The Plight and the Bounty: Squatters, War Profiteers, and the Transforming Hand of Sovereignty in Indian Country, 1750-1774

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

Melissah J. Pawlikowski

Graduate Program in History

The Ohio State University

2014

Dissertation Committee:
Dr. John L. Brooke, Advisor
Dr. Lucy Murphy
Dr. Margaret Newell
Abstract

“The Plight and the Bounty: Squatters, War Profiteers & the Transforming Hand of Sovereignty in the Indian Country, 1750-1774” explores the creation of a European & Indian commons in the Ohio Valley as well as an in-depth examination of the network of interethnic communities and a secondary economic system created by refugee Euroamerican, Black, and Indian inhabitants. Six elements of creolization—the fusion of language, symbols, and legal codes; the adoption of material goods; and the exchange of labor and knowledge—resulted in ethnogenesis and a local culture marked by inclusivity, tolerance, and a period of peace. Finally this project details how, in the absence of traditional power brokers, Indians and Europeans created and exchanged geopolitical power between local Indians and Euroamericans as a method of legitimizing authority for their occupation of the Ohio Valley.
Vita

2005.................................................. B.A., History, University of Pittsburgh

2007.................................................. M.A., History, Duquesne University

2009 to 2014 ................................... Graduate Teaching Associate, Department
of History, The Ohio State University

Fields of Study

Major Field: History

Areas of study: Early American History, Primary field

                         Latin American History, Secondary field

                         Atlantic History, Minor field
Table of Contents

Abstract .......................................................................................................................... ii
Vita ................................................................................................................................. iii
List of Maps .................................................................................................................. v
Maps ............................................................................................................................. 1
Introduction ................................................................................................................... 3
Chapter 1: Settling & Unsettling the Susquehanna River Valley, Geopolitical Control and
the European-Indian Struggles for Autonomy, 1750-1767 .............................................. 41
Chapter 2: Regulating Social Order: Speculating, Segregating, and Controlling
Settlement Patterns, 1750-1768 .................................................................................. 72
Chapter 3: Migration into the Valley of the Dispossessed: Transformative Years on the
Eastern Edges of the Ohio Valley, 1765-1769 ................................................................. 106
Chapter 4: Refugee Community-Building in the Ohio Valley Commons, 1768-1773 ... 163
Chapter 5: “Peace & Quietness”: Creating a Culture of Collectivity and Absolution in the
Eastern Ohio Valley, 1768-74 ...................................................................................... 236
Chapter 6: Living and Lobbying from the Ohio Valley, 1768-1774 ................................. 295
Conclusion .................................................................................................................... 360
Bibliography ................................................................................................................. 383
List of Maps

Map 1. Warranted Settlers and Unwarranted Settlements in the Susquehanna Valley, 1750-1768

Map 2. Euroamerican and Indian Settlements in the eastern Ohio Valley, 1768-1774
Map 1. Warranted Settlers and Unwarranted Settlements in the Susquehanna Valley, 1750-1768

Map by Jim DeGrand
Map by Jim DeGrand

Map 2. Euroamerican and Indian Settlement in the eastern Ohio Valley, 1768-1773
Introduction

While tilling his family’s western Pennsylvania land at the end of the nineteenth century, a young Francis Harbison turned up “[b]roken parts of table plates…a broken tumbler… the butt of an ancient rifle… rusted irons… a miscellaneous lot of broken glass…” and “flint arrow heads.” All around the Harbison farm, “relics” appeared as visual markers of the Euroamerican and Indian inhabitants of the eastern Ohio Valley between 1768 and 1773.\(^1\) The landscape between the western footholds of the Allegheny Mountains and the lush green shores of the Ohio River in western Pennsylvania offered an expanse of previously cleared fields, orchards, and a penetrable brush-free forest—easily overlooked as the improvements of years gone by. The Harbison family, nineteenth-century landowners, cleared land by removing the ruins of a recent but forgotten past, “rotted log” foundations and remnant stone hearths. The vestiges of the valley’s “vanished” people begged Francis to ask, “Who were they? Where had they gone?\(^2\)

Antiquarian historians writing during Francis’s life detailed the valley’s first people in a catalog of America’s early histories. Often local in character, writers recaptured county histories through information collected by the children and

\(^1\) I have specifically chosen the name inhabitants because this is the name that the 1768-1774 eastern Ohio Valley occupants adopted. The name inhabitants is also suggestive of important descriptive elements of this group as non-landowners and temporary occupants of land, topics addressed in this project.

grandchildren of founding settlers. Intimately entangled in the stories they told, authors commonly used family names to reference eighteenth-century landmarks, such as cabins and mills, which were in decay by the time of their writing. County chronicles, like Boyd Crumrine’s 1004-page *History of Washington County, Pennsylvania with biographical sketches of many of its pioneers and prominent men*, included such minute details as the eye and hair color, weight, height, and temperament of many of the first Euroamericans to occupy the eastern Ohio Valley. These works provided the names of settlers and accounts of their transatlantic migrations and successive North American settlements. Although definitively Eurocentric, eighteenth-century stories of the Ohio Valley, much like the flint arrowheads unearthed by a young Francis, unintentionally exposed the participation of American Indians, free Africans, and slaves in the 1770 settlement of the Ohio Valley. Writing during the mid- and late-nineteenth century, local historians used stories to connect their families, communities, and states to the American Revolution and to American exceptionalism—defining the history, development, and material success of the United States as often predestined and superior to that of other countries.

With the push to create a distinctly American history, some of the first professional historians began writing national histories glorifying American exceptionalism. Exceptionalism simplified a complicated tale of diverse people to a triumphant “white” story that reinforced the country’s march westward to manifest its destiny. Frontier history went particularly unchanged until Frederick Jackson Turner’s

---

“The Significance of the Frontier in American History” described early American history as a succession of frontier expansions. Turner contended that physical frontiers offered land and resources that equalized the socioeconomic opportunities for the common sort. Frontier histories continued to develop the twin ideas of meritocracy and the rise of the middle class through migration with books like Ray Allen Billington’s *Western Expansion: A History of the American Frontier* (1949), which focused on the low socioeconomic status of frontier migrants and ascribed a Protestant work ethic to the Revolution-era pioneers. According to early western histories, colonial and subsequent American expansion and capitalism drove a social revolution ongoing from the American Revolution through the early republic.

With Francis Jennings’s *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism and the Cant of Conquest* (1975), historians departed from the triumphant and liberal-minded frontier model by incorporating the perspective of Indians and explicitly detailing the violence, displacement, and destruction of Indian communities and culture that resulted from colonial and later American expansion. Writing in the same vein, historians such as Eric Hinderaker and Patrick Griffin wrote influential frontier texts accounting for the white exploitation of Indians in western Pennsylvania and the greater Ohio Valley. Both Hinderaker’s *Elusive Empires* (1997) and Griffin’s *American Leviathan* (2007) focused on the relationship between Indian polities and the English, French, and Spanish empires.

As imperial-focused studies, both Hinderaker and Griffin blamed Indian-Euroamerican settler discord and perpetual violence on the British government’s inability
to manage interethnic relations. Neither book addressed peaceable community-building or other cultural transformations that followed from frequent Indian and Euroamerican interactions. Jeremy Adelman and Stephen Aron have argued for the continuation of imperial history and the Indian-European case studies of foreign diplomacy detailed in “frontier histories.” Top-down histories add important insight into the policies and the institutional apparatuses within which Euroamerican and Indian settlers operated. Yet the tendency of imperial history to examine the decisions and actions of traditional power brokers has obscured how the application of policies like the Proclamation of 1763 actually affected the local Indian and Euroamerican populations. Imperial-focused books risk parsing out blanket roles to Euroamerican settlers as aggressors and Indian settlers as non-passive victims. Often, and particularly in colonial era studies, the reason for this difference is the imperial origin of a space as a borderland. All Europeans are identifiable as examples of imperial colonization, uninvited and militant migrants encroaching on Indian land in North America. Borderland scholarship, however, allows for more complicated alternatives.

A division of borderland studies, new western history differs greatly from imperial works by broadening the range of historical actors taken into account. Moreover, it seeks to understand the complex interactions, relationships, and the formation of local identities that contextualized local events, decision making, and outcomes. Most importantly, new western history looks to the processes that borderland scholars of the

---

early modern world label “creolization” and “ethnogenesis.” Since these terms are foundational to the interpretations in this dissertation, their recent development and intellectual deployment need to be considered at some length.

Scholars define creolization as the adoption, exchange, or influence of a culture, or individual cultural characteristics (such as linguistics, theology, political ideology, heritages, material goods, or any number of other unique markers used to identify a specific group of people), by people of a foreign culture. Creolization occurred as a result of interethnic or intercultural interactions between one or more different peoples. A negotiated blend of unique characteristics, in the context of North America this often included a cross-section of Europeans/Euroamericans, Africans, and/or American Indians. Creolization generally occurred consciously or unconsciously, by way of adaptation, acculturation, negotiation, resistance, hybridity, fusion, exchange/borrowing, cooperation, or the inclusion of foreign peoples in communities. When many of a group’s cultural identifiers altered “ethnogenesis” occurred and a new ethnicity formed.

Understanding creolization and the formation of a new culture—the seeds of interethnic community-building—are essential in determining how local people related to, and were affected by, imperial policies. Too often the Indian and Euroamerican men who weighed in on foreign diplomacy or formulated the trade and land policies that governed backcountry regions of the British colonies did not immediately bear the brunt

---

of their own policies. Land sales and purchases, like the Fort Stanwix Treaty of 1768, displaced local Delaware Indians. Displacement created an environment of obstacles that necessitated reconciliation and community building between local Euroamericans and Delaware. Conversely, the Delaware’s encouragement of Euroamericans to join them in the Ohio Valley led to violence between Ohio Indians, particularly the Shawnee, and new settlers. Themes like creolization and ethnogenesis provide an essential access point, or inlet, for historians to follow the ripple of consequences derived from imperial land and trade policies to the downstream effects on local spaces and intimate aspects of daily life.

Creolization and ethnogenesis entered the intellectual toolkit of early American historians through the influence of scholars working on the borderlands between British and Spanish colonial North America. Borderland historians generally focus on regions where one or more culture exists in close proximity to one another. Some borderland history seeks to compare multiple cultures, but most scholars identify the regions around a shared border as a crossroads and explore the influence that comingled cultures have on one another. Borderland scholarship examines social, political, and economic relations across spatial, cultural, and theoretical borderlands, multicultural encounters, and contact points. Most borderland scholars use interdisciplinary approaches, including geography and ecological exchanges, and concentrate on themes evoking the transformation of culture, social roles, networks, and hierarchies. Borderland scholars have identified the creolization and ethnogenesis throughout the eighteenth-century Atlantic world.
Creolization and ethnogenesis are also important concepts to the histories of Africa, Latin America, and North and South America. During the violent struggles that consumed western Africa in the era of the slave trade, African leaders incorporated captives taken during the intra-African wars to expand their communities. Other leaders sold captives into the Atlantic slave trade, while some captives fleeing sale took refuge in new communities. The influx of large numbers of these captives and/or refugees formed new communities such as the Sala Mpasu, Kanyok (Luba) and the Hungu. Latin America similarly includes many instances of coalesced peoples. One example is the mixture of aboriginals, Portuguese colonists, and free and enslaved Africans who married and/or formed complex trade, social and political networks between the sixteenth and eighteenth century in Santana de Parnaíba, Brazil. Another is the free and enslaved African, Indigenous, and creole Spanish population found by Spanish officials cohabitating Lima, Peru in the mid-eighteenth century. From the end of the fifteenth century into the nineteenth century, European colonization, the expansion of the free market, and the Atlantic slave trade brought new ethnic groups together and the interethnic, or intercultural, interactions that followed begat new peoples.

For marginalized groups creolization defined as much of their experience during the eighteenth century as did mass upheaval and transatlantic movement.

---

Historian James Sweet has aptly argued that creolization resulting in ethnogenesis occurred commonly throughout the Atlantic world, owing fundamentally to the “adaptability” of human beings. Anthropologist Thomas Hylland Eriksen adds to Sweet’s argument. Creolization occurred, and continues to occur, with such frequency that creolization is a common place method found in normative cultural formation in all multicultural environments. The components that constitute culture are fluid and transformative, meaning ethnicity is inherently interactive and constantly in a state of reformation. Owing to the interaction of human adaptability, fluidity of culture, and the churning of different peoples throughout the Atlantic World, eighteenth-century marginalized peoples relied on creolization and ethnogenesis as survival mechanisms. Creolization and the formation of entirely new cultures through ethnogenesis abounded particularly among and between communities threatened by more dominant outsider groups. The line between dominant and dominated, however, should not be drawn sharply between ethnicities. Instead, historians should carefully parse out those people empowered to dominate, by their access to resources, and those people with fewer resources and thus compromised determination. I am suggesting that categories based on social standing are sometimes more accurate in identifying a distinct people with a common interests over grouping people by shared ethnicity. Standing derived from via

social and traditional capital may more accurately identify those people who gained from community building with others of like social standing. For non-elites, building new identities across ethnic, cultural, religious lines offered a means of meeting common ends, a significant form of resistance, and a strategy for survival. Examples illuminating the ways in which ordinary peoples might join together include Joseph Miller’s pointed demonstration of the commonplace reordering of social identities among un-free African communities throughout the Americas. Miller states that slaves invented “the most flexible, dynamic” temporary and long-term “collective identities” to sustain themselves within the institution of slavery and its broader social and economic system in which they were forced to live.9

Scholars characterize the processes by which creolization occurred in similar stages. Frances Jennings identified four stages: contact between indigenous people and Europeans, violent decimation of Indians, establishment of a new social hierarchy, and finally the emergence of a single community composed of a dominant group and dominated population. Cultural historian Urs Bitterli poses only four stages of creolization, “initial contacts, collisions, relationships… [and] cultural intermingling.”10 While neither Jennings or Bitterli use the term ethnogenesis, both scholars describe the end result of creolization as the creation of a new culture. As in the work of James

---


Sweet, the processes described by Jennings and Bitterli identify violence as the antecedent of creolization and eventual ethnogenesis. Sweet, comparing post-warfare West Africa to the early American frontier, asserts that “[i]n the efforts to reconstitute social connections, dislocated peoples often found themselves searching for the broadest expressions of cultural sameness. These cultural ties became the basis for an expanding ethnic consciousness that was at first translocal and then regional in flavor.”

Yet Sweet differs greatly with Jennings and Bitterlie in how he identifies the historical actors and the elements that influenced the trajectory of creolization. According to Jennings and Bitterlie, Europeans and indigenous people were two monolithic groups, who came into contact, engaged in violence, and then rebuilt. In Jennings’s argument the rebuilding is particularly hegemonic with a successful conquest; all Europeans are agents of empire. The remaining indigenous population formed a subaltern group forced into a larger imposed new culture and social order. Sweet’s summary, however, offers a more localized perception in which the violent decisions of governing bodies are separated from the interests of common people. Interethnic groups, as a single social strata of “dislocated people,” pulled together as response to violence acted upon them equally by people with greater resources. With this insight, scholars may consider creolization and ethnogenesis not always as acts or repercussions of oppression but instead as a productive process that displaced people willingly engaged in.

