenchmen tried to escape, but the way was blocked by Tanaghrisson and his warriors. A French officer called for a truce, as fourteen French casualties were lying at the bottom of the glen.<sup>21</sup>

The commander of the French party, Ensign Joseph Coulon de Villiers de Jumonville, was one of those casualties. Through a translator, Jumonville tried to explain that he was a diplomat carrying a letter telling the British to withdraw, the inverse of what Washington had done the previous year at Fort LeBoeuf. While the French and British tried to work collectively to translate the letter, Tanaghrisson took matters into his own hands. He walked up to Jumonville and, channeling the diplomatic language used between the Indians and their French “father,” said in French, “Thou are not yet dead, my father.” He then struck Jumonville in the head with a hatchet, “reached into the skull, pulled out a handful of viscous tissue, and washed his hands in Jumonville’s brain.” The other warriors began killing and scalping the other wounded Frenchmen until only one wounded man was left alive.<sup>22</sup>

As shocking as this event is to modern sensibilities, and indeed even to the young George Washington, who looked on helplessly, this was the desperate act of a man who had tried again and again to be heard. His loss of credibility had left Tanaghrisson as an outsider, and he needed an ally to push back the French and restore his influence. As historian Fred Anderson explains, “Tanaghrisson had committed a murder, but he had also made a diplomatic statement. He was declaring war – on his own behalf and that of the Virginians.” What had happened at Trent’s Fort in April was a bloodless affair that could almost be viewed as a business competition the

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<sup>21</sup> Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 5-6.

<sup>22</sup> Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 6.

Virginians had lost. The killing of a French officer, however, was an entirely different matter. Rumors would swirl, and opinions would differ about whether Jumonville was actually on a diplomatic mission or was there to fight Washington, and whether Washington had condoned or even ordered the massacre afterward or, worst of all for his sense of honor, had simply lost control. In the end, all that really mattered was that it happened under the eyes of a militia officer from Virginia. A French officer and half his soldiers had been killed, and the other half taken as prisoners, despite there not actually being a state of war. There was no coming back from the diplomatic precipice.<sup>23</sup>

In fact, in the version of events that Scarouady told to the governor of Pennsylvania in December 1754, the entire run-up to the event was given diplomatic significance. Scarouady was an Oneida, and therefore Iroquois, man who lived on the Ohio. He would inherit the title of “Half King” after Tanaghrisson’s death and was present at Jumonville’s Glen. His speech to the governor was full of metaphors that reveal the nuanced and rich diplomatic rhetoric of the day. He began by holding up a wampum belt that had the image of a hatchet on it, which he said had been sent to them by the governor of Virginia as “an Invitation to us to Join with & Assist our Brethren to repel the French from the Ohio.” At the time, they did not have enough support, so they “put it into a private Pocket on the inside of our Garment. It lay next to our Breast.”<sup>24</sup> They were not quite ready to go to war.

It would take French aggression to get them to pull the belt back out. Scarouady said the French “pulled us by the Arm and almost stripped the chain of Covenant from off it.” He was

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<sup>23</sup> Fred Anderson, *The War that Made America: A Short History of the French and Indian War* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 47-48.

<sup>24</sup> Council Held at Philadelphia, 20 December 1754, IMA, 250-251.



referring to the “Covenant Chain,” the complex system of alliances that had bound the English, Iroquois, and other “tributary” tribes together. He pulled out the wampum belt “and saw there this Hatchet,” and then they told Washington about Jumonville’s group. Of the French, he said, “Ten were killed and twenty one were taken alive, whom we Delivered to Col. Washington.” Scarouady told Washington they had “blooded the Edge of his hatchet a little.” According to Scarouady, then, it was the aggressive French attempts to pull them to the French side that caused the Ohio Indians to attack Jumonville. Now, they had irrevocably bound themselves to Washington and Virginia specifically and the British in general.<sup>25</sup>

Ironically, and sadly, that bond with Washington would not even last a month. After the engagement at Jumonville’s Glen, Washington returned to the rest of his force, which was located at the so-called Great Meadows. He set about trying to piece together a coherent narrative of what had happened and pushed his men to finish the construction of “Fort Necessity” in order to be ready for the French reprisal he was surely expecting. The fort became a stress point between himself and Tanaghrisson, who repeatedly advised him to abandon the position, arguing that it was indefensible because it was overlooked by hills and offered no cover. Washington declined the advice, despite having no experience in building or defending forts. The killing of Jumonville made Washington eager to distance himself from Tanaghrisson.<sup>26</sup>

Tanaghrisson, for his part, had grown weary of Washington. He later complained about Washington to Conrad Weiser, “tho’ in a very moderate way, saying the Col. Washington was a good-natured man but had no Experience.” He told Weiser that Washington “took upon him to

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<sup>25</sup> Council Held at Philadelphia, 20 December 1754, IMA, 250-251. For the Covenant Chain, see Francis Jennings et al, eds., *The History and Culture of Iroquois Diplomacy: An Interdisciplinary Guide to the Treaties of the Six Nations and Their League* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University, 1985), 116-117.

<sup>26</sup> Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 59-60.

command the Indians as his Slaves, and would have them everyday upon the Out Scout and attack the Enemy by themselves, and that he would by no means take Advice from the Indians.” Had Washington listened to him and built the fort on the hill where Tanaghrisson told him, “He would certainly have beat the French off.” Instead, “The French had acted as great Cowards and the English as Fools in the Engagement.” He concluded his rant to Weiser by saying that he “had carried off his Wife and Children, so did other Indians, before the Battle begun, because Col. Washington would never listen to them.”<sup>27</sup>

Just prior to Tanaghrisson’s departure, one last attempt was made to get the Delawares and Shawnees to join the British effort. The council stretched from 19 June until 21 June 1754 and included a wide assortment of flowery promises and assurances of loyalty. The Delawares said it had been recommended to them to “hold fast to the chain of friendship which has sustained so long between us...and our brothers the English.” Washington told the assembled representatives he was there with soldiers because of their “repeated requests” for an army “to maintain your rights, to restore you to possession of your lands and to guard your wives and children, dispossess the French, to maintain your rights, to secure all this country to you.”<sup>28</sup>

But despite all this high-minded diplomatic rhetoric, the council had begun ominously. An Ohio Indian told Washington, “We know that upon our return the French will ask us what is the number of our brothers whom we have just seen; so we bid you by this belt to tell it to us, as well as the number of men you expect and at what time, and when you plan to attack the French,

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<sup>27</sup> Conrad Weiser, “Journal of the Proceedings of Conrad Weiser in his Way to and at Aucquick, by Order of His Honour Governor Hamilton, in the Year 1754, in August and September,” in *Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, From the Organization to the Termination of the Proprietary Government* (Harrisburg: Theo. Fenn & Co., 1851), 6:151-152.

<sup>28</sup> Kent, “Washington’s Journal,” 26-29.

so that we can warn our village.” Three days later, after all those professions of friendship and loyalty, Washington concluded his journal entry for the council by writing, “Afterward, the council broke up, and these treacherous demons who had been sent by the French to spy went away, not without some suitable stories prepared to amuse the French, and to tend to make our own designs succeed.” The flowery promises had been nothing more than window dressing for lies and distrust.<sup>29</sup>

Diplomacy was dead on the Ohio River, and with this final attempt, Tanaghrisson knew his last hope of regaining control over the other Ohio Indians, to the extent he had ever really had it, had died too. With the other inhabitants of the Ohio Valley having no interest in openly supporting the British, he recognized that his gamble had failed. He picked up his family and moved them and a handful of supporters to a trading post in Pennsylvania called Aughwick. Some of his followers elected to stay and went to the French at Fort Duquesne to ask for pardon. This startled the French, but they collected themselves and capitalized on the diplomatic gift being handed to them. They granted the Indians pardon “after making it seem that they could obtain pardon only with great difficulty” and as long as they swore they had nothing to do with the attack on Jumonville.<sup>30</sup> Tanaghrisson himself would die on 4 October, with some of his followers believing he had been killed by “French Witchcraft.”<sup>31</sup> Weiser had a different theory, telling Richard Peters that Tanaghrisson had died “I suppose by his hard drinking.”<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Kent, “Washington’s Journal,” 26, 30.

<sup>30</sup> Duquesne to the Minister, 3 Nov 1754, in Sylvester K. Stevens and Donald H. Kent, eds., *Wilderness Chronicles of Northwestern Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical Commission, 1941), 84.

<sup>31</sup> Robert Hunter Morris to Governor De Lancey, 10 Oct 1754, IMA, 209.

<sup>32</sup> Weiser to Peters, 12 Oct 1754, p. 47, CWP.

It would be incorrect to assume that because the Delawares and Shawnees did not support the British, they must have supported the French. Instead, an interesting new theory suggests that the Ohio Indians worked behind the scenes to try and keep the invaders balanced against each other, thus allowing the Ohio Indians to play one off the other. The French, fueled by anger at the murder of Jumonville, quickly marched to destroy Washington's army, with Jumonville's brother leading the expedition. They surrounded the pitiful fortifications of Fort Necessity and continued to pour fire into it through the night. Washington and his men expected to be charged – and killed – by the bayonet-wielding French soldiers, but out of nowhere, a French officer shouted out asking if they wanted to parley. Even Washington could not understand why “such a vastly superior Force, and possessed of such an Advantage,” would do such a thing. The French commander later qualified his decision and said that, in part, it was because “it was repeated continually that drum beats or cannon fire were heard in the distance.”<sup>33</sup>

But there were no British reinforcements anywhere around, which begs the question of who provided this false intelligence and why. The answer, according to historian David Dixon, is the Ohio Indians. They were “astute enough to realize that Washington represented the only countervailing force to French presence in their country. To spare him to fight another day would, in turn, provide the Indians with continued leverage to use against the French for the duration of the impending war.”<sup>34</sup> If true, and the scant evidence does seem to support it, then it becomes clear the Ohio Indians were playing a masterful game of diplomatic chess. They managed to walk a fine line between the two imperial powers in a way that allowed them to try

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<sup>33</sup> “Journal of the Campaign of Coulon de Villiers, Fort Duquesne, June 26-July 7, 1754,” in *Letters from New France: The Upper Country, 1686-1783* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 205, quoted in Dixon, “A High Wind Rising,” 346-348. I have also relied on Dixon for this version of events.