---

Euroamerican and Indian settlers can be seen as joint casualties of English and Indian imperial power-building, yet the relationship between small local populations of Indians and Europeans in North America is more accurately described as one between interdependent allies and members, if only temporarily, of the same social group.

A consensus also exists among scholars that within this general process of creolization, and sometimes ethnogenesis, local variables had the greatest influence over the type of transformation of culture that occurred. James Sidbury and Jorege Cañizares-Esguerra contend that any number of elements determine the cultural characteristics that might withstand creolization, the general success, and type of creolization that occurred. These circumstances included migration, place of origin, language family of new and old population, region of resettlement, the environment, demographics of local population, and the purpose or use of the new culture. Joseph Miller and Gwendolyn Midlo Hall hold that the exact creolization, and the resulting culture, undergone by enslaved Africans from the same regions in Africa differed greatly depending on their new world diffusion, the culture of the population they were immersed in, their survival rates, and gender of those taken to name only a few. Culture changed over time but with a relevance and a meaning to subscribers that directly related to local changing realities. The importance of an adopted culture should not be measured by how many of its earlier practices survived. Instead a more accurate test of a group’s cultural identity needs to consider the relevancy of specific practices to the lives and obstacles of the people who claimed it.

---

Additionally, creolization occurred as a power dynamic between groups. Cultural attributes like language, material goods, or mores also expressed social, economic, and geopolitical dominance in a region. As demonstrated by Jill Lepore, in late seventeenth-century New England settler acculturation, as a form of creolization, proved problematic when New England settlers and members of the Wampanoag each perceived themselves as ethnically superior and brutalized one another in King Phillip’s 1675 War.\textsuperscript{13}

Yet, the formation of creolized multiethnic cultures sometimes suggested the acceptance and inclusion of cultural outsiders, allowing a level of equality with a foreign people. When European colonizers accepted non-European techniques of hunting, cooking, medicine and other necessary skills, they acknowledged their dependence on non-European cultures and could not wholly claim ethnic superiority over non-European cultures. In North Carolina, white dependence on the Indian-informed remedies adopted by slaves, such as the cure for rattlesnake bites, forged a European-African-Indian culture and prevented exclusive European cultural dominance of the enslaved population.\textsuperscript{14}

Research of borderlands throughout North America by historians like Kathleen Duval, Richard White, Daniel Usner, and Juliana Barr indicates that a general culture of inclusivity, particularly among indigenous people, encouraged the creolization of their communities. By incorporating outsiders into their numbers, European communities expanded their access to, and thus their opportunities to adopt, foreign tools and


knowledge. Additionally leaders might advance their scope of influence in Indian and/or European political spheres, and thus gain leverage or economic positioning. This concept too is comparable to indigenous-directed creolization throughout the Atlantic world. An example of which includes the adaptation of preexisting political hierarchies by indigenous participation in foreign institutions. Throughout colonial Latin American indigenous people—as preexisting nobles, elites, and sometimes common people—gained positions within Spain’s colonial government as regional lords (caciques) and other local office holders who acted as intermediaries between the indigenous communities and Spain’s Royal offices. Local leaders adapted and/or understood, colonial policies with and through traditional indigenous cultures. Similarly the indigenous people they represented often mixed indigenous material culture and practices with those of the Spanish that they found beneficial.15

Kathleen Duval and Juliana Barr offer model examples of creolization as a resource for power-building. DuVal contends that Indian communities in the Arkansas Valley recognized non-Indians inclusively—even near equally—as fellow human beings. Equity indicated a recognition that from Europeans Indians might gain new knowledge and tools. Interior Indians found their relationship with European outsiders empowering; the ability to gain new members and trade partners, as well as their tools and knowledge, expanded Indian geopolitical power and influence with other Indian communities. Thus,

---

adopter and adapting the material goods of outsiders for their own use and negotiating with outsiders and expecting outsiders to negotiate with them occurred commonly.\textsuperscript{16}

Similarly, in \textit{Peace Came in the Form of a Woman} (2007), Juliana Barr has uncovered the Indian command of Indian-Euroamerican relations in the eighteenth-century southwest. According to Barr, this was particularly true of the Caddo, who adapted their matriarchal hierarchy to Spanish gender roles. Through the captivity and return of female members of their tribe the Caddo shaped diplomatic relations and negotiated trade, geopolitical power, and military alliances. According to Barr, communities and individuals often acted with their own interests in mind rather than those of empires to which they may or may not have ever had any loyalties. The strategic use of cultural adaptation by the Caddo enabled local interethnic alliances and thus increased their overall influence and physical power in the southwest.\textsuperscript{17}

Likewise, in \textit{The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815}, Richard White demonstrated how a mixture of accommodation and fusion (based on misunderstandings) enabled local Algonquin and colonial leaders to construct new social, economic, political, and legal power throughout the \textit{Pays d’en Haut} region of the Great Lakes. Through mutual accommodation, equally weak political


\textsuperscript{17} Juliana Barr, \textit{Peace Came in the Form of a Woman: Indians and Spaniards in the Texas Borderlands} (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007).
and/or military powers could build interethnic communities and trade networks that enabled a successful occupation of the Pays d’en Haut.\textsuperscript{18}

That collective multiculturalism increased numbers and resources of peoples who lacked access to traditional government power or larger markets is also established in the work of Daniel Usner. In his \textit{Indians, Settlers, & Slaves in a Frontier Exchange Economy: The Lower Mississippi Before 1783} Usner reasoned that the secondary economic and social networks created by small interethnic bands of locals facilitated the trade of everyday foodstuffs and organized labor. Essential trade among common people functioned outside of traditional imperial structures between common people. Local networks formed the foundation of multicultural communities in the lower Mississippi Valley. Usner contends that marginalized Indians, European, and free and enslaved African settlers significantly benefited from their membership in local interethnic networks because the secondary communities and “frontier economy” more successfully offered them necessary goods than did larger formalized or transatlantic network participation. The frequent realities of borderlands in general—including weak imperial authority structures, small relative populations, and a diminished ability to acquire essentials—encouraged the Native and outsider population to mitigate their differences with some creolization and benefit from interethnic cooperation.\textsuperscript{19}


This work, “The Plight and the Bounty,” expands the rich western and borderland historiography with a detailed account of the creolization and ethnogenesis of Euroamerican and Indian settlers occupying the westward-moving Pennsylvania and Virginia borderland. Similar to research conducted on eastern Pennsylvania prior to the American Revolution by Jane T. Merritt, James Merrell, Peter Silver, and David Preston, this project examines interethnic relations in the eastern Ohio Valley. These five historians demonstrate the effectiveness of local social and economic relations in forming informal interethnic diplomatic relations. “The Plight and Bounty” goes further by detailing how refugees developed the network of interethnic neighborhoods in the eastern Ohio Valley as well as the ways in which individuals and groups functioned and benefited from them.

In *At the Crossroads: Indians and Empires on a Mid-Atlantic Frontier, 1700-1763* (2003), Jane Merritt addresses the importance of local interethnic relationships in trumping imperial loyalties or objectives among local people in the backcountry of Pennsylvania. Particular factions of Delaware Indians living in central Pennsylvanian during the mid-eighteenth century wielded diplomatic power and an ability to contest their subjugation by local Euroamericans through local trade, legal and religious practices. While Merritt does not utilize the phrase “creolization” her research specifically describes Indian and European community-building as occurring through the exchange, adoption, and adaptation of Indian culture by Europeans and European culture by Indians. Some Indians adopted Christian values and beliefs and adapted Christianity
by incorporating Indian beliefs. Other examples include the adoption of Indian and European naming patterns or the shared use of Indian customs, including “hospitality, reciprocal [relationships], and gift giving,” to establish and maintain good interethnic relations.²⁰

Peter Silver focuses on the Susquehanna Valley in his *Our Savage Neighbors: How Indian War Transformed Early America* and extends Merritt’s findings. Silver contends that violent interethnic experiences during the French and Indian War motivated Susquehanna Valley settlers to construct a common white identity. Prior to the French and Indian War leaders of religious communities, particularly Lutherans and Presbyterians, had used sermons and religious writing to emphasize the cultural differences of other Christian denominations in unsuccessful attempts to prevent intra-European “accommodation” and “mutual borrowing” of language, ideas, and behavior.” During the French and Indian War, however, heightened fears of Indians offered a stronger solidifying agent than already diminishing denominational differences.²¹

The work of Peter Silver and James Merrell focuses on personal interethnic relationships using individuals shaped by unique experiences including captivity, immersion, or simply frequent interethnic interactions as examples of creolization. Merrell particularly focuses on “go-betweens,” a group he defines as men and women who had the ability to live and move between Indian and European communities. These

“go-betweens” could be either Indians or Europeans and understood the languages of both groups, dressed in a mixed assortment of Indian and Euroamerican clothes, and represented a blend of Indian and European cultural characteristics that bridged ethnic communities. Merrell concludes that the exchange of cultural identifiers between peoples, particularly with regard to “go-betweens,” created uneasy cultural “fissures” in which “go-betweens” fit in neither culture.

While Merrell stops short of stating that go-betweens represented elements of creolization, he depicts the process in which “go-betweens” moved away from individual Indian and European cultures and moved toward a new mixed culture. A prime example of a creolization of culture in mid eighteenth century Pennsylvania is the mixture of Indian and European material culture, social mores, and behavior described by Merrell as back country “travel culture.”

In much the same light David Preston’s work, The Texture of Contact: European and Indian Settler Communities on the Frontiers of Iroquoia, 1667-1783 (2009) expands the perspective of the direct and indirect forces that created mutual dependencies between Euroamericans and the Delaware living in the Susquehanna throughout the eighteenth century. These interdependent relationships fostered an environment that supported interpersonal networks between people of a variety of heritages.

---

22 James Hart Merrell, Into the American Woods: negotiators on the Pennsylvania frontier (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2000). For an explanation of travel culture see “‘We Discoursed a Good Deal of the Night Together’ Sharing the Road,” 136-140. Indian Creolization is discussed throughout but a good example is Andrew Montour’s transition on 294. Merrell’s views on European and Indian cultural mixing are on pages 92, 137 and “Fitt & Proper Person to Goe Between:” Paths to the Woods,” 54-105.
“The Plight and the Bounty” extends the findings of Merrell, Silver, and Preston relating to creolization in the seventeenth and eighteenth Susquehanna Valley to the people of the eastern Ohio valley at the end of the eighteenth century. Moving west, as did the frontier and borderland itself, this research adds to the spectrum of ethnicity and identity formation in the context of community building between Euroamericans, Africans, and American Indians during the second half of the eighteenth century in the eastern Ohio Valley. This discussion is largely absent from the literature focused on western Pennsylvania, the seat of Indian-Euroamerican segregation policies that included strict regulations against interethnic trade, capital punishment for Euroamericans caught cohabitating on Indian land, and eventually Indian removal.23

The objective of this dissertation is to expand the literature by reconstructing the voice and experience of the commoners, often labeled squatters by modern historians, who predominated the eastern Ohio Valley population. “The Plight and the Bounty” is a borderland history focused on the cooperative interethnic community building that occurred among landless people in the eastern Ohio Valley.

This project follows an overarching model of creolization that is best described as migration, interdependence, adaption, and exchange and details the six elements of creolization (defined by geopolitical, religious, social, economic, and legal components)

23 These topics are, however, explored significantly in works focused on Kentucky with a rich historiography by Stephan Aron, Elizabeth Perkins, Andrew R. L. Cayton, and Fredrika J. Teute and Craig Friend. My research has been dependent and greatly influenced by these histories. Stephan Aron, How the West Was Lost: The Transformation of Kentucky From Daniel Boone to Henry Clay (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1999); Elizabeth A. Perkins, Border Life: Experience and Memory In the Revolutionary Ohio Valley (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1998); Andrew R. L. Cayton & Fredrika J. Teute ed., Contact Points: American Frontiers from the Mohawk Valley to the Mississippi, 1750-1830, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Craig Friend, Kentucke’s Frontiers (Indiana University Press, 2010).
that resulted in ethnogenesis.\textsuperscript{24} I contend that the manner in which creolization took place owed to the location, environment, and obstacles individual peoples confronted. Individuals and in turn communities made decisions that differed from European traditions, norms, or expectations based on their unique realities and needs. Instead of comparing Old World Europeans to those living in the Ohio Valley, my work suggests that a “clash” of ideas occurred more intimately and abruptly between frontier inhabitants and those who inhabited older established cities in the British North America.\textsuperscript{25}

Although sometimes interrupted by warfare, the ongoing creolization process began in the Susquehanna Valley during the 1750s and, driven by necessity, came to fruition in the eastern Ohio Valley by the mid-1770s. In the first element of creolization, Euroamerican and Indian refugees adapted their views on community-owned land, for-use occupation of land, and resources. Accommodating the needs of all valley inhabitants in the transformation of their land ideologies allowed for multicultural cohabitation of the eastern Ohio valley. Euroamericans moved away from demanding private property and returned to an expectation of sharing a commons. Pennsylvania Indians similarly incorporated Euroamericans into their communities to extend land access rights to them.


The second element consisted of the creation of a common language of symbols and actions, a shared meaning required by the peoples of the eastern Ohio Valley to communicate their intentions. Tree notches and rock stacks formed a code that conveyed important information among Indians, Euroamericans, and colonial officials, namely their intentions for the land as well their desire for peace. Accommodation and fusion assisted a composite population of some 15,000 German, French, Swiss, Scottish, Scots-Irish, African, and around 7,000 Delaware, Mingo, Seneca, Mohican, Shawnee, and Wyandot Indians in establishing a meeting point; all were landless people requiring access to common territory and resources.

Negotiating the details of fusion allowed European and Indian settlers to create and share geopolitical legitimization among themselves across over one hundred and forty-two communities in the eastern Ohio Valley. Euroamerican settlers requested Delaware authority to settle in the eastern Ohio Valley, even though their Delaware neighbors had no formal authority in the region.

With a self-imposed structure in place, during the third element of creolization, a culture of inclusion and collaboration assisted Euroamerican and Indian settlers in forming new families, establishing overlapping neighborhoods and cooperative labor and recourse networks. For cohabitation to prove successful Euroamerican and Indian settlers needed to make intra-cultural and interethnic accommodations.

In the fourth element, Euroamericans and Indians adapted one another’s material culture to cope with the circumstances presented by backcountry life. Likewise, in the
fifth element of creolization Euroamerican and Indian refugees created a secondary economy where they exchanged everyday goods, labor, and knowledge. In the sixth element of creolization, Euroamerican and Indian settlers maintained peace by constructing informal assemblies and a legal code that called for the punishment of violent offenders and largely the acceptance of theft.

The process of creolization created and maintained peaceable cohabitation. With stabilized interethnic relationships two important achievements occurred. The first achievement was an interethnic frontier exchange that sidestepped commercial trade in the region and provided locals with the ability to exchange foodstuff and common goods, like the blankets or clothing that Euroamerican and Indian settlers depended on. And in the second achievement the neighborhood experienced ethnogenesis by which a new multiethnic and restructured community emerged. Both participants in the new culture and outsiders perceived eastern Ohio Valley inhabitants as different from populations in eastern Pennsylvania and eastern Virginian.26

What may differentiate the experience of the eastern Ohio Valley from the interethnic backcountries of Georgia or the Carolinas is that both the Indian and Euroamerican population arrived in the region around the same time and neither was welcome in the region by established Indian or colonial governments. The shared experience and identity of Euroamericans and Delawares as newcomers in the

---

Susquehanna Valley enabled the seven elements of creolization and subsequent ethnogenesis that occurred in the eastern Ohio Valley.