<sup>34</sup> Dixon, “A High Wind Rising,” 348.

to maintain some level of autonomy. What they had not bargained for was Washington signing a surrender document in which he accidentally – due to a bad translation – admitted to “assassinating” Jumonville, and thus giving the French the *casus belli* necessary to expand the war. Washington’s surrender on the fourth day of July, 1754, would shove the Ohio Indians into an even bigger war.<sup>35</sup>

As part of the surrender, Washington had to leave two officers with the French. One of those officers was a man named Robert Stobo, and he became a critical source of intelligence not just about Fort Duquesne and the French but also about the dispositions of the Native Americans who came and went. He snuck letters out via some of those same Native Americans, and their willingness to take such a great personal risk to deliver critical intelligence to the British is yet again evidence of their desire to maintain a balance of power. One of the men Stobo spoke with was Shingas, the leader of the Ohio Delawares who were supposed to be hostile to the British. Clearly, there was more going on beneath the surface.<sup>36</sup>

Stobo revealed the incredible damage a rumor could do to diplomatic efforts. He wrote on 28 July 1754, “The Indians are greatly alarmed at a report...that half king [Tanaghrisson], Managutha, and a Sha[w]nese King...were confined by the English & Carried as prisoners, that...so soon as they got them to the inhabitants they would hang them all.” The report came from “an Indian named Tusquerora,” who conveniently showed up the day before the French were supposed to have a council with the Shawnese. The French tried to assuage the Shawnese fears and gave them “16 very fine Guns, 2 barels Gun powder & bullets in proportion,” among other things. While there is no way to know for sure, and Stobo did not speculate on it, the

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<sup>35</sup> Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 64-65.

<sup>36</sup> Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 64; Robert Stobo to Unknown, 28 July 1754, IMA, 179.

French certainly could have paid Tusquerora to say those things, and it would have been some of the most effective money they ever spent. Apparently, the rumor continued to grow because later in the letter Stobo wrote, “Its now reported for certain that the half King &ca are Killed & their wives and Children given up to the barbarity of the Cherokees & Catabas.”<sup>37</sup>

Both rumors had a profound and immediate impact. As the Ohio Indians viewed it, not only had the British killed the man most loyal to the British, but they had made an alliance with the Ohio Indians’ long-time, hated enemies. The Ohio Indians also heard there were three hundred Cherokees and Catawbas lying in wait at the Ohio Company’s storehouse. Stobo opined, “True or false its greatly alarmed them and had it not been for that report I believe a great many Indians of several nations would have been with you now.” In the same vein, he also wrote, “I assure you there was not any of those Indians we call ours at the battle except 6 or 7, I believe of the Mingo Nation.” That last detail shows just how isolated Tanaghrisson had become: the only people who supported the French directly were themselves Mingos – Iroquois people who had moved to the Ohio Valley – just like Tanaghrisson. Regardless of that fact, however, Stobo’s report indicates the Ohio Indians were not so closely bound to the French as their lack of open support for the British would imply. It also reinforces Dixon’s theory that they may have worked behind the scenes to help Washington at Fort Necessity.<sup>38</sup>

While the Ohio Indians struggled to develop their own response to the disaster unfolding before them, they also had to wonder how the Iroquois were going to respond. In the same council where Scarouady discussed his involvement at Jumonville’s Glen, he told the council that he had been sent “to the six nations, and look into their Houses, particularly the Houses of

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<sup>37</sup> Stobo to Unknown, 28 July 1754, IMA, 179.

<sup>38</sup> Stobo to Unknown, 28 July 1754, IMA, 179-180.

the Oneidos. I was to be sent to appear at their Doors and Just look in to see who were our friends.” Given that he was speaking to a council of Pennsylvanians, he probably meant those who were friends of the British, but he just as easily could have been speaking solely from the perspective of the Ohio Indians that he was ostensibly “half king” of now. He then continued with a powerful, imagery-filled snapshot of the anxieties swirling around himself and the other Ohio Indians:

What I am now going to say, is in the Character of a warrior, I lay down the Counsellor, and take up the Warrior. I shall speak from my heart. Believe me I shall speak from my Heart. My thoughts are ruminating upon Old Times, I am revolving in my breast the fate of our forefathers from Ancient times down to this day. Multitudes of skulls, some of our forefathers some of our brethren lye on Heaps before my Eyes. I see Large quantities of dry Bones, those who animated them were all destroyed by our Enemies. This sad vision these doleful thoughts I intend to relate to the six nations when I look into their Doors...and if they are not infatuated they will take into consideration the deaths of their forefathers killed by the Enemy, and conclude to Join with me in assisting our Brethren.<sup>39</sup>

Scarouady also tried to reassure the Pennsylvanians that “The Delawares, Shawonese, Owendats and Twightwees are our Allies, we expect they are in full Friendship with us; you may depend on the Truth of what I say, they are our fast Friends.” This was important because the French had actively been trying to win supporters, such as when they sent a string of wampum to Aughwick, asking the people taking refuge there to “Take pity of your Father in his olde Days and Look back to your former Dwellings.”<sup>40</sup> None of them were interested in the offer, but it illustrates the reach the French had. The only thing that could stop that reach would be a strong military response, and Pennsylvania Governor Morris assured the Indians a strong response was coming soon. He told Scarouady to pass along the message to Onondaga that the king had “filled

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<sup>39</sup> Council Held at Philadelphia, 20 Dec 1754, IMA, 248-249.

<sup>40</sup> Council Held at Philadelphia, 20 Dec 1754, IMA, 252, 255.

out some of his Large ships and filled them with Soldiers, and Arms, and Cannon, and they are now on the Seas coming to our aid, so that as soon as the Spring Opens, the six nations may rest assured there will be a great Army.”<sup>41</sup> By this point, diplomacy had to be backed by muskets.

Whatever comfort the idea of a British army coming may have furnished to the Ohio Indians who wanted to remain allies with the British, or at least were eager to maintain a power balance between the French and British, that comfort evaporated when they met the army’s commander. Despite the recent attempts to revive his reputation, there is little doubt that General Edward Braddock did nothing to win favor with the Native Americans. His official orders explicitly said, “You will not only cultivate the best Harmony & Friendship possible with the several Governors of our Colonies & Provinces, but likewise with the Chiefs of the Indian Tribes.” While he failed on both those points, he did follow through on giving William Johnson a commission as the Indian agent for the Northern Indians, “as the Person thought to be most acceptable to them.”<sup>42</sup> Unfortunately, while Johnson would prove to be adept at working with the Iroquois, he was to become a roadblock for diplomacy in Pennsylvania.<sup>43</sup>

Whatever goodwill remained for the British after years of vacillation, broken promises, and Washington’s embarrassing defeat, Braddock managed to quickly drive it from the Ohio Indians. A remarkable example of this can be found in the captivity narrative of a Pennsylvania man, Charles Stuart, who was taken by a mixed group of Delawares, Shawnees, and Mingos after the raids began in the backcountry in October 1755. Stuart certainly had no reason to make

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<sup>41</sup> Council Held at Philadelphia, 24 Dec 1754, IMA, 263.

<sup>42</sup> General Braddock’s Instructions, 1754, in Samuel Hazard, ed., *Pennsylvania Archives* (Philadelphia: Joseph Severns & Co., 1852), ser. 1, 2:203-204.

<sup>43</sup> Paul A. W. Wallace, *Conrad Weiser: Friend of Colonist and Mohawk* (1945; repr., Baltimore: Wennawoods Publishing, 1996), 381.



up the encounter and to present the Ohio Indians in a favorable light, and yet their decision to take up the hatchet seems understandable after he presented their side. He reported that the Delaware leader Shingas told the captives, “the English and not the Indians were the Cause of the Present War.” Shingas and some other Delaware, Shawnee, and Mingo leaders spoke to General Braddock in the spring or early summer of 1755. They asked Braddock “what he intended to do with the Land if he Could drive the French and their Indians away.” Braddock responded, “that the English Should Inhabit & Inherit the Land.” The Indians then asked if they be allowed to live among them and hunt, to which Braddock responded coldly, “No Savage should Inherit the Land.”<sup>44</sup>

Braddock’s honesty about his intentions for the Ohio Valley was too much for the Indians to believe. Shingas tried to give Braddock the benefit of the doubt; perhaps he had simply been in a bad mood or misspoken? After giving him a night to cool off, the Ohio Indian leaders asked him the same question and received the exact same reply. In response, “Shingas and the other Chiefs answered That if they might not have Liberty To Live on the Land they would not Fight for it [,] To which Genl Braddock answered that he did not need their Help and had No doubt of driving the French and their Indians away.” When the leaders told their people what Braddock had said, “They were very much Enraged and a Party of them went Immediately upon it and Join’d the French.”<sup>45</sup> To add insult to injury, it had been Shingas and other Ohio Indians who had smuggled out Robert Stobo’s intelligence-laden letters and maps of Fort Duquesne and carried them to the British.<sup>46</sup> With remarkable efficiency, Braddock had managed to shatter the delicate

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<sup>44</sup> Beverly W. Bond Jr., ed., “The Captivity of Charles Stuart, 1755-57,” *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 13, no. 1 (1926): 63-64.

<sup>45</sup> Bond, “Captivity of Charles Stuart,” 63-64.

<sup>46</sup> Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 95.

illusion of British good faith towards the Ohio Indians that had been hanging on by a ragged thread since the Treaty of Logstown.

Shingas was not the only man who had a bad experience with Braddock. Scarouady also had some choice words to say about the general, telling a council in Pennsylvania, “He is now dead but he was a bad Man when he was alive. Scarouady explained that Braddock “looked upon us as Dogs and would never hear any thing we said to him, we often endeavoured to advise him, and to tell him of the danger he was in with his soldiers, but he never appeared Pleased with us, and that was the Reason that a great many of our Warriors left him and would not be under his command.”<sup>47</sup> When Braddock finally went off on his doomed march, he had only “Scarouady and 7 other Mingo warriors” to guide him along the way.<sup>48</sup>

Braddock was not even grateful to those eight incredibly patient souls. He wrote to adjutant general Robert Napier in an annoyed tone on 8 June 1755, “You conceive the difficulty of getting good Intelligence, all I have is from Indians, whose veracity is no more to be depended upon [than] that of the Borderers here.” Tellingly, the intelligence he chose to ignore was a report that the French garrison at Fort Duquesne was small, but they “expect a great Reinforcement.” He fatefully opined, “This I do not entirely credit, as I am very well persuaded they will want their Forces to the Northward.”<sup>49</sup>

While it is understandable that some individuals became angry to the point of taking up arms after hearing and experiencing the above, what is even more remarkable is that many still

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<sup>47</sup> Council Held at Philadelphia, 22 Aug 1755, Manuscripts on Indian Affairs, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>48</sup> Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 96.

<sup>49</sup> General Edward Braddock to Robert Napier, 8 June 1755, in Stanley Pargalis, ed., *Military Affairs in North America 1748-1765: Selected Documents from the Cumberland Papers in Windsor Castle* (1936; repr. n.p.: Archon, 1969), 85, 92.

did not want to do so. Shingas, according to Charles Stuart, reported that while a handful of his followers had joined the French, “The Greater Part remained neuter till they saw How Things wou’d go Between Braddock and the French in their Engagement.” Pragmatism continued to guide these people who wanted only to be able to control their own lives, and they were desperate for any reason not to get involved. Unfortunately, “After the French had ruined Braddocks Army they immediately compelled the Indians To join them and let them know that if they refused they wou’d Immediately cut them off, On which the Indians Joind the French for their Own Safety.”<sup>50</sup>

Braddock had betrayed the Ohio Indians twice. The first betrayal had been telling them explicitly that he would take away their homes, and the second was being defeated by the French at the Monongahela River on 9 July 1755 and destroying any hope of being able to leverage a place for themselves in between the two empires. As the French and their Indian allies opened their devastating ambush on Braddock’s vaunted regulars, they shattered the hopes of the British finding a diplomatic accommodation with the Ohio Indians as much as they shattered the bodies of Braddock’s soldiers. Tellingly, the overwhelming majority of the French-allied warriors were not from the Ohio Valley but instead were from the vague *Pays d'en Haut*, generally consisting of the upper Great Lakes. This detail would be continuously overlooked by the colonists, but it revealed a crucial fact: the Ohio Indians’ ambitions for independence suffered right along with Braddock.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Bond, “Charles Stuart,” 64.

<sup>51</sup> White, *The Middle Ground*, 242-243.

## Chapter 4

### “As a Warrior Should...With Candour and Love:” The Triumph of Diplomacy in Pennsylvania

Christian Frederick Post had been given an unenviable mission. Post had emigrated from Prussia to Pennsylvania in 1742, where he had proven remarkably adept at learning Indian languages. He even married into the eastern Delaware community in the Wyoming Valley, where he became a Moravian missionary. His language abilities and understanding of the Indians made him the perfect candidate to carry Pennsylvania Governor William Denny’s invitation for the proposed peace conference in Easton to the Ohio Indians. Post traveled with Delaware leader Pisquetomen, Shingas’ older brother. Their journey revealed the softer, personal side of diplomacy and revealed the impact three years of war had on the Ohio Indians.<sup>1</sup>

As Post and Pisquetomen neared Fort Duquesne, the French demanded that the Indians bring him in to them. They ignored them and told the French to “let them hear no more about it; but to send them one hundred loaves of bread; for they were hungry.” In the same village, Post saw an “old deaf Onondago Indian,” who, when Post arrived, “rose up and signified his displeasure.” The man was “much disliked by the others” and was “mightily attached to the French.” He then made a show of being upset that Post, representing the British, was in the village, and tried to speak for the Shawnese, saying, “I, the Shawnese and my father [the French] do not like that a Swannock [white man] come on our ground.” To this, the Delawares who had

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<sup>1</sup> Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years’ War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000), 270.

brought Post said, “That man speaks not as a man...he dreams; he and his father [the French] have certainly drunk too much liquor.” The next part of the Delaware condemnation of the man indicates he may have taken on the baggage of all the Iroquois, as they told him, “You do not know what your own nation does, at home; how much they have to say to the Swannocks.”<sup>2</sup>

Post proved adept at navigating these intertribal rivalries, and he was also able to bring a personal touch to the discussions. His conversation with Shingas, more than any other moment, shows just how much the situation in the Ohio Valley had changed. He asked Post whether or not “if he came to the English, they would hang him, as they had offered a great reward for his head.” Post reassured him, “That was a great while ago, it was all forgotten and wiped clean away.” The next day, Shingas shared a meal with Post and told him that despite the price put on his head, “He had never thought to revenge himself, but was always very kind to any prisoners that were brought in.” He concluded with a powerful prophetic statement that highlights the triumph of British diplomatic efforts and foreshadows the betrayal of everything those efforts were supposed to represent. Shingas told Post that “he would do all in his power to bring about an established peace, and wished he could be certain of the English being in earnest.”<sup>3</sup> For now, at least, the English earnestly wanted peace.

Much has been written about the diplomatic quagmire that developed in western Pennsylvania and the critical conferences and treaties that eventually bridged that quagmire and allowed General John Forbes to march victoriously into the smoking ruins of Fort Duquesne in

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<sup>2</sup> Christian Frederick Post, “The Journal of Christian Frederick Post, from Philadelphia to the Ohio, on a Message from the Government of Pennsylvania to the Delawares, Shawnese, and Mingo Indians, Settled There,” in Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., *Early Western Travels* (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1904), 1:201-203.

<sup>3</sup> Post, “Journal,” 1:211-212.

November 1758.<sup>4</sup> While these works do a good job of inserting the Native American perspective as much as possible, there is still room for more emphasis on the way the progression of the war impacted the various Indian groups living in Pennsylvania. There have also been recent efforts to give the Quakers of Pennsylvania their due credit for bringing the issues of these groups to the forefront and spearheading the diplomatic efforts to end the war.<sup>5</sup> There is still more that can be done to contextualize these two elements, however.

Those diplomatic successes still lay in the future, however, and the fall of 1755 was a terrible time to be an Indian agent in Pennsylvania. When Conrad Weiser heard that a group of French-allied Indians was approaching the communities along the Susquehanna River, along with reports of some people being murdered, he sprang into action trying to organize the people of the communities into a militia force. But he also felt terrible for the peaceful Indians living in the same area, who he knew would be subjected to threats and assaults by both the French and English. As such, he tried to gather some volunteers to go to the Indian town of Shamokin in order to invite them back to their towns for protection. The people would have none of it, and things almost turned ugly for Weiser.<sup>6</sup>

He wrote an undated letter to Governor Morris, probably on or around 1 November, in which he described the passionate and violent wave of anti-Indian sentiment sweeping through the colony. A messenger had come to him from a different town to warn the Indians not to go that way because “The people were enraged with all the Indians and would kill [them] without

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<sup>4</sup> See Anderson, *Crucible of War*; Francis Jennings, *Empire of Fortune: Crowns, Colonies, and Tribes in the Seven Years War in America* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1988); Matthew C. Ward, *Breaking the Backcountry: The Seven Years' War in Virginia and Pennsylvania, 1754-1765* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003).

<sup>5</sup> See Catlin Lowes, “Zeal For the Service: The Quakers and Their Pacifism Go to War,” ScholarSphere, 29 April 2022, <https://scholarsphere.psu.edu/resources/3aeb2317-59fb-41fc-b5f5-13a831c4752b>. Parts of this chapter also appear in the above work.

<sup>6</sup> Paul A. W. Wallace, *Conrad Weiser: Friend of Colonist and Mohawk* (1945; repr., Lewisburg, PA: Wennawoods Publishing, 1996), 404.

distinction.” After receiving this message, Weiser rode down the road and “saw about 400 or 500 men and a loud noise...I heard some say Why must we be killed by the Indians and we not kill them: Why are our hands so tied [?].” Weiser worked to get the Indians out of there “with much adoe” and “healed them with a small dram and departed in love & friendship.” Clearly, the average backcountry resident was not in a diplomatic mood.<sup>7</sup>

Things then took an even more violent turn, and Weiser found himself in danger simply for being sympathetic to the Indians living on the Susquehanna. After a defense plan was developed and read to the people of the town he was in, “They cried out that so much for an Indian scalp they would have be they friend or Enemy.” Weiser informed them that he had no authority from the governor to create a scalp bounty, for which they “Called me a traitor of the Country who held with the Indians.” He continued by saying, “I sat in the house by a low window. Some of my friends Came to pull me away from it telling me some of the people threatened to shoot me...I was in danger of being shot to death.”<sup>8</sup> As more and more rumors circulated, providing outlandish descriptions of events like a husband being forced to “see the wife of his Bosom, her head cut off, and the Childrens blood drank like Water by these Bloody and Cruel Savages,” it was only going to get more difficult to try to seek out diplomatic answers.<sup>9</sup> But diplomacy would prove to be the only way to get the violence to stop. Diplomacy would bring peace back into the otherwise quiet farming communities of the Pennsylvania backcountry and contribute to the defeat of Britain’s most powerful rival in the New World.

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<sup>7</sup> Weiser to Governor Morris, c. 1 Nov 1755, vol.1, p. 34, Conrad Weiser Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. Hereafter CWP. Underlining in original.