This project strives to demonstrate that Euroamerican culture did not dominate the resulting interethnic culture. The Euroamerican population in the eastern Ohio Valley represented an amalgamation of European peoples: German men who married Irish women, English men and women who took Delaware and Seneca spouses, or Irish families who took in Welsh and Swiss orphans. As with other American Indian peoples, Mingo communities were populated by Delaware, Wyandot, African, and English people. Ethnogenesis enveloped both Euroamerican and Indian settler communities.

This project recognizes that prior to cohabitation in the eastern Ohio Valley, Euroamerican and Indian culture were undergoing ongoing transformation. Following Pontiac’s War, displaced Indian and Euroamerican war refugees migrated from the Susquehanna Valley into the eastern Valley. Comingling between the Allegheny Mountains and the Ohio River, the cultural transformations of Euroamerican and Indians—now sharing the same social status as squatters—further entangled across ethnic lines. This project adds the eastern Ohio Valley to the history of common people and recognizes ethnogenesis as a coping strategy reflecting people’s general adaptability for survival.27

For Euroamerican and Indian refugees, the Susquehanna Valley transformed into what Robbie Ethridge describes as a “shatter zone.” In her introduction to Mapping the

Mississippian Shatter Zone: The Colonial Indian Slave Trade and Regional Instability in the American South, Ethridge explains that she does not address the Euroamerican bystanders caught by empire building and the rise of capitalism in North America. I would suggest that squatters as a group—along with the Delaware, Mingo, and Wyandot—demonstrate a pattern of displacement resulting from a Susquehanna “shatter zone” much like that which occurred in the Mississippi Valley as a “shatter zone.” Additionally the survival strategies utilized by EuroAmericans and Indians alike after the destruction of settlements during the French and Indian War and Pontiac’s War parallel those of the Shawnee described by the research of Stephen Warren and Randolph Noe. The Shawnee relied on their social and cosmological fluidity and geographic mobility to adapt to new regions, needs, and populations.28

The historiography of EuroAmerican and Indian relations in the Ohio and Susquehanna River Valley generally supports colonial and crown policies implementing EuroAmerican and Indian segregation and ultimately Indian removal beginning with the Proclamation of 1763. I challenge this argument and maintain that a grass-roots process of community-building by refugee squatters in the eastern Ohio Valley offered an alternative vision of the frontier to the racial segregation and warfare that ultimately emerged. Much of the EuroAmerican and Indian adaptability that allowed for

ethnogenesis is fully understood by identifying the socioeconomic subculture to which eastern Ohio Valley inhabitants belonged.

This project redefines eighteenth-century squatters as transient people. Socially, politically, and economically marginalized people most often turned to squatting, or the occupation of uninhabited land, after outside forces dispossessed them. Eighteenth-century colonial officials, such as Virginia Governor Lord Dunmore, depicted the squatters’ transience as a choice, or an innate “roving” owing to an undeveloped culture. In modern texts this pattern of migration and resettlement is misunderstood by scholars as liberal opportunity-seeking—unqualified “land hunger” or a reactionary “land rush.”

The research presented here reframes squatting in terms of migration as opposed to settlement. I argue that migration—or more precisely—dispossession—is the definitive characteristic of squatting in eastern Ohio Valley inhabitants. A succession of commercial decisions by global merchants pushed Euroamericans from their homes in eastern Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Maryland. The availability of uninhabited land and resources forced squatters westward. Marginalized Euroamericans and Indians commonly experienced disposition and migration.


30 It is important that other researches consider if people in other regions may also have been forced out of previous residences rather than attracted to new regions by good land.

Squatters moved more often than settlers who claimed ownership of land and had established communities recognized by colonial officials. Squatter transience is additionally supported by their very name. From the sixteenth through the eighteenth century, the term squatter referred metaphorically to transience and developed a connotation that included a lack of self-determinism. Originating as the verb, “squatler,” all four English definitions for “squatter” referenced types of disorganized movement, including “to spill or pour out disorderedly” – the splatter affect. Moreover, the term squatter is interchangeable with “vagrant,” which was predominantly used as a pejorative term in Great Britain for the poor and similarly meant “wanders, nomadic” - landless people. Increasingly in the United States between the late 1780s and 1790s, “squatter” described urgent and intentional actions, including “To scatter, disperse” or “To fly or run.”31 Owing to the volatility of life in a state of diaspora, traditional Indian and colonial leaders viewed landless peoples as lacking political voice.32

Conversely, modern historians including Patrick Griffin, Eric Hinderaker, and Richard White suggest that early Euroamerican settlers in western Pennsylvania and western Virginia forcibly seized land from Indians in an attempt to secure land tenure. This definition is problematic as squatters often did obtain authorization from local Indians who occupied and used the land. Susquehanna migrants moving into the eastern Ohio Valley were particularly careful in requesting permission to do so from the

31 Oxford English Dictionary [hereafter cited as OED], squatter and vagrant entries.
Delaware who lived in Northwest Pennsylvania. Moreover, examining the experience and actions of squatters illuminates that their sociopolitical reality hindered them from landownership. Squatters needed to keep moving in order to achieve sustenance; even when given an opportunity to obtain land patents, squatters did not have the luxury to take it prior to the American Revolution.

Fitting with their name and owing to their needs, squatters in successive migrations did move with the shifting frontier. These movements are best described as attempts to locate under-inhabited spaces, such as commons and wastelands. Landless people inhabiting the eastern Ohio Valley were commoners looking for traditionally communable public spaces and resources with which to sustain themselves.

The concept of a commons was rooted in English cultural history (Commons, Common Fields, Commanoble Land, Wastelands, Common Pastures, or Town Fields, etc.), Welsh (Toftheads), Scottish (run-rigs), and Irish (rundales) but similar land ideologies existed throughout European and American Indian communities. The king might designate any uninhabited or underused forest, a patch of land or vast acres of field, or outskirts/backcountry as a commons. In Great Britain, in some parishes between 20 and 68 percent of the population lacked sufficient land or livestock to support their families.\(^33\) Transatlantic and westward-moving migrants transported the concept of a commons to British North America. As had occurred in England, settlers expected public lands be set aside, or assigned for, a broad range of low-ranking and landless people,

including craftsmen, farmers, laborers, “the old and widows,” as well as other
“unfortunate” people at no or low cost.\textsuperscript{34} Although in England the king or specific nobles
technically owned the commons, the needy—known as commoners—depended on their
ability to take protein or timber, farm or graze cattle in common pastures, or even
establish “free holds” in the forest.\textsuperscript{35}

The reconstruction of commons by landless people in North America was not
exclusive to the eastern Ohio Valley. In seventeenth and eighteenth century New
England every town regulated the public resources of common fields, forests, cottages,
and resources (waste).\textsuperscript{36} The commons provided for a basic standard of living for the
middling yeomen as well as the poor.

How both Euroamericans and Indians inhabitants of the eastern Ohio Valley came
to require the commons is chronicled in the first chapter. Mass transatlantic migrations
followed the enclosure of twenty percent of England (upwards of 78,000 acres by 1768,
and at an increasing rate of about 14,946 acres a year to 6.8 million acres by 1820), the
expansion of market trade, and the imperial wars (including the English Civil War, the
War of the Austrian Succession, King George’s War, and the Seven Years War) fought
throughout the eighteenth century. Increased migration into port cities inevitably led to
population pressures and some movement of transatlantic migrant families into the

\textsuperscript{34} J. M. Neeson, \textit{Commoners: Common Right, Enclosure and Social Change in England, 1700-1820} (Cambridge:
\textsuperscript{35} Neeson, \textit{Commoners}, 60; OEH, Commons, entry; Paul Ocobock, “Vagrancy and homelessness in Global and
Historical Perspective” and A. L. Beir “A New Serfdom:” Labor Laws, Vagrancy Statues, and Labor Discipline in
England, 1350-1800, both in \textit{Cast Out: Vagrancy and Homeless in Global and Historical Perspective}, A.L. Beir and
Paul Ocobock eds. (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2008), 1-34 & 35-63. Ocobock and Beir’s essays substantially
influenced my understanding of how early modern Europeanists perceived the poor and/or landless.
\textsuperscript{36} Slater, \textit{The English Peasantry}, 183-5.
interior of British North America over multiple generations. Further uprooting desperate
peoples, the French and Indian War (1754-1763) and Pontiac’s War (1763-1766)
decimated both Indian and Euroamerican populations in the Susquehanna Valley. The
aftermath of these two conflicts generated flights into the interior of Pennsylvania and
Virginia between the 1750s and 1760s by Euroamerican and Indian commoners alike.\(^\text{37}\)
With the end of Pontiac’s War in 1766 the Iroquois and colonial leaders created a new
British imperial border and accompanying frontier west of the Alleghenies in the eastern
Ohio Valley. Without recourses to another strategy, Euroamerican and Indians traveled
further west, into danger, to create a new commons. The shared experience of war in the
Susquehanna Valley eroded differences between Euroamerican and Indian enemies
cohabitating the eastern Ohio Valley.

Similarly Euroamerican and Indians had the same socioeconomic need for land,
food, and other natural resources. Shared needs provided a binding agent greater than the
division ethnic differences could create between Euroamerican and Indian refugees, and,
coupled with preexisting resemblances, especially the idea of the commons, allowed for
productive community building. Indian and European newcomers to lightly populated
regions frequently began settlement with a mixture of community-sustenance strategies in
which individuals or families depended on the region’s larger labor population and access
to collective land. A majority of North American Indians organized land in common
among individual communities or branches of allied Indian groups. The first colonial

settlements in Virginia and Massachusetts initiated “collective agriculture.” Spain required all new towns in late sixteenth colonial Mexico to lay out ejildos (common pastures), and French settlers laid out common pastures along the St. Lawrence River in Canada. Private property and large tracts consolidated under single owners came second to settlement. Initial survival required extending one’s access to labor and land collective through agriculture and communing. The eastern Ohio Valley, as a commons, provided a cultural and spatial meeting point for politically and economically marginalized Indian and Euroamericans. For Euroamerican and Indian settlers sharing the eastern Ohio Valley, a social identity superseded the formation of racial identities as well as the increased segregation that existed elsewhere in the Atlantic world.

Chapter Two examines how Euroamericans and their Delaware counterparts perceived the eastern Ohio Valley as a commons. Within the framework of migration and preliminary settlement, this chapter demonstrates how warfare during the French and Indian War and Pontiac’s subsequent war destroyed communities in the Susquehanna Valley. During the 1768 Fort Stanwix treaty, Iroquois and colonial officials constructed land sales that displaced Euroamerican and Pennsylvania Indians from the valley. Chapter two also addresses Indian and Euroamerican migration into the eastern Ohio Valley in the 1760s as well as their authority to settle the region. Both Indians and Euroamericans moved into the valley around the same time, despite neither having authority from Iroquois or colonial authorities to do so. By contesting the authority of

---

38 Allan Greer, “Commons and Enclosure in the Colonization of North America” The American Historical Review vol. 117 no. 2 (April 2012), 370 & 372-5.
treaty negotiators, Euroamericans and Indians in the eastern Ohio Valley constructed authority among them and distributed it between each other.

Chapter Three demonstrates how migration and settlement enabled the building of alternative geopolitical power. Unlike the power building that occurred in the Great Lakes, where a balance of power existed between Europeans and Indians, neither Euroamerican nor Indian inhabitants held power recognized by outsiders. Members of both communities occupied the valley despite the wishes of traditional Iroquois leaders or the royal department of Indian Affairs. Delaware Indians authorized Euroamerican occupation of land, and in doing so, Euroamericans settlers inadvertently legitimized Delaware geopolitical authority over the region.39

This second stage of new identity formation assisted marginalized Indians and Euroamericans in combating their subordination to colonial officials and Iroquois leaders by constructing their own legitimization through invented authority – power building. Instead, the formation of new communities helped subvert royal official land policies that attempted to prevent Euroamerican and Indian settlers from occupying western Pennsylvanian and western Ohio. Successful community building required the development of a mutually accepted language of symbols, cultural understandings, and expectations. Both creolization and ethnogenesis occurred consciously and

---

unconsciously as direct and indirect strategies to assist local inhabitants in adapting to their new environments, population, and power dichotomies.

This project contends that identity formation and community building through accommodation, adaptation, inclusion, and exchange are examples of productive coping strategies employed by marginalized individuals and groups. Euroamericans and Indians withstood, and sometimes benefit from, the greater social, economic, political transformations that resulted from European colonization and globalization in general.

Chapter Four details the third stage of ethnogenesis as the creation of a socially blended community of interethnic members and the establishment of an interethnic neighborhood throughout the eastern Ohio Valley. Mutual dependence and the reconstruction of decimated communities necessitated interethnic peoples and a culture of inclusivity, as mixed communities formed from the family unit outward. Inhabitants participated in a frontier exchange of labor, skills, goods, and networks that connected Euroamerican and Indian households together. Euroamericans particularly depended on Indians sharing their knowledge of hunting to survive. Communities also required collective labor to establish mills and other structures. Equally important, eastern Ohio Valley, inhabitants agreed upon an informal legal system and code of ethics, which included holding an individual, rather than an entire community, responsible for an interethnic murder. This grassroots legal system maintained peace between one-time enemies within the valley.
Finally, Chapter Five outlines the eastern Ohio Valley’s ultimate destruction at the hands of outsiders. After six years of peace, two competing land companies, the Grand Ohio Company and the Ohio Company of Virginia, claiming millions of acres in western Pennsylvania and western Virginia, intentionally destabilized the frontier in a convoluted attempt to have the crown grant them authority over the region. Both companies employed men to harass Euroamerican and Indian settlers in the eastern Ohio Valley. Hired gangs created gapping ruptures by directly targeting the multiethnic hinges that held both European and Indian communities together – namely Indians with Euroamerican wives or those who lived in Euroamerican settlements. In conjunction with this ploy land companies also recruited new settlers for the region by the thousands.