<sup>8</sup> Weiser to Governor Morris, c. 1 Nov 1755, CWP.

<sup>9</sup> Adam Hoops to Governor Morris, 3 Nov 1755, in Samuel Hazard, ed., *Pennsylvania Archives* (Philadelphia: Joseph Severns & Co., 1852), ser. 1, 2:462-463.

The antipathy that developed towards the Indians in Pennsylvania following Washington's and Braddock's defeats, as seen in Weiser's brush with death at the hands of an angry mob, is probably unsurprising. Given the genocidal trend that American history would follow for the next 150 years, it seems like a foregone conclusion that the colonists would have opted for violent retribution towards their Indian neighbors. Indeed, many of them did opt for that solution without hesitation, as shown by the angry mob that threatened to kill Weiser. With that in mind, however, one of the most astounding developments following the British military disasters in the Ohio Valley was the cry for colonial and Indian unity that developed in some circles.

One of the most fascinating examples of this comes from Scarouady, whose oratory prowess and strong connection to the British – or at least the source of political power they represented – should be obvious by now. At a council in Philadelphia in August 1755, just a month after Braddock's defeat, Scarouady told Governor Morris of Pennsylvania that the defeat was because of the “Pride and Ignorance of that Great General that came from England.” As discussed previously, it was at this point that Scarouady told how Braddock had treated him and the other Indians like “dogs” and would not listen to them. He then presented a plan that reveals a potential new American identity that Braddock had caused to germinate. Scarouady told Governor Morris, “Let us unite our strength...Don't let those that come from the Great Seas be concerned any more, they are unfit to fight in the woods, let us go ourselves – we that came out of the Ground, we may be assured to Conquer the French.”<sup>10</sup>

Note his use of “we,” a collective plural pronoun that lumps the colonists and Indians in the same group, as opposed to the men “from the Great Seas.” This wave of unity even washed

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<sup>10</sup> Council Held at Philadelphia, 22 Aug 1755, Manuscripts on Indian Affairs, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia. Hereafter MIA.



over Richard Peters, who wrote to Conrad Weiser in October 1755, just before the outbreak of violence in the Pennsylvania backcountry, and argued, “It should seem to me that there is no way either with our own Indians or the Body of Indians in general better than to take them into regular daily pay in the same manner the Soldiery is.” His next idea was incredibly radical, as he said they should “form Companies of them and let there be one Company of English and one of Indians always together, that they may learn from each other and fight either after the English or Indian fashion.”<sup>11</sup> Perhaps Scarouady’s plan of unity had really caught on.

Unfortunately, there were two major impediments to the kind of unified colonial and Indian response that Scarouady had proposed. The first was the crippling, long-running power struggle between the Quaker-led assembly and the proprietary family of Pennsylvania. The Quakers were pacifists, which did contribute to the problem, but not to the extent some contemporaries and historians believed. Although some were unwilling to budge on their beliefs, the majority had proven willing to either step away from politics during times of war or implement clever workarounds.<sup>12</sup> The bigger issue within the government was the issue of taxing the Penn family and their lands, which led to gridlock as the Assembly refused to pass a bill for raising a military force without including taxes on the proprietary lands, while the governor could not sign a bill that included said taxes.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Richard Peters to Weiser, 18 Oct 1755, vol. 1, p. 58, CWP.

<sup>12</sup>One example of this was their appropriation of money for the New England colonies during King George’s War, in which they used carefully crafted language to give money for the “Purchasing of Bread, Flour, Wheat, *or other Grain*,” as a way for the colony to buy “grains” of gunpowder, while still giving the Quakers plausible deniability for not buying war supplies. See Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 160-162; quote from Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography and Other Writings*, ed. Kenneth Silverman (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), 115-116. Italics original.

<sup>13</sup> The Penn family made most of its money from the sale of land, something which they effectively had a monopoly on. As they “owned all Pennsylvania’s unallocated lands and enjoyed the sole right to acquire title to tracts held by Indian nations,” they could control much of what happened in the colony. They instructed every new governor, however, that they should not allow the assembly to pass any taxes on their lands, under penalty of losing a £5,000 bond posted at the beginning of their term. Furthermore, they argued the assembly had no right to tax them anyway. Conversely, the assembly (who were not all Quakers, it should be pointed out), argued that it was unfair to tax the

Without levying the tax, the colony could not raise funds to arm and equip an army, build and maintain forts, or support the larger British campaigns. The issue was not finally resolved until Benjamin Franklin and Joseph Galloway came up with a compromise, in which the assembly would raise “£55,000 ‘for the King’s use,’” a term used to give the Quakers plausible deniability. In exchange, the proprietors would give a £5,000 “gift” to the colony “in lieu of taxes,” thus avoiding the taxation question<sup>14</sup>

Unfortunately, this incredible delay over taxation came at exactly the same time the Indians were being forced to choose sides. As shown in previous chapters, the Ohio Indians wanted to maintain their independence. They would have preferred subjecting themselves to neither European power, but when that no longer was an option, they tried to maintain a balance of force in the valley and to play one power off the other. No matter what, they required access to the crucial manufactured goods they needed to survive. The British had shown themselves not to be up to the challenge, however, with two different expeditions being routed in spectacular fashion. Following Braddock’s defeat, many of the Ohio Indians tried to give the British one last opportunity to rise to the occasion. What they found in Pennsylvania did nothing to give them confidence.<sup>15</sup>

In the very same council where Scarouady laid out his plan for unity, Pennsylvania’s gridlock was laid bare. Scarouady told Governor Morris, “The Delawares, as well as our Brethren the Nanticokes, have assured me, that they were never asked to go to war against the French in the Late Expedition.” But, “If their Brethren the English (especially those of

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citizens but not the largest land holders in the colony. This fight was nothing new, but it gained a new level of ferocity as the war in the backcountry escalated. See Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 161.

<sup>14</sup> Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 161.

<sup>15</sup> For more about the leverage game that was being attempted, see Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 243-248.

Pennsylvania) will give them their Hatchet, they would make use of it, and would Joyn us, their Uncles against the French.” Here was an open request for Pennsylvania to enter into a ready-made alliance with a group of people, the Delawares, who had every reason not to give them another chance, and yet were still willing to work with the colonists. But Morris could make no such deals because the Assembly continued to be at an impasse over taxes.<sup>16</sup>

The sigh that Morris’ response must have elicited probably shook tree leaves all the way on the Ohio River. He politely told Scarouady, “he was not enabled to afford the Delawares the Assistance necessary on Such an Invitation.” His next justification was almost farcical, as he said, “Nor had his Majesty Declared War Against the French.” Given that the council had begun with Scarouady describing the factors that led to the near destruction of his majesty’s military expedition against the French, this point must have seemed beyond ludicrous to the Indians. Morris concluded by “Returning thanks to Scarrooyady for his kind Advice, and to the Delawares for their Regards for this Province, and that they hoped that Nation would always continue their Friendship to the English.”<sup>17</sup> Following that tepid response, the Delawares would not continue their friendship with the English for two months.

The second impediment to colonial and Indian unity in the war effort is much less complex than the intricacies of Pennsylvania’s colonial politics: the opening salvos of the war had uncorked the passions of intercultural warfare—what would today be labeled as racism. While this has already been shown in Weiser’s encounter with the angry mob and would be seen again and again throughout the war in things like scalp bounties and punitive raids to burn Indian villages, what is less obvious is the impact these actions had on the Indians. It is clear they felt deeply hurt by the ugliness the war was bringing out in their neighbors, with whom it must be

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<sup>16</sup> Council Held at Philadelphia, 22 Aug 1755, MIA.

<sup>17</sup> Council Held at Philadelphia, 22 Aug 1755, MIA.

remembered they had not fought a war since the colony's founding. While there had unquestionably been bad feelings surrounding land fraud and other shady dealings, murderous hatred was uncommon.<sup>18</sup>

An example of this can be found in a council held in Philadelphia in March 1756. Scarouady told Governor Morris that the Delawares had joined with the French because the French "had corrupted the Delawares by Presents and after the Defeat of General Braddock they were greatly encouraged by the Plunder and Riches got there." But they also had more personal reasons, with Scarouady saying, "the English had neglected the Delawares and had not taken due care to cultivate a friendship with them." He then revealed the repercussions of the anti-Indian rhetoric that had swept through the colony and perhaps of Washington's assessment of them as "treacherous demons who had been sent by the French to spy."<sup>19</sup> He said he had been asked to find out the "particular Reasons assigned by the Delawares and Shawanese" for their attacks on the colony that had erupted in October 1755. He reported that they said "their Brethren the English had accused them very falsely of joining with the French after Col. Washington's defeat and if they could charge them when they were Innocent they could do no more if they were Guilty." The backcountry residents paid for those accusations, as they made the Delawares and Shawnees "very heartily their enemies."<sup>20</sup> Acting in a more diplomatic manner could have prevented the worst of the bloodshed before it had even begun.

With the complete and total breakdown of diplomacy and with ample grievances, the Delawares, Shawnees, and Mingos of the Ohio Valley descended on the backcountry settlements

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<sup>18</sup> See James H. Merrell, *Into the American Woods: Negotiators on the Pennsylvania Frontier* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1999), 225-230.

<sup>19</sup> Donald H. Kent, ed. and trans., "Contrecoeur's Copy of George Washington's Journal for 1754," *Pennsylvania History* 19, no. 1 (1952): 30.