With interethnic tensions rising, the Crown government passed the Quebec Act of 1774 and in doing so voided both companies’ land grants. In a last effort to protect the land grants, in the fall of 1774 Lord Dunmore mobilized Virginian militia to attack the Shawnee and peaceable Delaware in modern-day Ohio. Less than a year later, continued violence spurred by Lord Dunmore’s War permanently separated the eastern Ohio Valley’s inhabitants by race. The need for protection overrode the benefits provided Euroamericans and Indians by the interethnic neighborhood. Divided along racial lines, eastern Ohio Valley Delaware and Mingo settlers migrated across the Ohio River to join larger Delaware, Shawnee, Mohegan, and Seneca communities. Without their Indian allies, the Euroamerican settlements were transformed into targets for British-allied armies of Ohio Indians, and they were forced to take up arms to protect their families.
Chapter 1: Settling & Unsettling the Susquehanna River Valley, Geopolitical Control and the European-Indian Struggles for Autonomy, 1750-1767

In the 1730s Andreas Byerly left Catholic Germany with his Lutheran parents. The Byerlys, with other German families, attempted to resettle in Switzerland, then Amsterdam, and finally, boarding the Charming Nancy, British North America. The group landed in Philadelphia in 1738 but remained in Germantown for only a few years before joining a convoy of families migrating first to Frederick, Maryland and then Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Andreas arrived in the Susquehanna Valley in his late twenties, around 1740, and obtained a 64 by 245 foot lot in Lancaster. There, he and his first wife built and ran a boarding house until 1759. Andreas’s experience might be considered typical of many migrants who arrived to the southern portion of the Susquehanna Valley by the 1740s. In 1755 however, when another German, Jacob Byerly, set out from Philadelphia to attempt the same feat, he and the forty “poor” families he led first to the Mahoning Creek and then to the North West Branch of the Susquehanna River met with immediate ejection from colonial officials and local Indians. Latecomers to the valley, the second Byerly settlement failed – on land unclaimed by Euroamericans, but contested by Delaware Indians, and one of the first Susquehanna settlements destroyed during the French and Indian War.40

The stories of Andreas and Jacob Byerly both exemplify typical experiences of migrants to the Susquehanna Valley between 1740 and 1760. Andreas’s story demonstrates the success and plenty found by those who entered the southern segment of the Susquehanna Valley in the early 1740s and gained legitimization by colonial officials. Jacob’s story, however, illustrates the volatility in settlement experienced by later arrivals. With the lower Susquehanna Valley settled by 1750, those reaching the region

after 1750 did so as vagrants and squatters. Opportunities decreased for settlers during the fifteen year lapse between settlement in the south and north. Over the same period the agendas of imperial officials shifted, and with them so too did economic opportunities and diplomatic relations with Indians. New imperial settlement and trade guidelines challenged local conceptions of authority and altered local Indian-Euroamerican relationships. The destruction resulting from the French and Indian War amplified the demand for land by the Susquehanna Valley’s most vulnerable Euroamerican and Indians families. Alternatively, the war’s aftermath created an opportunity for colonial officials to extend the borders of the colonies they oversaw. Colonial agents, who also engaged in war profiteering and land speculation, profited significantly by increasing the territories they oversaw. Conversely, the war profiteering and the land mongering of agents displaced (predominantly Delaware) Indians and Euroamerican settlers alike.

Destruction of communities through the loss of material possessions, family members, and a physical space to live forced an array of both European and Indians to form cooperative relationships. As a Euroamerican ethnogenesis commenced, so too did a process in which squatters and Delaware came to depend on one another for geopolitical legitimization as peoples in control of land.

In theory Pennsylvania offered an “asylum” for individuals, families, and groups like the Byerlys who had begun to migrate into the interior of North America to increase the quality of their life. The crown had established Pennsylvania via a land grant to William Penn in the late seventeenth century. From its establishment as an English
colony Penn, the true and absolute proprietor, promoted Pennsylvania as a “holy experiment.” Through two successive constitutions (the Frame of Government in 1682 and the Charter of Privileges in 1701) Penn attempted to construct a tolerant colony offering religious freedom to all God-fearing people, an elected Provincial Council, a representative democracy for all “freemen” and the ability to obtain private property. A mostly trade alliance, the League of Peace, between Penn and local Delaware made the Pennsylvania frontier, then the Susquehanna Valley, a generally peaceful place. William Penn did make stipulations against “vagrants” or idle people in his Frame of Government stating, “That all prisons shall be work-houses, for felons, vagrants, and loose and idle persons; whereof one shall be in every county.” Yet this provision did not prevent commoners from throughout Europe from making the journey to Pennsylvania. By the late 1740s and 1750s Pennsylvania’s backcountry required the labor and provincial loyalty that landless Europeans offered. During the first decades a multiplicity of religious denominations and ethnicities arrived in Pennsylvania and in the twenty years that followed a mixed lot of transatlantic migrants by the hundreds of thousands had arrived through the port of Philadelphia.41

*Settlers in the South, Squatters to the North*

In the first decades of the eighteenth century some of central Pennsylvania’s first Euroamerican settlers gathered along the southern tributaries and basin of the

Susquehanna watershed. Bands of migrants entered the region in near monolithic ethnic and religious groups and established insular communities. In 1718 William Penn’s death and the subsequent decade-long family battle for control over Pennsylvania curtailed land sales in the colony, but this struggle only proved an inconvenience for the majority of migrants intending on heading for the hinterland. The first Atlantic migrants to Pennsylvania’s interior often came from a rising English and German middling stock. This small group trekked into the thick of Penn’s Woods with an array of agricultural skills and artisan trades as well as moderate expectations for a good quality of life. By the 1730s and 1740s, Swiss, Swedish, Scots-Irish, and English Quakers, joined by Lutheran, Reformed, and Mennonite “Dutch” Germans, along with their indentured and redemptioner servants, proliferated in the lower Susquehanna region along a contested Pennsylvania and Maryland border. In the Susquehanna lowlands, settlers planted extensive agricultural communities on some of the middle Atlantic colonies most fertile land. Large farms of about 1,000 to 3,000 acres, farmed by family members and hired labor forces, provided for individual families as well as produce markets in eastern Pennsylvania and Maryland. Even those families who did not farm commercially still cultivated some crops for sustenance and claimed as much as fifty to one hundred and fifty acres. By the 1730s controversy subsided within the Penn family and William Penn’s sons Thomas, Richard, and grandson John Penn, regained the proprietorship. Thomas Penn made it his business to collect, preferably in sterling, the back quitrents and

42 Silver, Our Savage Neighbor, 7.
taxes owed to the family during the dispute. Two ramifications flowed from this
reasserted proprietary claim. First, a majority of the first settlers to the lower
Susquehanna obtained warrants and patents for the land they occupied; conversely, to
collect quitrents Penn appointed a collection of men as land office agents. Second, with
an increased number of men paid to enforce the Penn families right to quitrents, fewer
unauthorized settlers went unnoticed or without harassment.

Settlers who refused or could not pay back rents to Penn waited only slightly
longer before they too gained legitimate claims. In 1732 Lord Baltimore, George
Calvert, began the Maryland-Pennsylvania border dispute, claiming an entitlement to the
southern portion of Pennsylvania, from just above Philadelphia west through Lancaster.
Lasting over thirty years, the legal debate involved the wedge of land east and west of the
Susquehanna’s mouth, an area of great value as a route to the Chesapeake Bay and an
Atlantic port. Instead of ejecting settlers or forcing land purchases on them, the Penn
and Baltimore proprietors jockeyed for colonist loyalty in attempts to secure the land
within their individual domains. As the two families fought, land policies lacked
enforcement. Lord Baltimore stopped charging settlers quitrents and Pennsylvania
officials only charged rents loosely. In this “confused” environment, settlers
established communities without legal warrants in the southern region of the

43 Loret Treese, The Storm Gathering: The Penn Family and the American Revolution (University Park: Penn State
44 Lemon, The Best Poor Man’s Country, 65.
45 Treese, The Storm Gathering, 168.
46 Kenny, Peaceable Kingdom Lost, 30. Important to note Kenny later (pages 49-51) identifies this, as well as the
Walking Purchase as examples of Thomas Penn’s “land-hunger.” This phrase expresses a certain want for land but
obstructs what exactly the pressing motivations included. Having authority over land was important to the proprietors
in royal authority, social standing, and ability to continue to generate profits.
Susquehanna Valley. Places like the Big and Little Coves and Conolloways thrived for some years without fear of the Six Nations, Pennsylvania, or Maryland expelling them from the valley. Aptly, the lack of government intervention encouraged more migrants from Philadelphia and Baltimore who “stole into the Great Cove,” or Great Valley, located just “five miles north of the Temporary border” between Pennsylvania and Maryland.\textsuperscript{47} There, long growing seasons produced harvests principally of tobacco, wheat, oats, corn, and potatoes. Peach and apple orchards flourished as did thick berry patches and vegetables and a sweeping variety of produces; ample cleared pastures of lush grass supported swine, steer, and dairy cows.\textsuperscript{48}

Access to valuable plots in the south of the Susquehanna Valley diminished between 1730 and 1760 as the region experienced its largest eighteenth century influx of migrants. Equally, as time passed free settlers released an abundant number of redemptioner and indentured servants. When freed of their indenture this group often took up land in the immediate vicinity of their previous masters in the valley lowlands. As tracts grew scarce in the southern portion of the Susquehanna many servants, particularly German, began taking up residence in the northern wastelands of the Susquehanna Valley, building homes along the Raystown Branch of the Juniata River some fifty miles north of older valley settlements. This landscape lay at the periphery of


\textsuperscript{48} Raymond E. Murphy, Pennsylvania: A Regional Geography (Harrisburg: The Telegraph Press, 1937), 219-228, 236-242, 258-262.
British imperial territory. Just beyond settlement these river and creek beds appeared under-inhabited and under-utilized, the cultural requirements for needy people to claim it as a commons. Culturally recognizable among Europeans and people throughout the Atlantic world, the Pennsylvania hinterland was by definition a wasteland held in common for attaining, through labor, the resources necessary for everyday life.\textsuperscript{49} Successful in obtaining land, “poor servants” in Pennsylvania gained a reputation for becoming “very rich.”\textsuperscript{50}

From 1740 through 1760 the price of lots in the Susquehanna’s south rose exponentially each decade, increasing from around twenty shillings to eighty shillings per acre with the best lands from one to three pounds per acre.\textsuperscript{51} Marking the decreasing availability of free “barrens” along with the frustrated continued need for them, one group of Scots-Irish migrants forcefully asserted their occupation of “idle” lands set aside for Pennsylvania’s Conestoga Indians in Lancaster County (Conestoga Manor), aggressively demanding the right to “…labour on [the land] and raise their Bread.”\textsuperscript{52} Suggestive of the physical development and growth of southern Susquehanna settlements between 1730 and 1740, warranted and unwarranted lowland settlements extended beyond the disputed Pennsylvania-Maryland border in an inclusive bulging arch extending from Kittochinchy (Chambersburg) on the west, Paxtang (Harrisburg) at the

\textsuperscript{49} Greer, “Commons and Enclosure in the Colonization of North America,” 369-70, 372, 375-6 & 383.
\textsuperscript{50} Lemon, The Best Poor Man’s Country, 10 & 23-4, 32, 61, 67 & 69-70; Barbra Rhoda also described the population as Dutch German and English. Barber, Rhoda, Journal of settlement at Wright’s Ferry on the Susquehanna River, 1830 [hereafter cited as Rhoda Journal], HSP.
\textsuperscript{51} Lemon, The Best Poor Man’s Country, 67-8 & 87-8.
\textsuperscript{52} James Logan to Richard Penn, February 17, 1731, James Logan Letter book, vol. 3, Logan Papers, HSP.
north, and Lancaster to the east.\textsuperscript{53}

By 1740, owing to a combination of their late arrival and lack of financial resources, the trajectory of migrants shifted, passing through the well-developed and rich lowlands but leaving through Harris’s Ferry at Paxtang. Others traveled north and east by way of a well-traveled Indian road, the “Path Valley or Tuscarora Gap,” into the Susquehanna’s rocky north and the western highlands of the Pennsylvania Appalachians.\textsuperscript{54} Latecomers, arriving between 1741 and 1754, finished their journey at the second largest tributary of the Susquehanna, the Juniata River. Composed of about three German families and led by Frederick Star, one of the earliest groups arrived at the Juniata in 1741-2. Much like Star’s group, most of the post-1740 migrants continued to settle on the northern tributaries of the Susquehanna, building homes on the Juniata, west of the Kittatinny Hills known also as the “Endless Mountains” or the Blue Mountains.\textsuperscript{55} Forced into the “forested uplands” by the sharp-edged cliffs along the Susquehanna River proper, settlers contended with shorter growing seasons and longer periods of frost than those found in the fertile lowlands of the Great Valley.\textsuperscript{56} Geographically, the majority of the land on the Blue Mountains, along the Juniata and West Branch Rivers, included a rugged mountainous topography with jutting jagged and hilly earth, gray shale, and slate.

\textsuperscript{53} Kenny, \textit{Peaceable Kingdom Lost}, 20-1.
\textsuperscript{54} Lemon, \textit{The Best Poor Man’s Country}, 65-6; July 2, 1750, Richard Peters to the Assembly, PA Archive, ser. 8, vol. IV, Votes of the Assembly 1750, 3329.
\textsuperscript{55} Walton, \textit{Conrad Weiser and the Indian Policy of Colonial Pennsylvania}, 198-9; “A Hunger for Land” in a Kenny, \textit{Peaceable Kingdom Lost}. Kenny characterizes the 1742 migration curiously as “land-hungry” and not in need of physical space.
\textsuperscript{56} Murphy, \textit{Pennsylvania}, 213, 237, 249, 259, 320-1.
just below unproductive soil.\textsuperscript{57} Without the ability to farm, many of this group employed their time in hunting large game for food and the fur trade.\textsuperscript{58}

Of the 1740s and 1750s migrants, a great number hailed from Northern Ireland. Far from a simplified “land hunger,” the Scots-Irish arrived in the Susquehanna as refugees, with the cultural scars of political, economic, and social persecution. This group had endured tenant and labor exploitation and knew too well the insecurity of living by the ebbs and flows of the Atlantic linen market. In the Susquehanna Valley, land represented stability through self-determination. Much like their earlier southern counterparts, this group planted single dwellings at “scattered” locations instead of consolidated communities or structured open field settlements.\textsuperscript{59} When officials attempted to expel squatters from the northwest woods of the valley they did not travel to population centers to present warnings and ultimatums - the effective method of removal usually taken. Instead, in 1742 Pennsylvania Governor George Thomas served an eviction notice to squatters living in the northern Susquehanna by ordering officials to tack a proclamation to trees in highly trafficked areas of the woods and public spaces in developed eastern towns like Lancaster.\textsuperscript{60}

The uninhabited land west of the Susquehanna River was not quite as serendipitous a find as latecomer settlers asserted. The Six Nations had set much of the fallow grounds aside for Indian hunting. With the arrival of Delaware communities from

\textsuperscript{57} Lemon, \textit{The Best Poor Man’s Country}, 34-6 & 64.
\textsuperscript{58} Murphy, \textit{Pennsylvania}, 96.
\textsuperscript{59} John Harris to Governor Thomas, October 20, 1755, PA, Colonial Records, vol. 6, 645.
\textsuperscript{60} Proclamation of Governor Thomas Against Settlers on Lands in Lancaster, October 5, 1742, PA, ser. 1, 1:629-30.
eastern Pennsylvania to the Susquehanna, the hunting grounds had grown in importance. Refugees from the Six Nations and Thomas Penn’s Walking Purchase, these Delawares required the land for subsistence. Following Governor Thomas’s eviction proclamation a winter, spring, and summer passed and “[much] as were then spared, [had] since spirited up to stay.” So began a fifteen-year process of uprooting families from uncultivable, but available, land. Increasing numbers of European migrants gradually arrived, creating small population centers as they filled out the land.