<sup>20</sup> Council Held at the Council Chamber, 27 March 1756, MIA.

of Pennsylvania and Virginia in a calculated campaign of terror. Here again, however, one must be careful not to assume they had allied themselves with the French. In the words of a prominent historian, the Ohio Indians and the French were mere “enemies of a common enemy,” and already by 1756, the French had come to realize that the war had taken on a life of its own and beyond their control.<sup>21</sup> While the distinction would have seemed wholly unimportant to the people suffering from the raids, that distinction held the key to finding peace in the war. The Ohio Indians and their relatives and other groups still living further east in Pennsylvania were not fighting *for* the French. Rather, they were fighting to carve out and maintain their own place to live and to seek satisfaction for the long list of wrongs done to them. Not least of all, the Indians were eager to see settlers flee from the land that had so recently belonged to them. Unfortunately, it would take almost three years for this lack of affinity for the French to be recognized by the British.<sup>22</sup>

Things got much worse before they got better, as colonial leaders gave in to the wave of anger and turned to military retribution rather than diplomatic conciliation. One example that had tragic consequences was Governor Morris’ decision to declare war on the hostile Indian tribes in April 1756. The Quakers implored him to wait so that a “full Enquiry may be made whether some Apprehensions these Indians have conceived of a Deviation from the Integrity of Conduct towards them, so conspicuous in the first Establishment, may not unhappily have contributed in some Degree to the Alteration of their Conduct towards us.” What they did not know yet is that a “Deviation” in conduct was precisely what had angered them. The Quakers also raised a concern that was just as logical for pacifists as it was for war hawks: they argued that more time would allow the Indians “who still remain well affected towards us” to “reconcile our enemies.” But,

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<sup>21</sup> Richard White, *Middle Ground*, 244.

<sup>22</sup> For more on the raids on the backcountry, see Ward, *Breaking the Backcountry*, 59-77.

even more pragmatically, more time would allow “that proper Care may be taken to prevent our Allies being, thro’ the Misconduct of evil Dispositons of any, injured in such manner as to provoke them likewise to turn their Arms against us.”<sup>23</sup>

This fear of provoking allies was echoed by many. The largest concern stemmed from the scalp bounties that Governor Morris included in the declaration, stating, “For the Scalp of every Male Indian Enemy above the age of Twelve Years, produced as Evidence of their being killed, the Sum of One Hundred and Thirty Pieces of Eight” would be paid. Different bounties were broken down for women, children, and prisoners. Scarouady explained to the governor why this was problematic, saying, “We heartily approve of your Resolutions,” but “you must now build a Fort at Shamokin.” He lamented that the friendly Indians needed somewhere protected to gather because “At present your People cannot distinguish Foes from Friends; they think every Indian is against them.”<sup>24</sup>

Some of the leading colonial figures in Indian diplomacy feared that backcountry residents would begin murdering friendly Indians as well. Conrad Weiser wrote to Thomas Penn that “rudeness, lawlessness, and ignorance of the back inhabitants...will bring a general Indian war over us.” He noted rather sympathetically that “They curse and dam[n] the Indians and call them murdering dogs into their faces without discrimination, when on the other hand these poor Indians that are still our friends do not know where to go for safety.”<sup>25</sup> The royally-appointed superintendent for Indian affairs in the northern colonies, Sir William Johnson, likewise complained, “What will the Delawares and Shawonese think of Such Opposition and

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<sup>23</sup> *Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, From the Organization to the Termination of the Proprietary Government*, ed. Samuel Hazard (Harrisburg: Theo. Fenn, 1851), 7:85-86; Hereafter *MPCP*.

<sup>24</sup> *MPCP*, 7:79-80.

<sup>25</sup> Conrad Weiser to Thomas Penn, 28 Feb. 1757, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, quoted in Steven C. Harper, “Delawares and Pennsylvanians After the Walking Purchase,” in *Friends and Enemies in Penn’s Woods: Indians, Colonists, and the Racial Construction of Pennsylvania*, ed. William A. Pencak and Daniel K. Richter (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004), 178. No further information provided on original source.

Contradiction in our Conduct?...these hostile Measures which Mr. Morris has Entered into is Throwing all our Schemes into Confusion, and must Natureally Give the Six Nations [the Iroquois] such Impressions and the French such Advantages to Work on Against us that I tremble for the Consequence.”<sup>26</sup>

With so much of the *casus belli* arising from the injustices done to the Indians by the colonists, a British victory would require pacifying and winning Indians back to the British cause. In fact, this was almost universally acknowledged, or at least paid lip service, by the leaders of Pennsylvania. Governor Morris’ replacement William Denny told the assembly at the beginning of their October 1757 session, “A Bill for regulating the *Indian* Trade, and preventing the Abuses formerly praticised on the Natives, is also of the utmost Importance to this Province, as well to attach firmly the *Indians* to His Majesty’s Interest.”<sup>27</sup> In a letter to Quaker Israel Pemberton in 1758, Benjamin Franklin argued that “The obtaining [of] Justice for the Indians is, to be sure, a Matter of the utmost Importance.”<sup>28</sup> Obviously, the Quakers were firmly on board with finding a peaceful solution.

The man who was to prove critical for guiding the Quakers and other Pennsylvanians down the path to peace was an eastern Delaware leader named Teedyuscung. His remarkably complex rise to prominence and subsequent fall illustrates many of the complexities and issues of Pennsylvania’s first inhabitants. To begin with, he was from the Delaware Valley and had witnessed the dispossession of his family on account of the infamous Walking Purchase of 1737. The “Purchase” was made by the sons of William Penn based on an old deed they “found” and

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<sup>26</sup> *MPCP*, 7:117.

<sup>27</sup> *Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives of the Province of Pennsylvania, Met at Philadelphia, On the Fourteenth of October, anno Domini 1757, and Continued by Adjournments* (1858; America’s Historical Imprints, 2002), 5.

<sup>28</sup> Franklin to Israel Pemberton, 10 June 1758, *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, The American Philosophical Society and Yale University, franklinpapers.org.

involved the use of runners to measure the distance along the Lehigh River that was meant to be covered in a day and a half of walking. This fraudulent measurement, based on a fraudulent deed, was confirmed by the Iroquois, who had become Pennsylvania's preferred point of contact for land deals. Unable to resist, the Delawares felt betrayed by not only the Pennsylvanians but also by the Iroquois. The deal was then covered up by all parties, and the Delawares were left to stew on it until Teedyuscung saw his opportunity to use the war as leverage to obtain compensation.<sup>29</sup>

Prior to the war, Teedyuscung briefly lived at the Moravian mission of Gnadenhütten after converting to their version of protestant Christianity. In 1754, the Iroquois "summoned" the converts to live in the Wyoming Valley in order to be able to exercise more control over them and to fight off the Connecticut invasion that had Weiser and Peters so worried. Teedyuscung then found himself as the appointed "king" of a multi-tribal confederation that banded together for strength and ultimately chose to participate in the backcountry raiding that began in 1755. The confederation also resisted Iroquois attempts to control them, something which put Teedyuscung firmly at odds with the Iroquois. This tension was to prove incredibly detrimental

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<sup>29</sup> The origin of the fraud can be found in the early 1730s, when John and Thomas Penn claimed to have found an incomplete deed from 1700. The details of the alleged sales agreement between William Penn, their father, and the Delawares living there dictated that the northern limit of the land being sold would be determined by a man walking for a day and a half along the Lehigh River. According to historian William A. Starna, the "walk" finally took place in 1737, after the Delawares finally gave up on contesting it. Paid runners – not walkers – took off "on a path that had previously been cleared," and ran in a straight line rather than following the river. Starna concludes, "Through this trickery, the Penns were able to lay claim to all of the territory between the Delaware and Lehigh rivers, lands that many of the Delawares would refuse to abandon."

The final stab in the back was provided by the Iroquois, who claimed an awkward position of authority over the Delawares from a past conquest and were ostensibly supposed to protect their subordinates. Instead, they cashed in on the land sale themselves. In exchange for "45 guns; 500 pounds of powder; 600 pounds of lead; 100 blankets; 100 shirts," and other supplies provided by the governor, they agreed to legitimize the sale. In 1742, Iroquois headman Canasatego put an end to the Delawares' protests and threw them out of the contested land. In doing so, he hoped to strengthen the position of the Iroquois in the eyes of Pennsylvania's leadership, stating to the Delaware headman Nutimus, "We conquer'd You, we made Women of you, you know you are Women, and can no more sell Land than Women...Take the Advise of a Wise Man and remove immediately." Faced with the choice of leaving or fighting the Six Nations, the Delawares finally relented. See William A. Starna, "The Diplomatic Career of Canasatego," in *Friends and Enemies*, 149. Teedyuscung biographical information, Jennings, *Empire of Fortune*, 263.



to any hope of peace negotiations, as Pennsylvania's negotiators could not negotiate with Teedyuscung without enraging their theoretically strongest ally, the Iroquois. In turn, angering the Iroquois would draw the ire of the Royally appointed Indian agent who had an immense stake in their power, William Johnson.<sup>30</sup>

Johnson pushed the Iroquois to pull the eastern Delawares back into their orbit. Iroquois control over the Delawares would, in turn, push sole control of Pennsylvania Indian affairs and their potential profits of them into the hands of Johnson. As such, the Iroquois had a fascinating meeting with Teedyuscung in early 1756 in hopes of pulling him back into their orbit. As always, there are no firsthand accounts of the event from the Indian leaders involved, which leaves some confusion about what was actually said. What seems most likely, however, is that Teedyuscung told the Iroquois that the Delawares would be speaking for themselves from now on, and the Iroquois were forced to "grant" him that authority in order to save face. They were forced to accept this demand because the war was opening divisions within the Iroquois Confederacy, with the Seneca backing the Delawares because of their long list of legitimate grievances. Since, according to one historian, the Senecas "outnumbered all the other Iroquois combined," there was nothing for the rest of them to do but acquiesce.<sup>31</sup> Teedyuscung had played his first card well, and he now turned to the French to try to secure a source of supplies in order to become totally independent of both the Iroquois and Pennsylvania.

Teedyuscung journeyed to French Fort Niagara in June 1756 in order to see about getting those supplies. Unfortunately, the French supply situation had been noticeably deficient even early in the war. With a long, tenuous supply line that trickled up the St. Lawrence and Great Lakes from Canada, it was always difficult to get supplies down to Fort Duquesne, the main

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<sup>30</sup> Jennings, *Empire of Fortune*, 263-265.