As in the Susquehanna’s south, migrants into the northern region of the valley arrived and settled in clustered ethnic groups. Germans and Scots-Irish predominantly populated the north, with a smattering of English and Swiss migrants to the valley. The demographic composition of the Susquehanna’s southern valley worked to maintain unadulterated European ethnic and religious identities. When describing the Susquehanna’s southern population centers both George Hutchinson of Conegochig Creek and Jacob Morgan of Berks County summed up the people as only Dutch, Germans, and Englishmen. When interviewed, a man named John Craig suggested his town, Great Cove, held an Anglican, English identity and singled out a distinctly different member of the population, Mohawk James. Only in the aftermath of the French and

---

62 Richard Peters to the Assembly, July 2, 1750, PA, ser. 8, vol. IV, Votes of the Assembly 1750, 3330-3332.
64 Examination of George Hutchinson of Peters township in the County of Cumberland, November 15, 1755, Indian Affairs, Examination of Patrick Burns of Marsh Creek in the county of york, November 17, 1755, Jacob Morgan’s Deposition, November 18, 1755, Berks County, Deposition of John Craig, March 30, 1756, vol. 2, Indian Affairs, Penn
Indian War could the southern valley be described as including ethnically and religiously mixed peoples.\textsuperscript{65} Prior to the war however, multi-ethnic neighborhood networks began to take shape in the northern Susquehanna. In Raystown, English settlers joined with a community of freed Dutch German servants, as did at least one “Mulatto,” likely of African and Indian heritage, and possibly a small group of Delaware Indians.\textsuperscript{66}

In both northern and southern regions of the valley, immigrants with varying languages, religions, and cultures settled near water sources, constructing organic, but surmountable, borders between nearby neighbors.\textsuperscript{67} Throughout the Susquehanna Valley groups behaved territorially, wanting, and keeping, distance between each other. The regional arrangement of the Susquehanna’s southern and northern valley settlements suggests residents desired loosely inhabited areas rich in natural resources, game, and extensive uninhabited land.\textsuperscript{68}

The distance generally required to travel between homes for trade or to visit relatives, whether Indian or Euroamerican, fostered a frontier “hospitality.” Civility and the need for reciprocity obligated families to receive Euroamerican and or Indian travelers into their homes, offering supplies and sometimes shelter.\textsuperscript{69} Susquehanna homesteads did so while regarding outsiders with social prejudice, fear, and wary

\begin{footnotes}
\item[65] Family Papers, HSP [hereafter cited as Indian Affairs]; Supporting these claims Barbara Rhoda also described the population as Dutch, German and English, Rhoda Journal, HSP.
\item[66] Memorial to William Denny Esquire Lieutenant Governor and Commander in Chief of the Province of Pennsylvania, The address of the trusties and treasure of Friendly Association for regaining and preserving peace with the Indians, 1757 Indian Affairs, Penn Family Papers, vol. 3, HSP.
\item[67] Examination of Patrick Burns, November 17, 1755, Indian Affairs, Penn Family Papers, vol. 2, HSP.
\item[69] Kenny, \textit{Peaceable Kingdom Lost}, 23-36.
\end{footnotes}
hesitance. Communities understood the ability of an individual or group to ignite hostilities with regional repercussions. Southern valley settlers expected as much, especially from settlers of the Susquehanna’s north and American Indians, both groups deemed outsiders.

Despite a common European background, settlers in the long established areas of the Susquehanna watershed commonly referred to those in the north of the valley pejoratively as “backcountry inhabitants” – the people who lived on the fringe of real society, those whom leaders willing offered up in a “buffer zone” as the first to die in an attack. Although timing and geography determined much of the difference between the two groups, northern Susquehanna settlers stood out sharply for donning more skins and furs than linen and living predominantly off a diet of game and fish. Northern valley settlers mixed socially with local Indians, working, eating, and playing with one another. At Licking Creek, a community of Delaware lived on one side, while Scots-Irish made their homes on the other. According to reports by unnamed “back inhabitants,” “most of the Indians which are so cruel, are such as were almost daily familiars at their houses, ate, drank, cursed, and swore together – were even intimate playmates…” Refined outsiders deemed communing as evidence of the valley’s inhabitants unruly and uncivilized nature.  

---

70 Murphy, Pennsylvania, 96.
72 John Bartram to Peter Collinson, February 21, 1756 in A tribute to the memory of Peter Collinson, 27-28; Uriah James Jones and William Henry Eagle, History of the Early Settlement of the Juniata Valley, embracing an account of the early pioneers, and the trials and privations incident to the settlement of the valley, predatory incursions,
In the northwest of the Susquehanna Euroamerican and Indian settlers knew one another by face, name, and on terms suggesting an expectation of peaceable relations in perpetuity.\textsuperscript{73} Comparable to the process of community building transpiring between cultural divergent Indians during the first half of the eighteenth century, self-preservation trumped desires to remain culturally pure.\textsuperscript{74} Northern communities, and their uncultivable land, required neighbors and outside peoples to furnish everyday needs through trade.

Descriptions of northern valley settlements suggest a false sense of security. Settlers living in the northwestern of the Susquehanna did not prioritize fort or even stockade building immediately or shortly after settlement, as did later squatters in the Ohio country. Nor did they initiate so much as a central fortification after living years in the valley. Even as the French and Indian war closed in on the Susquehanna’s northern settlements, squatters continued to view their position as safe and remained “exposed” without constructing local barriers or protective shelters. Andreas Byerly and his family, who had left the boarding-house they operated in Lancaster to farm on unwarranted land on the western slope of the Allegheny Mountains, had established relations with local Indians. Just before Ohio Indians sacked their home in 1763 a local Indian with whom the family had friendly relations warned them to leave.\textsuperscript{75}

\textsuperscript{73} Bomberger, \textit{Bush Creek Tales}, 32.
\textsuperscript{75} Preston, \textit{Texture of Contact}, 164-7.
Cross-community trade relations served as important information networks and cultivated settlements’ awareness of one another across great expanses. Unsurprisingly, geography predetermined trade partners. Settlers in the south of the valley had road access for trade with larger Euroamerican population centers. The westernmost of the southern settlements in the Susquehanna needed to cover only seventy miles to Lancaster, and Lancaster residents had only sixty miles to travel to reach Philadelphia. Both southern regions had even less distance between themselves and the heavily populated rural country west of Philadelphia in Chester and Berks counties. Southern valley settlers benefited from the multiplicity of substantial rivers feeding the region including the Delaware, Lehigh, Schuylkill, and Potomac.\(^{76}\) In the valley’s north, however, the Susquehanna River restricted settlers to trading partners in the southern region of the valley or the collection of Mohawk, Delaware and other Indian communities in the north of the valley. The Susquehanna proved a difficult river to travel and encouraged a westward looking trade perspective, as settlers followed the flow of interior rivers to Indian towns.\(^{77}\) The ninety to two-hundred-mile outing necessary for trade with population centers and ports limited wider market participation for northern valley settlers.\(^{78}\)

Location restrained development despite both regions originating from “crude cabins;” the Baltimore-Penn struggle for control over the Maryland-Pennsylvania border did not protect northern Susquehanna settlements. The settlers offered no benefit to the

\(^{76}\) Murphy, *Pennsylvania: A Regional Geography*, 258.
\(^{77}\) Murphy, *Pennsylvania: A Regional Geography*, 213.
\(^{78}\) Lemon, *The Best Poor Man’s Country*, 34, 41 & 45-6.
Six Nations and only trouble for Pennsylvania officials who made it their business to confront unwarranted settlers soon after the settlers arrived. The Susquehanna’s fledgling northwestern settlements struggled to advance. One Seneca deputy of the Six Nations recounted that squatters, “audacious” enough to settle on the mountains, “[had] been forcibly removed & their Plantations broke up & destroy’d.”

Within five years, in 1748, however, justices of the peace for Cumberland County Conrad Weiser rode into the area around the Juniata “turning off the Squatters,” of which at least one small group of Germans had received authorization for their settlement by local Delaware with whom they shared the Juniata Valley. One year later regional Six Nations deputies, the overlords of the Delaware Indians, lodged “complaints” in Philadelphia against a group of families settling on the Blue Mountains. German-born, Conrad Weiser’s family had sent him to live in New York among a Mohawk community as a young child. Weiser spent his early life learning Indian languages and culture in preparation for a career as the official interpreter of Pennsylvania. Weiser spent much of his time in the late 1740s and early 1750s representing the Six Nations and his own land speculation interests by way of warning out settlers.

A year later, in 1749, Weiser informed the Pennsylvania Assembly of concerns raised by the Six Nations’ council at Onondaga. Weiser repeated, that “white people settl[ed] beyond the Endless Mountains on Juniata, on Sherman’s Creek … [and] that above thirty families [were] settled upon the Indian’s land this spring,

79 Council minutes, July 1, 1749, PA ser. 1, vol. 5:388-94.
80 Quote cited as Weiser to Richards, August 15, 1748 in Walton, Conrad Weiser and the Indian Policy of Colonial, 203-4.
81 Kenny, Peaceable Kingdom Lost, 37 & 40.
and daily more [went] to settl[el] thereon…Some almost to the head of Juniata River, along the path that leads to the Ohio. Evading eviction for a little over a year, this group constituted the first community-builders in the northwest highlands of the Pennsylvania frontier.

_Contesting, Constructing, & Inventing Authority_

The Susquehanna’s northwestern and southern settlements greatly differed in who authorized their settlements. Few settlers northwest of Lancaster County gained legitimacy by procuring a royal proprietary land patent. Those settlers in the southern portion of the Susquehanna Valley who did receive official permission also did so sooner than northern settlers. Northern settlers on average waited until the late 1760s, particularly for the New Purchase of 1768, before applying for land grants. Acceptance through inaction represented the informal method of authorization most southern valley settlements received before 1750. Pennsylvania officials and Six Nations leaders dared not upset inhabitants. Pennsylvania especially feared that settlers might turn on them; if the settlers espoused loyalty to Maryland, then the Penn family would have effectively lost the southern border to Maryland. The Six Nations did not protest the southern settlement either, which meant these settlers did not immediately damage Indian-Pennsylvania relations. Instead, the ability of the Six Nations to negotiate Euroamerican settlement strengthened the Six Nations control over Indian land. Leaders of

---

Pennsylvania, Maryland, and the Six Nation thus only contested occupation in the southern Susquehanna Valley when they had a specific need to do so.

Some Indian leaders and colonial officials, living in the southern region of the Susquehanna, found Quaker and German inhabitants beneficial to their own goals. Richard Peters and Conrad Weiser played pivotal roles as local advisors in determining who to eject and who to maintain as settlers for the Penn family. Thomas Penn chose Peters, a prominent Anglican minister, to serve as provincial secretary, secretary of the land office, and the clerk of the Pennsylvania Assembly in the hopes Peters would keep the assembly in line with Thomas’s own interests.  

In 1743, Richard Peters legitimized settlers in Kittochinny (Chambersburg) through quitrents and leases. The same year, Peters similarly subdued an especially aggressive group of no less than thirty families living along Marsh Creek. Just two years previously, when surveyor Zachery Butcher arrived in the area, the men of the settlement “gather’d together in Companies, and [went to] Arms every Time they Expect[ed] [Butcher] any where near there.” Butcher claimed the men had “full resolution to kill or cripple [him], or any other person, who shall attempt to Lay out a manor there.” A year later during the 1744 Lancaster Treaty negotiations, when the Six Nations objected to the first squatter settlements in the Susquehanna’s southwest, Conrad Weiser organized the

---

83 Kenny, Peaceable Kingdom Lost, 37 & 40.
84 Zach Butcher to Gov’r Affairs at Marsh Creek, June 17, 1741 and Settlers on Marsh Creek who Obstructed the Survey, 1743, PA, ser. 1, vol. I, 625 & 635; Jones and Egle, History of the Early Settlement of the Juniata Valley, embracing an account of the early pioneers, and the trials and privations incident to the settlement of the valley, predatory incursions, massacres, and abductions by the Indians during the French and Indian war of the Revolution, & etc, 39.
purchase of the inhabited land from the Six Nations. In other examples, backcountry officials obtained land grants from Indians for Euroamericans who had settled the land, transforming squatters into renters.

Just as they had in the early 1740s, in the 1750s colonial officials applied land policies unevenly throughout the Susquehanna. While Governor James Hamilton and the Pennsylvania Assembly contemplated legally awarding county status to the southeast portion of the Susquehanna, officials targeted the northern valley latecomers for removal. In July of 1749, a proclamation from Governor Hamilton directed the Blue Hills settlers “with their Families and Effects” to leave the land within five months or have officials remove them. The following spring, Richard Peters and Conrad Weiser, along with Cumberland county justices, including Deputy Indian agent George Croghan and under-sheriff Andrew Works, spent three months warning off settlers. To Weiser’s chagrin, his attempt at arresting the Blue Mountain group and jailing their male participants failed. The men of one squatter family, George and William Galloway, occupiers of the land Frederick Star inhabited earlier, stood up to Weiser saying, “You may take our lands and houses and do what you please with them; we deliver them to you with all our hearts, but we will not be carried to jail!” With that the men fled, leaving all of their property behind. The riotous Andrew Lycon similarly responded to Weiser’s threat, “present[ing] a loaded gun to the magistrates and sheriffs; [he] said he would

85 Walton, Conrad Weiser and the Indian Policy of Colonial, 199.
86 Conrad Weiser to Richard Peters, May 2, 1754, Indian Affairs, vol. 2, HSP.
87 Council minutes, August 16, 1749, PA, ser. 1, 5:398-403.
shoot the first man that dared come nigher.” Weiser worried “if the Trespassers, who were more numerous in other Parts, should believe they were to be carried to Prison, they would unite, and with superior Force resist the Magistrates…”

Once Weiser collected the intruders and explained the Six Nations’ position, the frontier families surrendered their homes to destruction. In one instance five male heads of households admitted guilt as “trespassers” with “no manner of right” to have built there. Agreeing to pay a reduced group fine of one hundred pounds, as opposed to five hundred pounds each, the families “took every Thing out of their Log-houses, and assisted in burning them.” Even the absconded Galloways returned “and expressed Satisfaction” that their Cabins now lay in ash, “saying, that if the Indians were determined they should not stay there, it was better to go away directly, as it was Summer-Time and mild weather.”

The cabin burning episode demonstrates that, before Lord Dunmore’s War squatters wanted local Indian approval to occupy land. Squatters, especially when responsible for families, preferred peace and productive living over the instability and violence that came with contested land. Weiser deemed a good many of the families he had pushed off as “poor,” and several “Families were large.” These settlers he offered temporary “Rent-free” housing on his “own Plantations” before “no Mercy would be shewed.”

In all, fifty-seven squatter men, representatives of families from three settlements

---

89 Weiser deposition, July 2, 1750, PA, ser. 8, Votes of the Assembly 1750, 4:3330-3332.
90 Weiser deposition, July 2, 1750, PA, ser. 8, Votes of the Assembly 1750, 4:3330-3332.
91 Weiser deposition, July 2, 1750, PA, ser. 8, Votes of the Assembly 1750, 4:3330-3332.
on Sherman’s Creek, the Big and Little Juniata, similarly accepted the fate of Richard Peters’s torch as a consequence of settling in the Northwest of the Susquehanna Valley. Peters and his mob of officials continued to burn out the region around the West Branch of the Susquehanna River, but they intentionally disbanded before completing their mission against unauthorized settlers in the southwest of the Susquehanna Valley including the Big and Little Coves and Conolloways. Despite Peters’s attempts against the Susquehanna’s northwest settlements, for the next five years the outlaying region remained a haven for latecomers, including a new wave of migrants from New England.

Increasingly the region between the forks of the Juniata and the West Branch of the Susquehanna River represented a confluence of interests, while equally reflecting the resulting stress of displacement. Men like Andrew Montour recognized the land as a vehicle for individual economic advancement. A man of mixed Euro-Indian ethnicity, a “Warrior,” leader, and “go-between,” Montour claimed, by Six Nations authority, control of the land around Sherman’s Creek which allowed him to settle rent-paying Euroamerican tenants near the Juniata River. With the blessing of the Crown and the proprietors, Montour asserted control of “his creek” and expelled migrants unwilling to settle under his authority, claiming, in 1754 that “he could suffer no Irish to encroach upon him he would now act according to advice and kill some of them.” Montour did not go through with defending his land claim by murdering occupants, nor did squatters leave

93 Memorandum taken at Fort Allen,” November 26, 1756, Indian Affairs, vol. 2, HSP.
94 Conrad Weiser to Richard Peters, May 2, 1754, Indian Affairs, vol. 2, HSP.
the region entirely or permanently. Prior to the French and Indian War, new settlers arrived, old settlers returned, and successfully removed squatters dispersed only to resettle just west of the Juniata and in doing so “gave great offense to the Indians,” predominantly Ohio Country Shawnee, “who, in return, drove them off” and east again.95

When displacement from one area worked, it did not resolve the issue of where landless men and their families could or should live. Leaving this critical issue unsettled generated significant problems between local American Indians and squatter communities. Just eight months before the French and Indian War arrived in the Susquehanna Valley, hostilities arose in the competition for living space. In February of 1755, Jacob Beyerly “encouraged” around forty “poor” families confronting dispossession from the Mahoning Creek to resettle about ten miles east along the West Branch. A group of Moravian Indians already occupied the area Beyerly had selected, however. Falsely claiming to have purchased the land from the Penn family, Beyerly seized control of the Moravian village. In an act unusually aggressive for northern Susquehanna squatters who depended on local Delawares for trade, upon their arrival Beyerly and his party commenced seizure of dwellings. Adding further provocation, Beyerly scrawled a German message on the side of one Moravian’s house: “Jacob Beyerly …forewarns everybody from this place.”

Unsurprisingly, the bold deed of the “Independent Rascal Jacob Beyerly…. much offended” the Moravians who sought the assistance of Conrad Weiser to turn these


56
squatters away. Beyerly’s actions upset other local Indian communities on two counts: first, for suggesting the Penns had purchased the land without their knowledge and second, that he had not sought Indian authorization before settling. Gaining the permission of local Indians represented the locally practiced method of obtaining authority to occupy land. Both grievances exemplified the slipping of geopolitical control out from underneath the feet of Susquehanna Indians, particularly the Delaware. Anxieties over settlement at the north and western edges of the Susquehanna Valley disturbed real, imagined, and constructed power in eastern North America, all of which came to head in the mid-1750s. In order to reconstruct the layers of meaning implied by settlements in the northwest of the Susquehanna Valley, it is essential to understand the ongoing struggles for geopolitical power and agency occurring among the regional Six Nations, or the Iroquois, and Indians in Ohio and western and central Pennsylvania (most often the Delaware).

**Negotiating Local Power**

The pursuit of autonomy and geopolitical control among Indian and European groups overlapped, shaping Euroamerican and Indian settler relations and subsequently the squatter story. Through the 1750s and 1760s the Six Nations’ leaders, like colonial officials, sought to consolidate their control over land and thus also their influence over

---

96 Conrad Weiser to Richard Peters, March 8, 1755, Conrad Weiser Papers, HSP.
trade and in politics. Leaders of both groups did so by restricting the ability of local groups or individuals to exercise authority through local Euroamerican and Indian exchanges.

Beyond the Susquehanna River Valley, beginning in the late 1730s and extending into the 1760s, an American Indian movement with spiritual, social, political, and economic implications spanned the southeast of North America to the Great Lakes. Although generally connected to Pontiac’s 1763 War, the movement’s philosophical underpinning attracted a growing number of western Pennsylvania and Ohio Country Indian communities. Dubbed by modern historians as “Nativists,” this group called for a return to traditional forms of Indian living as a means of reclaiming spiritual power. The rhetoric of this “awakening” supported the formation of cooperation between multiethnic Indian groups—free of Euroamerican religious, cultural, and material influence.

Nativism, in theory, advocated the end of Indian-European trade and in doing so, an end to alleged Indian dependence on European goods. As a confederation of Indian communities bound by this commonality, American Indians sought political and economic autonomy.

Although Nativist ideas and Eastern Indian unity strengthened during the French and Indian War, not all Indian communities adopted the philosophy or interpreted it

---

97 Gail D. MacLeitch, *Imperial Entanglements: Iroquois Change and Persistence on the Frontiers of Empire* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 2 & 177. MacLeitch positions Iroquois policy making as an attempt to stifle the British Empire and vast economic transformation, in the form of the market economy, from alienating the Iroquois from political power in North America. She does not say that the Iroquois themselves were in the process of attempting their own empire-building, which I do.

similarly.  

Small communities in the eastern Ohio Valley and central and western Pennsylvania combated Nativism with attempts at independence from the Six Nations. Indians living in the “trans-Appalachian borderlands,” who struggled to retain and project their own political identity within the Six Nations’ empire, recognized the benefit of maintaining relations with Euroamericans settlers. Local Delaware communities attempted to increase their numbers in stronghold towns such as Kittanning on the Allegheny River.

Supporting the French also proved a formidable strategy against Six Nations control. Communities such as the Pickaway Miami found autonomy from the Six Nations by allying with the French early in the 1750s. Others, such as Oneida leader Scarogyady and Ohio Mingo leader Tanaghrisson, claimed Mingo autonomy and authority over land the Six Nations had sold. The Mingo, former Iroquois, had a history of insurrection against the Six Nations and declared their independence as a separate people. Both men attempted to dissuade French and British colonial leaders from purchasing land from the Six Nations, arguing that their rivals had no authority in the matter. On occasion Tanaghrisson claimed “…our Kings [at Onondaga] have nothing to do with Our Lands; for We, the Warriors, fought for the Lands, and so the Right belongs to...

---

100 Kenny, *Peaceable Kingdom Lost*, 52-3.  
102 Randolph C. Downes, *Council Fires on the Upper Ohio*, (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1969), 43-4, 62 & 65; Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance*, 21. Dowd uses a language of “accommodation” to describe Natives resistant to a Pan-Indian/Six Nations Identity. Accommodations relates well to the relationship these Natives fostered/maintained with the British and Euroamericans but does not speak to their call for unique community identities or their call for greater control over where they lived, land they used, trade relations, and military alliances made, free from Six Nations guidance. For this reason I use words relating to Independence to describe the counter-Nativist movement.
to US, and we will take Care of them.” Colonial leaders ignored the claims of both leaders and, in refusing to treat with tributary tribes, colonial officials denied the Delaware, Mingo and Shawnee authority and stripped them of geopolitical sovereignty.

As leaders of affected Indians grappled with land loss their rhetoric regarding land rights shifted as a strategy to prevent dispossession, but their ideology did not. When this occurred Tanaghrisson attempted to shield the Ohio land by weakening Six Nations’ sovereignty over it. Employing European land ideology, Tanaghrisson reminded the colonial officers that the French had right of first discovery—not the Six Nations or any other Indian polity. Tanaghrisson’s suggestion that the French had a greater right to the Indian country over the Six Nations did not indicate his actual assessment of land rights, but a ploy reflecting his awareness that arguing Mingo rights would fall on ears unreceptive to their plight.

The central and western Pennsylvania Delawares’ rebellion from the Six Nations mirrored the Mingo. Strikingly different from Nativist visions outside of Pennsylvania, in central Pennsylvania Delaware spiritual leaders proactively issued warnings about the Six Nations. Indeed, one of the first revelations experienced in the Susquehanna Valley came from a Delaware prophetess in 1751 who urged followers to cull from their community the “old and principal men” who answered regionally to the Six Nations.

Through land transactions with colonial agents of New York and Pennsylvania,
leaders of the Six Nations transformed the political, economic, and social organization and functioning of North American Indian society. Attempting to position themselves as major political brokers and global trading partners, the Six Nations operated like other mercantile European empires. The Iroquois attempted to control the trade and resources of each of their tributary communities for the benefit of the Iroquois. The Iroquois treated with colonial officials to the detriment of the Delaware, Mingo and Ohio Shawnee and in so doing ruptured relationships they had formerly established with their dependents. Unfavorable treaty ramifications for individual Indian communities engendered resistance from below.\textsuperscript{106} Subjugation by the Six Nations denied the Pennsylvania and Ohio Country Indians the right to manage the land they inhabited.\textsuperscript{107}

Within this power dynamic, western Pennsylvanian Indian communities grappled for agency while contending with displacement. The Iroquois contended that because of the widening gap of power between themselves and the British Empire they had few choices when treating with the colonial leaders other than selling the lands their dependents relied on. Yet when Iroquois leaders negotiated with colonies during the 1740s and 1750s, they did so in terms advantageous to their own Iroquois empire building, not the needs of local Indian communities.\textsuperscript{108}

\textsuperscript{106} Snyderman, “Concepts of Land Ownership Among the Iroquois and their Neighbors,” 26-7.
\textsuperscript{107} Kenny, Peaceable Kingdom Lost, 6.
\textsuperscript{108} On Iroquois empire-building see Downes, Council Fires on the Upper Ohio, “A decade of Iroquois Supremacy, 1745-1754”; “Economic Adversity and Adjustment” in MacLeitch, Imperial Entanglements, 2, 93-4, 177. MacLeitch positions Iroquois policy-making as an attempt to stifle the British Empire and vast economic changes, in the form of the market economy, and from alienating the Iroquois from political power in North America. MacLeitch also suggests that the Iroquois themselves were in the process of attempting their own empire-building or “augmenting their status as ‘overlords.’” Conversely, according to MacLeitch the Colonial officials pressured the Iroquois using European settlement and military occupation into relinquishing the land. The Iroquois did so as the best, if not only decision,
Two treaties, the 1742 Treaty at Easton and the 1744 Treaty at Lancaster, clearly demonstrate the destructive effects Six Nation negotiations had on other local American Indian communities. The Treaty at Easton displaced entire communities of Delawares from the Delaware Valley. As forced migrants many of these Indian communities moved west into the northern Susquehanna and eastern Ohio Valley. Terms of the Treaty at Lancaster passed off some Indian hunting grounds to the Penns and others to Virginia and Maryland; it also threatened to uproot Shawnees and Delaware refugees resettled throughout the Ohio Country.\textsuperscript{109} Combating the loss of geopolitical power and vying for self-rule, disenfranchised Delaware found some agency in authorizing settlement to Euroamerican outsiders – squatters. Granting settlement permission could act as a vehicle for local leaders to expand their influence and command over people as subjects, warriors, laborers, and partners. Conversely, gaining Delaware authorization could protect squatter occupation of land by legitimizing it. Working against the desires of the Pennsylvania and Six Nations’ government, unauthorized squatter-settlers began seeking, and gaining, political and material assistance from the local Indians and communities they lived among to sustain their improvements.

Evolving similarly in, but also counter to, the spiritual movement underway “dissident” Indians from Pennsylvania and the Ohio country (composed of Delaware, Mingo, Shawnee, Seneca and others) joined around shared cosmological ideals centering available. The uneven power, however, held by the Iroquois over the Delaware suggests a conflict of interest between the two groups.\textsuperscript{109} Fred Anderson, \textit{Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766}, (New York: Vintage, 2001) 22-3. 

62
on land use and broad concepts of community. The Six Nations had sold land and dispossessed a variety of peoples as they amassed political and economic power. Yet, their dependents viewed land possession not as political leverage or a token for economic gain but as a spiritually born inalienable right. The eastern Ohio Mingo, Delaware, and Shawnee, along with other Indian communities and their squatter counterparts, required new access to land and natural resources, and held the right to do so. Thus these groups refused to follow or enforce land policies that threatened their needs.110 Dispossession and vulnerability united subaltern peoples of the Susquehanna Valley before imperial objectives disrupted their tenuous community with the French and Indian War.111

Giving or denying authority in its simplest form represented an individual and/or group’s autonomy and authority over others. American Indians, similar to Europeans, also defined power as the ability to provide basic needs, successfully protect subjects, and ultimately exert influence over others.112 As multiethnic Indian alliances and individual communities struggled for authority throughout the eighteenth century, the authorization of squatter settlements and trade with Euroamericans served as important demonstrations of geopolitical power.113 When local Delaware and Mingo allowed Euroamericans to live on Indian land, against the wishes of the Penns and Six Nations, they threatened the trade and military support wielded by the Six Nations. Without the ability to demonstrate their influence over and direction of tributary Indian communities, the Iroquois lost their equal

---

111 Preston, Texture of Contact, 33, 136, 144 & 150.
112 Dowd, A Spirited Resistance, 3.
113 Dowd, A Spirited Resistance, 20-1.
footing in diplomatic and trade negotiations.

Oneida leader Thomas King understood that war was the contingency plan for failed land negotiations with colonial officials. Fearing dispossession, leaders including King attempted to hold the ground of their people against the colonies and warned of the consequences of failure. King pointedly stated—"If you keep pushing, you will push me out...I desire you will press no further. I desire another thing, that you will not take [the land] from me by Force. If you take this Land by Force, it will never go well with either of us. You may remember that God gave us this Land, and you some other, yet I have parted with some of it to you." Yet King, like other Indian leaders, miscalculated the amount of influence the Six Nations had with the provincial military officers who expected to speculate in land. Leaders of the Six Nations instead complied with imperial and colonial policies to safeguard their own interests. In one instance a Six Nations leader at Logstown, an Indian village within twenty miles of the Ohio, Alleghany, and Monongahela River confluence, turned away a Virginian Dunker, likely Thomas Hardie, who "requested liberty of [them] to make a Settlement on the River Youghiogheny." Short-term needs compromised Logstown Indians’ "Power to dispose of lands" to their own advantage. Seeking provincial military assistance for a war with Cherokee Indians to the south of them in 1751, Six Nations leaders enforced colonial land policies and refused the Dunker as "he did not take a right method, for he should be first recommended by their Brother the Governor of Pennsylvania with whom all publick

---

business of that sort must be transacted.”

Making sure Pennsylvania’s colonial representatives found out about the request for land and, more importantly, their response, the Six Nations purposefully demonstrated their authority over eastern Ohio land and their commitment to the Penn family. Three years later, in 1754, the commissioners of Pennsylvania charged leaders from the Senecas, Onondagas, Oneidas and Tuscarora’s with “clandestinely” encouraging migrants from Connecticut and New York to “fraudulently” buy and settle Susquehanna lands. The act threatened the Penns’ authority over Euroamerican settlers and demonstrated Indians’ ability to cultivate dependent relationships from Euroamericans instead.