<sup>31</sup> Jennings, *Empire of Fortune*, 265-266.

supply base for the Indians fighting the war, but Fort Niagara was struggling too. in June 1756, Richard Peters wrote in a letter that they had “hopes of separating the Susquahannah Indians,” which would include Teedyuscung and his followers, “from the Ohio Indians.” Peters chalked it up to their having “been reduced to great want in their Towns, the French not being able to supply them,” on top of a smallpox outbreak. The French officer in command at Fort Niagara, Pierre Pouchot, confirmed that “All the raids which were being made in every sector had resulted in a huge consumption of provisions & other trade goods.” Canadian officers had to bring “over from France on their own account the goods necessary for trade with the Indians.” Given how critical European goods had become for all Native Americans, the French were only useful allies if they could supply the necessary goods. Teedyuscung decided to turn back to the Pennsylvanians.<sup>32</sup>

After a preliminary meeting in 1756, facilitated by the Quakers, Teedyuscung next met with Pennsylvanians at Easton in 1757. The location was highly symbolic, as it was in that very town on the junction of the Lehigh and Delaware Rivers that the Walking Purchase had been confirmed. Teedyuscung clearly did not have unanimous support among the eastern Delawares, as he was joined by only a handful of followers. Nonetheless, the talks proceeded. The new Pennsylvania governor, William Denny, not understanding the intricacies of the fraud that had been committed by the sons of William Penn and his predecessors, made the mistake of asking, “Have we, the governor or People of Pennsylvania, done you any kind of Injury?” To this, Teedyuscung responded, “I have not far to go for an Instance, this very ground that is under me

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<sup>32</sup>Jennings, *Empire of Fortune*, 269-270; Peters to Rev. Chandler, 20 June 1756, vol. 4, part 1 (photocopies), p. 64, Richard Peters Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. Hereafter RPP; Pierre Pouchot, *Memoirs on the Late War in North America Between France and England*, ed. Brian Leigh Dunnigan, trans. Michael Cardy, Revised Edition (Youngstown, NY: Old Fort Niagara Association, 2004), 141-142.

(striking it with his Foot) was my Land and Inheritance, and is taken from me by fraud.” With this, the Walking Purchase and the foul play involved were finally revealed to the public.<sup>33</sup>

The revelation did much to muddy the waters of diplomacy for both parties. Benjamin Franklin suggested paying £500 on the spot to compensate the Delawares, but Teedyuscung had to decline because he could not speak for the specific people who had owned that particular piece of land, with his reference to “my land” above having been a metaphorical reference to his leadership of the Delawares. He did accept a grant of land in the Wyoming Valley and promises that Pennsylvania would build him and his people houses. For the Pennsylvanians, the embarrassment of having the fraud revealed pushed Thomas Penn and his supporters to do everything they could to discredit Teedyuscung and the treaty. In short, while an important roadblock to making peace was discovered, its discovery made it even more difficult to remove. Only the Quakers would be left actively searching for a compromise to make peace.<sup>34</sup>

As the 1758 campaign season approached, the Quakers gained an unexpected ally in the form of British General John Forbes. Forbes was appointed to command the campaign to capture Fort Duquesne. Unlike other British commanders, who at best seemed to tolerate Indians as allies and at worst seemed to despise them, Forbes had an innate understanding of the importance of having Indian allies. In a letter to British Prime Minister William Pitt, he stated about the Cherokee and Catawbias with him that “...our greatest Dependance is upon them.” As such, he stressed that he was doing everything in his power to keep them content and from going home, something made difficult because of their “being rather offended at not seeing our Army and Artillery assembled, which I am afraid they had reason to expect.” This anger over British inaction mirrored Tanaghrisson’s frustration with Washington’s slow march to the Ohio in 1754.

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<sup>33</sup> *MPCP*, 7:320, 324; Jennings, *Empire of Fortune*, 276-279.

<sup>34</sup> Jennings, *Empire of Fortune*, 280-281.

At any rate, here was a British commander who understood the importance of Indian allies and was at least empathetic to their situation.<sup>35</sup>

Forbes and the Quakers overlapped in their feelings towards the Delawares, as both parties were eager to see peace made with them. Forbes viewed the situation as a pragmatic outsider, detached from the factional animosities of Pennsylvania politics. Forbes wrote in a letter to Richard Peters that he expected the Indians would “abandon the French, and I fancy any demands that they have to make will be so moderate, as to be [e]asily complied with.” He also gave an implicit warning to Peters not to let things backslide into petty political squabbles, saying, “I hope the Province will make no difficulty, as to the Expence of this meeting, as it will be a most monstrous reflection upon them if they do.” If Pennsylvania did ruin the opportunity, “They never after can either look for, or expect the favour or protection of Great Britain.”<sup>36</sup>

Clearly, Forbes was eager to have the Delawares on his side. But even more than that, he was annoyed that Pennsylvania had not already achieved peace with them, to the point that he viewed it as a failure worthy of losing the protection of the mother country, a sort of “You brought this on yourself.”

At stake was not just peace with the eastern Delawares but also peace with the western Delawares and other Ohio Indians. Teedyuscung had begun putting out peace feelers to his distant relations on the Ohio, and by July 1758, he had managed to bring two western chiefs to Philadelphia who were seeking peace. Governor Denny sent Christian Frederick Post back to the Ohio with the chiefs. Post found the Ohio Indians to be eager to make peace, but they had a nagging concern. Delaware leaders Shingas, Beaver, Delaware George, and Pisquetomen asked

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<sup>35</sup> Forbes to William Pitt, 01 May 1758, in *Letters of General John Forbes Relating to the Expedition Against Fort Duquesne In 1758*, ed. Irene Stewart (Pittsburgh: Allegheny County Committee, 1927, 14; Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 267-268.

<sup>36</sup> Forbes to Richard Peters, 28 Aug. 1758, in *Letters of General Forbes*, 32-33.

Post, “It is plain that you white people are the cause of this war; why do not you and the *French* fight in the old country, and on the sea? Why do you come to fight on our land? This makes every body believe, you want to take the land from us by force, and settle it.” Post made as convincing of an answer as he could and pointed to the land granted to Teedyuscung in Wyoming as proof the British were not trying to take their land. Furthermore, the French were proving incapable of supplying their needs, with one man complaining, “We have often ventured our lives” for the French, “and had hardly a loaf of bread” for thanks. Faced with a French ally that was proving less and less capable of supplying their needs, they had no option but to take Post at his word and attend the peace conference.<sup>37</sup>

A critical reason the French had become less able to supply the Indians’ needs was the brilliant success of Lieutenant Colonel John Bradstreet’s August 1758 raid on Fort Frontenac. This French fort was located on the north shore of Lake Ontario, where it empties into the St. Lawrence River. The fort served as the staging area for troops and supplies that were to be sent west, and Bradstreet managed to reach the fort and surprise its weak garrison before reinforcements could arrive. The garrison quickly surrendered, and the French commander admitted to Bradstreet “that their troops to the southward and western garrisons will suffer greatly, if not entirely starve, for want of provisions.” Bradstreet destroyed a large number of weapons, cannons, and provisions, all of which would be sorely missed by the Indians who had already been suffering from want. The loss of Fort Frontenac was to push the Ohio Indians even more toward making peace.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Christian Frederick Post, “The Journal of Christian Frederick Post, from Philadelphia to the Ohio, on a Message from the Government of Pennsylvania to the Delawares, Shawnese, and Mingo Indians, Settled There,” in Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., *Early Western Travels* (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1904), 1: 213-214, 256; Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 270-271. Italics original.

<sup>38</sup> Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 263-264.

The peace conference took place at Easton once again in late October 1758. According to one historian, “more than five hundred Indians from thirteen nations attended.” The treaty involved a lot of inter-tribal politics. One person who lost in this game was Teedyuscung. He had already made peace for his own people and drawn the western Delawares to the treaty and so had nothing left to stand up to the renewed efforts of the Iroquois to return him to a subordinate position. Governor Denny and others were just as happy to see Teedyuscung removed from the spotlight as it would also keep the Walking Purchase issue from being further investigated. Teedyuscung ultimately capitulated and gave in to the Iroquois demands for control over his Wyoming settlement. Meanwhile, Pisquetomen agreed to peace on behalf of the Ohio Indians on the conditions they could continue to treat with Pennsylvania directly rather than through the Iroquois and as long as the British did not continue to claim the land west of the Allegheny mountains. With those concessions, the hatchets were finally put away in Pennsylvania.<sup>39</sup> Colonel Henry Bouquet, a key subordinate of Forbes, wrote that “the treaty with the Indians at Easton, has struck the blow which has knocked the French on the head.”<sup>40</sup>

Pisquetomen then made the journey with Christian Frederick Post back to the Ohio to tell the people there about the treaty. Given the amount of autonomy the heterogeneous communities maintained, Pisquetomen and Post still had to convince them of the merits of accepting the treaty. Once again, the main issue was their doubts about English intentions towards their land. One sachem told Post that “all the nations had jointly agreed to defend their hunting place at *Alleghenny*, and suffer nobody to settle there,” even though they were “very much inclined to the *English* interest.” He said that as long as the British stayed east of the mountains, everything would be fine, but if they remained in the Ohio Valley, “he was afraid it would be a great war,

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<sup>39</sup> Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 275-278.