Without Indian authorization, settlers such as Jacob Beyerly could and did turn belligerent. In one instance, after being refused by Indian leaders, settlers forcefully evoked their legitimization through the Crown, arguing a right to access of “lands belong[ing] to the king,” despite the fact that the land in question lay beyond Great Britain’s North American jurisdiction. Declaring King George III’s sovereignty amounted to a claim of “preemption,” an invocation of the language of imperial conquest through civilized superiority as opposed to a war victory. The legal authority imposed through preemption originated in the Doctrine of Discovery, a law that organized

---

115 “An Account of the Proceedings of George Croghan Esquire and Mr. Andrew Montour at Ohio in the Execution of the governor’s instructions to deliver the Provincial Presents to the several tribe of Indians settled there,” May 18, 1751, Indian Affairs, vol. 1, 72-72, HSP.
116 July 6, 1754, “Proceedings at Albany,” John Penn and Richard Peter, Indian Affairs, vol. 2, 3-7, HSP.
117 “River Indians Speech,” July 6, 1754, Proceedings at Albany by John Penn and Richard Peter and July 6, 1754 River Indians Speech, Indian Affairs, vol. 2, 14, HSP.
geopolitical control of potential colonies and aboriginal peoples under the dominion of European nation states. Taking shape over several hundred years, and throughout European debates, preemption’s North American use throughout much of the 1760s suggested a direct racial challenge made by Euroamerican settlers against American Indians. Through the language of empire, settlers acknowledged Indians as first, previous, or current occupants but asserted a greater right, if not duty, to land via Eurocentric definitions of agricultural cultivation.\textsuperscript{118} Squatters continued to claim rights to land through preemption, but it is important to note that the understanding and use of this language and right transformed with the needs and demands of the people who claimed it.

Confrontations illuminated the confused and increasingly desperate state of politically marginalized Indians and Euroamericans, both peoples who required a space to live. Relationships between individuals and groups may best be described by their struggles and strategies for gaining authority. Squatters sought to legitimize their use of land through an assortment of these local relationships as well as within the context of diplomacy involving the Crown, the Six Nations, and the provinces of Pennsylvania and Virginia. However far stretched, nasty, or creative the assertion, common Euroamericans and Indians understood, as did Indian and European governments, that individuals required permission to use land but that permission came in many convoluted forms.

Chapter 2: Regulating Social Order: Speculating, Segregating, and Controlling Settlement Patterns, 1750-1768

In the summer of 1754 Mohawk leader Hendrick met with Iroquois leaders on their way to a colonial-Indian conference in Albany, New York. Hendrick warned the Iroquois not to make their intended land sale to the Pennsylvania officials, nor to extend the Pennsylvania boundary beyond the Allegheny Mountains. The imperial government in London had ordered officials of the northern colonies to meet with delegates of the Six Nations at an Indian conference in Albany. As the French and Indian War approached imperial leaders assigned colonial officials with the task of repairing relations with factions of the Six Nations and streamlining Indian affairs throughout the northern colonies. Instead the attendants for Pennsylvania represented their private interests in land-speculation over the Crown’s or Pennsylvania’s interests. At Albany Hendrick continued to attempt to dissuade large sales of Indian land to the colonies, stating that Indian land sales impeded the long term interests of the Mohawk, Delaware, and other Indian peoples, with the foreboding conclusion that one day the Indians would “not have left a foot of lands.” Willing to anger Six Nations’ tributaries by dispossessing the Delaware and Mohawk communities, Pennsylvania officials successfully pressured the Indian delegates to expand the westward boundary of Pennsylvania and Virginia beyond the Allegheny Mountains to the Ohio River.119

Pennsylvania officials and Six Nations leaders spent much of the 1750s and 1760s using diplomacy and physical force to construct and enforce a social order beneficial to their interests throughout central and western Pennsylvania. Exemplifying Six Nations and land speculator ploys, in 1752 the Six Nations—by way of the Onondaga council and Iroquois and Ohio Mingo leadership, particularly the Half King (Tanaghrisson)—ceded some 500,000 acres of Ohio country to the Crown for the establishment of a charter in the name of the Ohio Company of Virginia.

According to the treaty at Logstown, which claimed precedence through terms set

---

119 “At a Meeting of the Indians of the Six Nations,” July 5, 1754 and July 6, 1754, PA, Colonial ser, 8:113-21
by the Lancaster Treaty of 1744, a group of Virginia adventurers (and financially interested Pennsylvanians including trader, negotiator, and land speculator George Croghan) would construct a settlement along the eastern border of the Ohio River to centralize trade “to the mutual benefit” of the British Empire and Six Nations. With considerable oversight to preserve peace as well as investor and imperial interests, the Ohio settlement offered a space for controlled Euroamerican and Indian contact. In practice, the company focused on increasing the profits of George Croghan and his partners at the Philadelphia merchant house Baynton, Wharton, & Morgan. An underhanded maverick, Scots-Irish migrant, and sometimes squatter himself, Croghan resembled the Euroamerican and Indian settlers and itinerate traders he wanted to dispose more than his educated business partners. A shrewd businessman Croghan had built a sizeable trade hub at Logstown in western Pennsylvania dealing in Indian goods and furs. Through his ability to procure European goods for western Indians Croghan had garnished respect throughout the Six Nations and even obtained a position on the Onondaga Council from the Iroquois. Using his diplomatic ties with the Six Nations Croghan gained standing, credit from social superiors, and most profitably, a 1756 appointment as Deputy Indian Agent in the north under Sir William Johnson.120

Guided exclusively by his own motivations, Croghan piggybacked debts and diplomatic promises for goods and partnerships. Ascending despite his near illiteracy, Croghan positioned himself as a lever of influence in the West among Indians and the

Pennsylvania proprietors, causing violence and forging diplomatic agreements as suited his needs.121 A key participant to the Logstown Treaty, Croghan sought to solidify his monopoly over western trade, disguised as oversight that preserved peace and imperial interests. The Ohio settlement offered a space for controlled Euroamerican and Indian contact, important for a man who controlled over “one third” the region’s trade but who wanted more.122

When the Pennsylvania Assembly refused to construct a storehouse for trade and the protection of Monongahela River Mingo Virginian merchant and land syndicate company, the Ohio Company, took over the project. Ohio Company investors included Virginia Governor Robert Dinwiddie, House of Burgesses member George Mason, London merchant John Hanbury, Esquire, and Maryland trader and agent to Lord Baltimore Thomas Cresap, among seventeen others including at least two members of the King’s Privy Council. The goals of the Ohio Company comprised “taking up a large tract of 500,000 acres of Land on the branches of Allegany and settling a Trade with several nations of Indians…”123 Thus by building the storehouse the Ohio Company gained good favor with western Indians and engaged in direct diplomatic negotiations with their greatest source of furs. For his part George Croghan worked intimately with the company as a representative for western Indians, Pennsylvania officials, and the Crown

alike. From a self-interested position Croghan assisted in reorganizing Indian and Euroamerican interactions in western Pennsylvania and western Virginia.

The Six Nations and the Ohio company planned the “Disposition” — that is removal-“of the Indians” living in region surrounding the Ohio and Monongahela Rivers. With the region cleared of Indians and Euroamerican settlers, the framers of the Logstown Treaty intended to introduce new and specific types of colonists to the area. Virginia would appoint a government official “acquainted with [Indian] customs and manners, as well as skilled in their Language” while the Virginia Governor, Robert Dinwiddie, required all Indians “to apply to a Justice of peace” to acquire an identifying document prior to their traveling to the region. The Virginia Commission also dictated that Indians should be led by an English speaking “man of prudence & discretion…” and banned any French or French Indians from joining them. On entering the Ohio settlement the government expected all Indians to “be orderly & peaceably.” A well-ordered plan, the Virginia Commissioners suggested that the Ohio settlement might “[unite]” the Six Nations and Great Britain “by the strongest Ties of Neighborhood as well as Friendship.” In return Tanaghrisson, a Catawba-born Indian Seneca leader, and the Onondaga Council asked that a fort be built at the “Fork of the Mohongalio” from which the Virginian colonial government would supply munitions to assist in protecting the Six Nations from the French. The Six Nations also requested that the Virginians only allow “good Men” known to be “fit” to trade at the Ohio settlement and “advise [those

124 Jennings, Empire of Fortune, 44.
men] how to behave”; in exchange the Six Nations agreed to take “all the Care [they could] of [their] young Men, that they [would] … behave better than they have.”

Three years later war interrupted the agenda of the Ohio Company but in the meantime, increased land sales and skulking surveyors amplified the concerns of local Indian communities marked for removal from the Ohio Country as well as western and central Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania regulations and diplomatic agreements, attempting to separate Euroamerican and Indian settlers, proved unrealistic at best. Divergent objectives placed Indian and Pennsylvania policy makers as well as authorized settlers, mostly Quakers, in contest with marginalized Euroamerican and Indians new to the region. The Six Nations’ sale of Ohio country land, occupied by Delawares displaced first from the Delaware River and now the Susquehanna Valley, encouraged some cooperative Indian-settler living. Landless and alienated from political power, individual Euroamerican and Indian refugees recognized the ability of inter-ethnic community relationships to fulfill their own needs through and thus resisted segregation. Throughout the eighteenth century, disposition, disease, and desolation forced Pennsylvania Indians to construct and reconstruct communities with diverse groups, refugees, and other itinerant peoples. The acceptance of multiethnic people and forging mutually reliant relationships had become ingrained in the culture and practices of the Delaware and other American Indian

---


71
communities long before the Nativist movement.\textsuperscript{126}

Likewise, throughout the early and mid-eighteenth century, landless Euroamericans gained access to land as tenant farmers of the Pennsylvania Delaware and other Indian communities.\textsuperscript{127} While proprietor-authorized settlers feared the inter-ethnic exchanges of outsiders, latecomer squatters and local Indians depended on one another.\textsuperscript{128}

As small independent traders, Euroamericans brought material goods into the region from urban centers. Beyond the Susquehanna Valley, Virginians and Pennsylvanians had cleared paths and built homes near the Ohio to trade in beaver pelts, skins, guns, and powder. That the traders succeeded indicates they also found the support of Indian customers. Only when the “River Indians” could not confine the benefit of European trade to themselves did they assert their control over British and French colonial settlement and leaders of local Indian communities by ending authorization of squatters.\textsuperscript{129}

Most Indian communities granted outsiders access to natural resources. In some cases, displaced and desperate Euroamericans chose to settle on Indian land without the intention of dispossessing preexisting Indian communities but instead hoping to


\textsuperscript{127} Preston, *Texture of Contact*, 99, 124-6, 129, 134 & 143. Preston suggests that Native and Euroamericans settlers worked together in the short term and that Euroamericans did so only while adjusting to the frontier. The temporary nature of the relationship is evident, however, in examining much of the same sources as Preston. It seems both groups also shared needs that they, at least temporarily, could fulfill through a cooperative relationship.

\textsuperscript{128} The Present State of the Indian Affairs with the British and French Colonies in North America, With some observations thereon, for securing the fidelity of the Indians to the Crown of Great Britain & Promoting Trade Among Them, Indian Affairs, vol. 1, 79, HSP. This document contains information stating that the preferred settlers to live with and among the Natives are educated individuals and skilled craftsmen. Reading between the lines the conclusion may then be drawn that the inhabitants bothering Penn family agents were not educated or skilled craftsmen.

\textsuperscript{129} June 28, 1754, Proceedings at Albany by John Penn and Richard Peter and July 6, 1754 River Indians Speech, Indian Affairs, vol. 2, 14, HSP.
productively coexist. Additionally various local leaders such as Scarogyady, an Oneida sachem at Logstown, supported specific Euroamericans settlement on Indian lands and proactively encouraged it. In part, the acceptance of new peoples onto Indian land and the inclusion of them as indirect members of Indian community harkened to the cultural expectation of “hospitality” among Indian and Euroamerican communities in general.  

That said, during the eighteenth and early nineteenth century colonization and empire building depended on accruing and maintaining the loyalties of individuals to leaders and empires. Sustaining regional boundaries and specific European land holdings in North America required the cooperation and support of inhabitants. When Shawnee, Delaware, and Mingo leaders residing in central and western Pennsylvania implicitly accepted Euroamerican settlements they affirmed their autonomy as independent leaders of sovereign communities. Similarly, when the Six Nations’ leaders granted land to the colonial officials they demonstrated geopolitical control over their tributaries.

*Land Schemes Sever All Ties*

Throughout the 1750s the Six Nations’ treaty negotiations with colonial officials shuffled local Delaware, Shawnee, and Mingo along with other local American Indians communities around, and out of, Pennsylvania. The Iroquois sale of land used by Delawares to the colony of Pennsylvania at Logstown in 1752 and at the Albany

---

130 Preston, *Texture of Contact*, 133-34; Rhoda Journal, HSP.
131 Preston, *Texture of Contact*, 134-5. With regard to the Native acceptance of Euroamerican settlers on Native land David Preston rightly purposes this was done as a common cultural practice among Natives. I propose an expansion to this argument with the addition that the Euroamerican acceptance of Native power assisted in legitimizing specific Native leadership and groups.
Congress of 1754 acted as final catalysts triggering an insurgency from within the Six Nations empire. As a direct result of these dispossessions, Ohio Delaware, Mingo, Wyandot, Twilightes (Miami), and Shawnee, and later Western and Central Pennsylvania Delaware, united under the leadership of Tamaqua, Shingas, Beaver, and Teedyuscung in attempts to first diplomatically, and later militarily, regain autonomy over land in the Ohio country and western Pennsylvania. In response to the predominately Delaware and Mingo military insurrection, local Indians, once cooperative neighbors, turned against the northwestern Euroamerican settlers of the Susquehanna Valley.

To the outrage of the Ohio Shawnee at the Albany Congress, proprietary officials Richard Peters and Conrad Weiser successfully utilized the numerous northern Susquehanna settlements – settlements which the officials had opposed earlier -- to support the Penn family’s purchase of this region as well as all the remaining Six Nations land in Pennsylvania. In addition to the trade and land investments at the core of Weiser and Peters’s personal agendas, the Penns desired to increase their land holdings as a vehicle for posturing among the British colonies writ large. The Susquehanna Company, a land syndetic out of Connecticut, stood in direct competition with Pennsylvania when they also attempted a multi-million acre land purchase with the Six Nations. Likewise, both New York and Pennsylvania wanted to increase trade with the Iroquois as well as

---

132 Jennings, Empire of Fortune, 29 & 41,”The Roundabout Road to Great Meadows”; Kenny, Peaceable Kingdom Lost, 6.
133 Downes, Council Fires on the Upper Ohio, 76-8.
the many Indian communities the Iroquois lorded over. As Great Britain and France struggled to gain control over the frontier, Weiser pressed Hendrick, the Mohawk representative of Onondaga, to “make a deed for all the lands that have been settled by White people, or are now wanted for settlements on the west side of the river Susquehanna.” When Hendrick refused Weiser falsely accused him and the other Iroquois of having already made a deal for the land with the French. Underlying Weiser’s statement was a threat that if the British colonies believed the Six Nations had made a land agreement with the French, the British colonies would not aid the Indians in the coming war against France. Although Sir William Johnson later reduced the full purchase, the sale of settled land endured in the Albany treaty of 1754. According to one Six Nations leader, the inability of the Pennsylvania governor to “remove his people from [their] lands” after the “utmost endeavor for that purpose except using force” persuaded the group to “part with [the land] and expect to be paid for them.”