<sup>40</sup> Boquet to William Allen, 25 Nov 1758, in *Letters of General Forbes*, 69.

and never come to a peace again.”<sup>41</sup> Still, Post made progress, aided by a letter he carried from Forbes, in which Forbes laid out his sincere hope the Ohio Indian warriors would join him. He concluded the letter with a touching flourish, saying, “I write to you as a warrior should, that is, with candour and love.”<sup>42</sup>

As Forbes’ force approached Fort Duquesne in November 1758, the peace overtures to the Ohio Indians began to have an impact. The French commander called to the surrounding people for assistance, but they all refused to answer. Recognizing that he could not remain and slug it out with the British with a half-starved, under-strength garrison and no Indian allies, he decided to destroy the fort, send the cannons downriver to Illinois, and take the remainder of the garrison up the Allegheny River to Fort Machault. Forbes finally took over the smoking remains of Fort Duquesne on 24 November 1758, a goal that had cost previous commanders dearly. The difference between Washington’s embarrassment, Braddock’s death and failure, and Forbes’ victory had come down to diplomacy. With their inability to supply the Ohio Indian’s needs, the French lost the Ohio Indians’ support. The British turned the Ohio Indian’s support into victory. The French continued to be pushed back to Canada as the British continued to build momentum and ultimately managed to expel the French from North America forever.

But their glorious triumph had been built on the foundation of a promise to stay out of the Ohio Valley. From the moment Forbes’ army set foot on the spit of land between the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers, however, that foundation began to crumble.<sup>43</sup> Christian Frederick Post continued to work with the Ohio Indians as Forbes’ army built the new British fort, Fort Pitt.

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<sup>41</sup> Christian Frederick Post, “The Journal of Christian Frederick Post, On a Message From the Governor of Pennsylvania, to the Indians on the Ohio, In the Latter Part of the Same Year,” in Thwaites, *Early Western Travels*, 1:278; Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 280-281.

<sup>42</sup> Post, “Journal,” 1:267.

<sup>43</sup> Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 282-283.

Forbes had to be taken back to Philadelphia due to a debilitating illness that would ultimately take his life. Colonel Henry Bouquet took over, and the Ohio Indian's leaders continued to implore him to leave. The Beaver, Shingas, and Kekuscund complained to Post that they had told Bouquet and the others “three times to leave the place and go back; but they insist upon staying here.” Despite this being their wishes, old land-speculating tricks were quickly reintroduced to the Ohio. One of the masters of the art, George Croghan, told Post that he had heard the Indians change their mind while talking to Bouquet, and they had “altered their mind; and had agreed and desired that 200 men should stay at the fort.” Post refused to “make any alteration in the answer to the general, till I myself did hear it of the *Indians*.” At this, “Mr. *Croghn* grew very angry” and said that Post’s statement that the Indians wanted the British to leave “was a damned lie.” Post spoke to Shingas about this exchange, and the latter confirmed that Croghan had “not spoke and acted honestly and uprightly” with Bouquet, and reemphasized the Ohio Indians’ desire that the British “should go back, thill the other nations have joined in the peace, and then they may come and build a trading house.”<sup>44</sup>

It was like the Ohio Indians had come full circle, all the way back to the Treaty of Logstown in 1752. Shingas was echoing the words and aspirations of Tanaghrisson, with both men simply wanting a trading post to be able to provide for the needs of their people. In both cases, a trading post was too much to ask and served as a justification for settlement. But things were much worse for Shingas: as the French were pushed further and further away, never to return, the only force that could possibly keep the British at bay disappeared with them. While diplomacy had won the British one of the most glorious victories in the history of their empire, it would have tragic consequences for the Ohio Indians.

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<sup>44</sup> Post, “Journal,” 1: 284-285.



## Conclusion

As the British marched into the smoking remains of Fort Duquesne, they were able to do so because of the Delawares and the other Indians of the Ohio Valley. In the end, however, no matter how pure the intentions of the Quakers or Christian Frederick Post, there was no denying that other British actors were more interested in land than Indian property rights. One of the great historical “what-ifs” is what would have happened had General John Forbes and his understanding of the Indians survived the war. Instead, he died on 11 March 1759 after succumbing to a debilitating illness that had left him litter-bound for much of the campaign against Fort Duquesne. His deathbed warnings to overall North American commander General Jeffrey Amherst to treat the Indians with fairness because they were critical to securing the empire went unheeded. Amherst cut off all Indian gifts and prohibited supplying them with gunpowder in any quantity, something the Indians had become critically dependent on. Furthermore, he encouraged people to move to the frontier posts, especially Fort Pitt, something the Indians had gone to war to prevent in the first place. Unable to provide gifts or necessary goods or to stem the flood of white settlers turned invaders, there was nothing the Quakers or any other diplomat could have done to stop the storm that was about to ravage the frontier.<sup>1</sup>

It is a sad, twisted irony that Fort Pitt – won through diplomacy and fair treatment of the Indians – became the hub for one of the first documented cases of biological warfare with the goal of extirpating the Indians. What has come to be called “Pontiac’s Rebellion” was fueled by the teachings of a displaced Delaware prophet named Neolin, who saw the signs that white men

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<sup>1</sup> Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years’ War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000), 284-285, 536.

would never treat the Indians fairly and therefore believed the Indians must sever all ties with both white men and their technology. One of the strongest sources of inspiration for Neolin and the prophets who came after him was the Walking Purchase, a final condemnation of the proprietors of Pennsylvania.<sup>2</sup>

As tribes all along the frontier rose up in 1763 and pushed white settlers once again out of the backcountry, British leadership was insistent that the Indians had to be pacified by military, not diplomatic, means. Thus, General Amherst suggested that the commander of Fort Pitt should distribute blankets infected with smallpox to the Indians in the form of gifts and ordered that all Indian prisoners should be put to death because of “their extirpation being the only security for our future safety.”<sup>3</sup> There would be no turning back the clock, no more friendly relations between Europeans and Indians, and no more room for the Quakers’ and their peaceful ways.

Just prior to the outbreak of Pontiac’s Rebellion, virtually all of the Indian leaders who had been so critical in bringing about peace had disappeared, lost influence, or been murdered. Pisquetomen and Delaware George, who along with Shingas had helped smuggle Robert Stobo’s letters and map of Fort Duquesne out to the British in 1754, had “both vanished, perhaps dying.” Tamaqua, also known as the Beaver, and Shingas were cast aside for being peace leaders by angry young warriors as it became more and more clear the British were not leaving.<sup>4</sup> Meanwhile, back east, Teedyuscung continued to have to fight off Connecticut settlers who persisted in trying to claim the Wyoming Valley land he and his followers had settled on. The Six Nations also continued to try to turn Teedyuscung’s situation to their advantage. On 19 April 1763, some Mingo Senecas came to town and gave Teedyuscung liquor, which he consumed

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<sup>2</sup> Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 535-536.

<sup>3</sup> Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 535-543.

<sup>4</sup> Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 537.

until he passed out. Someone then set fire to Teedyuscung's house and burned him alive. It is unknown if the Mingo Senecas were complicit or not, and if they were, whether they acted on behalf of the Six Nations or the Connecticut-based Susquehanna Company.<sup>5</sup> "Peace" was hard to find.

The shocking violence that ravaged the colonies in 1763 and 1764 as a result of broken promises and bad diplomacy did bring change to the British Empire and its interactions with its Native American neighbors. Eager to avoid another outbreak of violence and the financial burden the military campaign to put it down included, reforms were made to Indian affairs by returning the sole authority to oversee them to the northern and southern superintendents. They were to oversee officially-sanctioned trading posts to ensure traders acted fairly. The most important policy, however, was the Proclamation of 1763, which forbade settlement by British citizens west of the Appalachian Mountains. Furthermore, in honor of the 1758 Treaty of Easton and the passionate talks held along the Ohio River, those British citizens already living west of the mountains were supposed to leave. While it took five years and a devastating war, the Ohio Indians finally had security for their homeland.<sup>6</sup> In theory.

Unfortunately for the Ohio Indians and others, neither British policies nor the British themselves would remain in place for long. In fact, anger over the Proclamation of 1763 was a key milestone on the road to the American Revolution. Colonists who had ostensibly fought to gain access to the Ohio Valley, or had even been granted titles to land there in exchange for enlisting, viewed the proclamation as clear proof the home country no longer had their interests in mind.<sup>7</sup> The Ohio Company of Virginia was no more likely to take no for an answer in 1764

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<sup>5</sup> Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 533-534.

<sup>6</sup> Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 566-570.

<sup>7</sup> Before fighting had even broken out, Virginia Governor Robert Dinwiddie put out a proclamation 19 February 1754 calling for volunteers to build Trent's Fort and fight the French. He offered every soldier a share in "200,000

than it had in 1754.<sup>8</sup> The Proclamation of 1763 would prove to be a Pyrrhic diplomatic victory. In 1774, as tension continued to build in the colonies, the new Virginia governor, Lord Dunmore, decided that launching an attack against the Shawnees living in the Ohio Valley in order to seize their land would be the perfect rallying point for the politically divided colonists. While that part of his gambit failed, despite his move being wildly popular, he did succeed in forcing the Shawnees to sign an armistice giving up their claims to lands south of the Ohio River.<sup>9</sup> Promises were once again being broken.

What followed was a never-ending stream of setbacks and broken promises for all the Indians living in or trying to maintain influence in Pennsylvania. During the Revolutionary War, many of the Six Nations chose, for fairly obvious reasons, to side with the British. They suffered a devastating campaign that saw their homes and villages burned by the Continental Army in 1779-1780. Afterward, many chose to move to Canada, but those who did not were all but forced to sign the Treaty of Fort Stanwix in 1784, in which they gave up all claims to land west of New York and Pennsylvania. Then, in 1794, news arrived of General Anthony Wayne's decisive victory against the western Shawnees under Blue Jacket and his allies. This news prompted the Iroquois to accept the 1794 Treaty of Canandaigua, which created reserved lands and borders for their territories. The far-flung territorial claims of the Haudenosaunee had been bounded, and their influence over the Ohio Valley was all but gone.<sup>10</sup> The Delawares and Shawnees living

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acres...on, or near the River Ohio." Robert Dinwiddie, "A Proclamation, for Encouraging Men to enlist in his Majesty's Service...February 19, 1754," pictured in Fred Anderson, *The War that Made America: A Short History of the French and Indian War* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 253. While never actually implemented, Pennsylvania Governor Robert Hunter Morris proposed a similar scheme following Braddock's Defeat, writing that he had proposed giving "two hundred acres of land West of the Allegheny hills to every Soldier," and more to officers, who would enlist. Robert Hunter Morris to the Secretary of State, [n.d.] July 1755, *Indian and Military Affairs of Pennsylvania*, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, 331.

<sup>8</sup> Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 568-569.

<sup>9</sup> Anderson, *The War that Made America*, 257-258.

<sup>10</sup> Thomas S. Abler and Elisabeth Tooker, "Seneca," in Bruce G. Trigger, ed., *Northeast*, vol. 15 of *Handbook of North American Indians* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978), 508.

along the Ohio River were pushed out by Lord Dunmore's War, the Revolutionary War, and a myriad of piecemeal treaties that rendered Pennsylvania largely devoid of its original inhabitants.<sup>11</sup>

But there was one final enclave that persisted all the way until 1965, the heirs of the Seneca chief Cornplanter. In 1796, Pennsylvania granted Cornplanter "a tract of land two miles long and one-half mile wide on both sides of the Allegheny River," just south of the official Seneca territory across the border in New York. The grant was given to Cornplanter as a gesture of thanks for helping to prevent the Senecas from joining the western tribes as they fought against the United States in 1790-1791. While it was a relatively small piece, it was nonetheless a poignant diplomatic gesture and would prove to be Pennsylvania's last chunk of land owned by Native Americans.<sup>12</sup>

The story of what happened to the Cornplanter Grant is full of sad irony and brings to a close the desperate diplomatic efforts that were undertaken before and during the French and Indian War. Floods had become a worrisome problem in Pittsburgh throughout the early twentieth century, and as such, many people proposed building dams to control the flooding. By the 1950s, the idea had gained popularity, and the Cold War had put a premium on building national prestige via public works. Two hundred years after the French and Indian War, an interest in controlling the Forks of the Ohio and a competition with another world power were once again about to motivate unscrupulous land dealings and seizures.<sup>13</sup>

This particular grab was also orchestrated with military force, this time in the guise of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. They determined that a location just downstream of the

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<sup>11</sup> William A. Hunter, "History of the Ohio Valley," in *Northeast*, 592-593.

<sup>12</sup> Abler and Tooker, "Seneca," 509.

<sup>13</sup> Laurence M. Hauptman, "General John S. Bragdon, the Office of Public Works Planning, and the Decision to Build Pennsylvania's Kinzua Dam," *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 53, no. 3 (1986): 5-6.

Cornplanter Tract and the Seneca Allegany territory was the ideal place for the dam.<sup>14</sup> Of course, the location meant Seneca land and homes would be submerged under the dam's reservoir.

While the Corps of Engineers went through the motions of looking at alternatives, they ultimately refused them via a remarkably corrupt "independent" survey and bureaucracy. Their decision was backed by the legal ruling that "the United States has the right to acquire Indian lands on payment of just compensation."<sup>15</sup> This type of unilateral diplomacy would have made the Ohio Company proud.

The Seneca land in New York presented a slightly more difficult problem, as it was protected by the 1794 Treaty of Canandaigua, meaning it would take Congressional action to break the treaty. The justification was found in a 1958 line-item budget passed in an appropriations bill that gave a measly \$1,000,000 for the Kinzua Dam project. This was deemed as sufficient Congressional action to overturn the terms of the century-and-a-half-old treaty, no discussions with the Seneca being necessary. One Seneca man had a more concise explanation for why the Corps of Engineers had not adopted an alternative plan that would flood smaller, less populated, non-Seneca communities and instead broke the treaty: "Flooding the Conewango Valley [the alternative location] would provide more water for Pittsburgh, but it would flood out white folks! They vote (unlike many Iroquois)."<sup>16</sup>

Having failed to stop the construction of the dam via the courts, the Senecas had no choice but to accept the money they were offered. \$15,000,573 was deemed to be just compensation for the roughly ten thousand acres that were submerged, "including the entire Cornplanter Tract; destroyed homes, schools, churches, and the old Coldspring Longhouse, the

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<sup>14</sup> The Senecas use the "Allegany" spelling, while Pennsylvania uses "Allegheny" to refer to the river, national forest, etc.

<sup>15</sup> Hauptman, "Kinzua Dam," 187-192.

<sup>16</sup> Hauptman, "Kinzua Dam," 192-193.

ceremonial center of Allegany Seneca traditional life.” Even the physical remains of their ancestors were given a price tag: \$14.40 per grave to move three thousand bodies to cemeteries outside the flood zone. The dam also destroyed the ecology of the river and prevented traditional uses of it for everything from spiritual practices to basic subsistence.<sup>17</sup>

Rebecca Bowen’s account of what happened to her family reads just like an eyewitness account of a military invasion. She lived in the Red House community, which became part of the flooded reservoir. She described the day they were forced to move:

Like an occupation force, an army of construction companies invaded our homeland...I remember putting the chair outside the front door of our house and watching as the earth movers removed the entire face of the hill that stood in front of our home. I remember shouting the angriest things a child could think of. At night, the piles of trees and brush would burn. The land was cleared right up to the river banks. One day moving men showed up and said they would be back in four hours to move us to a new home. Our lives were changed forever. The waters that generate the power [of today’s Kinzua Dam] flows over our old homesteads where the Longhouse once stood, the foundations of our churches, our school, our old ballfields, even the graves of Senecas.<sup>18</sup>

Bowen’s last point is particularly salient, as private industry has reaped the profits of the electricity generated from a flood control dam built on land the Seneca people were cheated out of. The modern-day Indian traders peddle electricity rather than clothing and furs.

With the people moved and compensated to whatever degree the government felt was fair, the dam was completed in 1965.<sup>19</sup> As the water filled the reservoir, it covered the last Native American settlement in Pennsylvania. 221 years after the Virginians tricked the Iroquois into selling them the Ohio Valley by not mentioning how big their charter actually was, and 213 years after the British casually ignored Tanaghrisson’s request that they build nothing but a

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<sup>17</sup> Laurence Marc Hauptman, *In the Shadow of Kinzua: The Seneca Nation of Indians since World War II* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2014), xv-xvi, 98.

<sup>18</sup> Rebecca Bowen Testimony, in Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), *In the Matter of Scoping Document for Kinzua Pumped Storage Project (P-13880-000)* (Washington, DC: FERC, 2011), 34-35, quoted in Hauptman, *Shadow of Kinzua*, xvi-xvii.

<sup>19</sup> Hauptman, *Shadow of Kinzua*, xv.

strong house, the colonists had finally made good on Braddock's vow to Shingas in the spring of 1755 that the "English Should Inhabit & Inherit the Land... No Savage Should Inherit the Land."<sup>20</sup>

But the water of the Kinzua Reservoir also washed away the legacy of the incredible amount of energy that was poured into diplomacy in Pennsylvania. While it is easy to take Manifest Destiny for granted, the people of the 1750s did not know how the story would play out. Instead, people like Tanaghrisson, Scarouady, and Teedyuscung, as well as Christian Frederick Post, Conrad Weiser, and George Croghan had to continuously try to find a way to make accommodations and learn to live with each other. Even when these efforts were being carried out in bad faith, they still at least required the illusion of cooperation. The backwoods diplomats found that they had to present different tribes and communities with different solutions, and found the Indians to be far more than naïve children for the Europeans to act upon. The results were never in balance, however. For their efforts, the British secured one of the greatest victories in the history of their empire and ousted their archrival from North America. For the Native Americans, however, diplomacy did little more than put small speed bumps in the road to their ultimate displacement.

The Kinzua Dam represents that displacement in an incredibly tangible way. We can swim in their displacement, camp along it, fish in it. Every day that it exists, it continues to erode and wash away more and more of that legacy of diplomacy and the potential of coexistence. But the reservoir also proves that there is still work to do, and some wrongs that can still be corrected.

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<sup>20</sup> Francis Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire: The Covenant Chain Confederation of Indian Tribes with English Colonies* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1984), 354-356; Beverly W. Bond Jr., ed., "The Captivity of Charles Stuart, 1755-57," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 13, no. 1 (1926): 63-64.



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### Education

**Bachelor of Arts in History** **Spring 2023**  
The Pennsylvania State University, Behrend College, Erie, PA (Expected)

**Basic Leadership Course** **2014**  
7<sup>th</sup> Army NCO Academy, Grafenwoeher, Germany

### Experience

**Undergraduate Studies** **2019-Present**  
The Pennsylvania State University, Behrend College, Erie, PA

- Currently pursuing a degree in History, with minors in Spanish and Psychology.
- Earned the John Rossi Excellence in Undergraduate Research Award in 2022.
- Received a Gillman Scholarship to study abroad in Mexico for six weeks.

**Publishing and Events Internship** **Spring 2022**  
The Jefferson Educational Society, Erie, PA

- Assisted with editing publications in a wide array of fields.
- Researched and wrote an article for publication.
- Worked public educational events and interacted with the public.

**Appalachian Trail Thru Hiker** **2018**

- Hiked all 2,190 miles of the Appalachian Trail, from Georgia to Maine.
- Developed a deep appreciation and understanding of the geography, history, and most importantly people of the entire Appalachian region of the United States.
- Developed people skills and self-sufficiency and assurance that only seven months of walking through the woods can provide.

**Army Infantryman** **2011-2018**

- Served as an Airborne Infantryman, and developed leadership skills while in charge of the care and development of 10 other paratroopers.
- Developed teaching skills by providing classes to train soldiers.
- Served as a company armorer for a year, maintaining a safeguarding over \$12 million worth of sensitive weapons and equipment.
- Lived in Europe for over three years and became intimately acquainted with many different cultures and their histories.
- Participated in a multitude of multi-national exercises and became familiar with the importance of good public relations skills.

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