Yet once Pennsylvania gained authority over this huge swath of land in 1754, these same agents lost no time in challenging the legality of settlements made without warrants. The Pens required families pay quitrents or purchase land to remain, widening the economic gap between warranted and unwarranted settlers. Latecomers and those without financial resources or network connections to established settlements had little recourse but to move west and take up new land. In doing so, however, migrants further distressed local Indians who reacted with violence following General Edward Braddock’s

135 July 6, 1754, “Proceedings at Albany,” John Penn and Richard Peter, Indian Affairs, vol. 2, 3-7, HSP.
136 July 6, 1754, “Proceedings at Albany,” John Penn and Richard Peter, Indian Affairs, vol. 2, 3-7, HSP.

The 1754 purchase at Albany angered disaffected Pennsylvania Delawares and Ohio Indians who otherwise had a history of supporting the British and provincials, military and civilian alike. With no Delaware present, members of the Mohawk, Oneidas (Tuscarora), and to a lesser extent Seneca, Cayuga, and Onondaga made up the 150-200 Indians representing the Six Nations during the proceedings at Albany. At forty-nine, the Mohawk signified the largest, most directly affected contingent. The Mohawk ultimately sold land overlapping the New York-Pennsylvania border, including land around the Juniata River which refugee Delaware occupied.\footnote{Timothy J. Shannon, Indians and Colonists at the Crossroads of Empire: The Albany Congress of 1754 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), 127-8}

For most of 1754, the Six Nations held a position of neutrality between France and Britain. Anger at the British colonies increased among local Indian communities who wanted the colonies to “restore their Lands to their natural state and deliver [the land] over to them as Proprietors of the soil…”\footnote{Peter Wraxall to Johnson, January 9, 1756, New York Colonial Documents, vol. 7, 18.} As Delaware leader Teedyuscung argued, the Penns acted fraudulently in the 1754 purchase in taking double the land offered and complaining on behalf of the “poor” Euroamericans who now attempted to settle on it. Teedyuscung worried the colonies’ continued acquisition and settlement of
land “Penned” in the Indians.\textsuperscript{140} Factionalism smoldered within the Six Nations, as migrants from Connecticut began arriving daily with claims that the Iroquois had bargained away the Delaware land north and east of the West Branch to the Connecticut speculation outfit, the Susquehanna Company. Supposedly, company agents had gained their Indian grants after getting Iroquois attendees of the Albany treaty deliberations drunk.

Such rumors aside, the Iroquois had acted without first conferring with the Six Nations Council.\textsuperscript{141} Local Delawares reeled, threatening to “kill… cattle first, and if [settlers] persisted, then the white people.”\textsuperscript{142} Meanwhile, the Six Nations released the colonies from involvement in the land disputes raised by their “cousins,” and patronized, not consoled, the Delaware.\textsuperscript{143} The Delaware’s willingness to maintain diplomatic relations with Great Britain dimmed. The Six Nations, however, bided their time by maintaining neutrality, refusing to ally with either France or Great Britain before the outcome was clear. Only an empire capable of winning the war could garner the loyalty of Six Nations.

Local Susquehanna Indians attempted to maintain productive relations with the British military. In one account, leaders of “six western Pennsylvania Indians” met with General Edward Braddock on his journey to Fort Duquesne. The group included a

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{140} Indian Conference, November 13, 1756, PA, Colonial Records, 7:321-6. The date for this conference is a year after the beginning of Delawares attacks on Susquehanna settlements, however during this conference Teedyuscung addresses the grievances of the Delaware as explanations for their earlier actions.
  \item \textsuperscript{142} Weiser to Peters, October 12, 1754, fl 47, Conrad Weiser Papers, HSP.
  \item \textsuperscript{143} Council minutes, November 14, 1756, PA, Colonial ser., 7:326 – 8.
\end{itemize}
Delaware leader named Shingas with a long history of working productively with colonial officials. He dressed in European clothing and led his community jointly with his brother, Beaver (Tamaqua). In speaking with Braddock the council hoped to keep peace with Pennsylvania and offered to share the land sold at Albany with Euroamerican settlers. Braddock, who disliked all Indians, refused the offer. Shingas pushed Braddock further, inquiring how the colonial government, particularly the governor, interpreted and would apply their ownership of land in western Pennsylvania and the Ohio Country, if “Friends to the English might not be Permitted to Live and Trade Among the English and have Hunting Ground sufficient To support themselves and Families.” Representative of both the colonial and Six Nations policies, Braddock flatly rejected any plan for cohabitation.

Braddock’s refusal trampled hopes for cooperative living between Euroamericans and Indians under the current imperial alliance. Understanding that long term British imperial policies meant to exclude local Indians from the region, the council severed their ties to their overlords, the Six Nations and the Great Britain. The local Delaware, Mingo, Shawnee, Potowatomi, Iroquois, Caughnawaga of the eastern edges of the Ohio Country, central and western Pennsylvania had asserted their sovereignty; soon after, a localized Delaware war for independence from the Six Nations and Great Britain became embedded within the opening stages of the imperial French and Indian War. Small

---

numbers of local Indians deserted the Six Nations to fight Braddock in the woods along the Monongahela. Braddock’s defeat assisted in persuading greater numbers of Indians from the Ottawa, Mississauga, Wyandot, Delaware, Mingo and other communities to join the military resistance against the Six Nations and Euroamerican settlers. Actions from local colonial officials further provoked Pennsylvania and Ohio Country Indians away from neutrality.

Ohio Indians had particularly warned their Susquehanna brethren of the imminent threat of displacement posed by the unceasing pursuit of western lands by British speculators. The conferences culminating in the Logstown Treaty of 1752 and the Six Nations sale of some of the Ohio Valley’s most fertile land to the Ohio Company left many Ohio Indian communities unsettled. Local tensions ran high; while at Fort Pitt surveyor Christopher Gist, agent for the Ohio Company wrote, “I understood it was dangerous to let a Compass be seen among these Indians….” The Indians rightly feared the high stakes of land lost and Gist, along with fellow land agents, had no shortage of dishonest tactics to employ in their land surveys. Directly affected by the Ohio land sales, some Ohio Indians believed, as the people who occupied the land and depended on its resources, that they held a greater authority over it than the Six Nations, French, or the British. With new swarms of Connecticut settlers encroaching on supposedly guaranteed protected lands of the Susquehanna’s northwest and additional backcountry and land schemes coming to light, bad feelings for the British loomed among Ohio and

---

Susquehanna Delaware, Shawnee, and Mingo.\footnote{Hinderaker, \textit{Elusive Empires}, 139.}

In the critical year from the conclusion of the Albany conference to the outbreak of the French and Indian War, Weiser and Peters continued disturbing local Indian communities by encouraging surveyors to claim land on behalf of speculators and Pennsylvania. Alternatively Peters dislocated squatters or kept them in place for the benefit of Pennsylvania’s claims.\footnote{Preston, \textit{The Texture of Contact}, 124 \& 144.} Weiser’s sons explored the wilderness “40 miles westward” from modern day Selinsgrove, in the Juanita and West Branch region, looking for “good land.” Though Weiser seems to have objected to publicly attaching his and Peters’ names to the land claims, his sons “marked several pieces of land with” both men’s names. Weiser assured Peters that he could obtain the “little improvements” on the meager cultivable land already inhabited by squatters for a reduced rate.\footnote{Conrad Weiser to Richard Peters, March 8, 1755, fl 50, Conrad Weiser Papers, HSP.} As it was, when Peters found squatters occupying his land bordering the Susquehanna, Weiser suggested he take on the group as tenants. Weiser deemed the families all uneducated and argued that under Peters’s direction their labor and improvements would drive up the value of the land.\footnote{Weiser to Richard Peters, 1754, Conrad Weiser Correspondence, vol. 1, HSP.} Meanwhile, stationed in the Susquehanna Valley, career military men such as army surveyor John Armstrong used their time to “continually [survey] in the new purchase” for unknown parties.\footnote{Conrad Weiser Journal, September 13, 1754, Croghan papers, HSP.} Such deceitful land grabs irrevocably soured the local Delaware’s perception of the British, and their relationship with, and place
within, the British Empire. An alliance with the French transformed local rebel Indians from regional neighbors of the northwestern Susquehanna squatters to the settlers’ enemies.

Death along the Great Social Divide

The Scots-Irish settlers of Paxtang, a town at the northern rim of the southern valley, often represent the general Susquehanna experience and perception of the French and Indian War. Yet squatters in the northern Susquehanna Valley experienced elements of the war, and battle in particular, very differently than did their counterparts in the south of the valley. Under the weight of war the interethnic networks squatters relied on rapidly deteriorated. Worse yet, squatter settlement patterns and their inability to access military resources exacerbated the impact of combat as the French and Indian War, and later Pontiac’s War, unfolded at their cabins. Understanding how, and why, squatters had constructed their frail society is essential in understanding how quickly it unraveled.

By 1755, northwestern squatter settlements extended twenty miles west of the Susquehanna River and fifty miles north of modern day Selinsgrove and consisted of a network of loosely populated communities scattered along the spray of tributaries and springs of the Susquehanna, its West Branch, and the Juniata Rivers. While the government-sponsored burnouts five years earlier had not kept latecomers from the region, burnouts prevented settlers from improving homes, expanding fields, or

---

151 Hinderaker, Elusive Empires, 135-7.
prospering in trade. By the summer of 1755 the hub of settlement, on Penn’s Creek proper, housed around twenty-five individuals, most of German descent, while the region as a whole likely contained a population of around three hundred. Most settlements were single households or small startup communities consisting of one to three families located on one of the region’s many creeks, springs, or rivers.

Typical of most small plots, “Breylinger’s Improvement” included a plot with one structure supporting the Breylingers: Jacob, Hannah, and their two children. Generally, settlers of the Susquehanna’s north lived in single room cabins marked by a door, dirt floor, and simple “split log” and “clay chinked” roof. Some creative squatters, especially after a burnout, exaggerated the value of their property by referring to simple lean-tos as barns or hog houses. Reflecting hasty construction, squatters had few buildings outside of their dwellings. Additionally, a society employed as hunters, traders, and a small amount of livestock herders assembled few fences and cleared little land around their homes for agriculture.

Neighborhoods stretched a good distance, along the same water sources. Most, like Breylinger’s or “Gabriel’s Improvement,” owned by the principal settler George Gabriel, bore the name of the family in residence. Unlike future Ohio Valley settlements,

---

154 “Memorial to the Honorable Robert Hunter Morris, Indian Affairs & A brief narrative of the incursions and ravages of the French Indians in the Provenance of Pennsylvania,” December 3, 1755, both located in Indian Affairs, HSP; Murphy, *Pennsylvania*, 96.
the names did not usually speak to a regional leadership. The plethora of improvements named for families, geographic dispersal, and lack of centralized leadership is suggestive of people who inhabited individual/family plots but interacted within a broader regional “neighborhood” along the northwest valley. As a uniquely large and well-developed northern plantation, Gabriel’s Improvement (Selinsgrove), built in 1754, acted as a regional meeting place and included a farm, trading post, large home, and other out buildings. “In his immediate neighborhood,” “Godfrey Fryer, John Young, George Linn, George Schnabel and others” lived.\textsuperscript{155} Families interacted for trade and men came together for spontaneous defense of the region. In general, new settlers of the north and western Susquehanna lived apart. Settlers from older settlements on the southern banks of the Susquehanna, however, had laid deep roots over the generations and their towns encompassed larger populations by natural increase. Officials described southern homes in terms of substantial “Plantations” laden with possessions. Even small communities in the south of the valley such as the four-family settlement described by twenty-two year old resident John Craig comprised four houses and a mill built within a fort.\textsuperscript{156}

The location and structural differences between settlements in the northwest and southern region of the Susquehanna led settlers to experience shared events, war particularly, in decidedly different manners. Although France and Great Britain fought for imperial dominance over vast territories beyond Pennsylvania and Virginia in the Seven Years’ War, “French Indians” fought in the Susquehanna and Ohio Valley theaters

\textsuperscript{155} Linn, \textit{Annals of Buffalo Valley}, 9.
\textsuperscript{156} Deposition of John Craig, March 30, 1756, Indian Affairs, vol. 2, HSP.
of the global war to maintain autonomy and geopolitical control over the valleys. The army of Allegheny Valley Delaware and Shawnee left no question in their intent to push back European settlement. As the war’s new theater opened in the Susquehanna Valley, during the fall of 1755, Indians, in strategic military strikes, targeted the Susquehanna’s northwestern civilians and their improvements for annihilation.

In targeting Euroamericans settled on former Indian land, the Delaware also challenged the Iroquois’ leadership. Representing the first wave of the attack, two Delaware described the approaching army of 1,000 warriors and 500 French troops as seeking to “destroy as many of the Inhabitants Eastward of the Allegheny Hills as they could.”

The first attacks focused on settlements built on land only recently purchased from the Six Nations during the 1754 Albany Treaty – settlements that by their very location that housed squatters.

Leaders of the “River Indians” and Penn family representatives specifically labeled latecomers and their increasing numbers as the problem, not settlers established in the region earlier. The region’s most recent, predominantly New England born, squatters provoke local Indians into military formation by threatening that hundreds more planned to join them in the valley.

In the early fall of 1755, Shawnees, Delaware, and Mingo fell on northwestern settlements specifically as a statement against further settlement, loss of their land, and the dilution of their autonomy. According to the army’s pre-war expectations, Indians

---

157 John Armstrong to Governor Morris, November 2, 1755, PA, colonial ser. 6:676.
158 Preston, The Texture of Contact, 144-5.
159 “River Indian Speech,” July 6, 1754, Proceedings at Albany by John Penn and Richard Peter, Indian Affairs, vol. 2, HSP.
160 “Memorandum taken at Fort Allen,” November 26, 1756, Indian Affairs, vol. 2, HSP.
attacked forts first. The military counted on it and for this reason proactively built forts away from settlements to draw and concentrate Indian attacks on military targets. In the Susquehanna theater of the French and Indian War, western Indians bypassed forts, focusing their attacks on civilian settlements. Indian warriors collected “Prisoners and Plunder” as they sacked settlements throughout the West Branch of the Susquehanna Valley. Shawnee, Delaware, and Mingo along with other allied Indians “killed and carried off” sizeable portions of entire communities, including the population center at Penn’s Creek.

While a small Dutch-German group of families settled near Penn’s Creek fled to the woods, others met death at their doorsteps. An improvised posse of some forty-six men gathered at Harris’s Ferry to offer defensive aid to inhabitants in the valley’s north, but arrived days late and found only remnants of destruction and bodies to bury. Indian strikes entirely “ruined the Settlements” on Mahoney Creek, the whole of the Buffalo Valley, and cleaned families off a fifty mile stretch of the western shore of the Susquehanna. Following the assaults the northern most Pennsylvania settlements lay in abandoned ruins. One man, Mr. McClintock, refused to surrender his new

162 John Harris to Robert Morris, October 18, 1755, Colonial series, vol. VI, 644-5. Historians have cited different numbers of those killed or taken captive from Penn’s Creek as the result of relying on a number of sources or even letters within the same source which provide estimates. My research suggests that following the attacks at Penn Creeks few if any inhabitants avoided either death or capture. In the account of Paxtang’s John Harris, understanding the attack on John Penn’s Creek as being the same as the attack on Mahoney is not quite right. The two settlements were in the same neighborhood but were separate individual communities.
163 John Harris to Robert Morris, October 20, 1755, PA, Colonial ser., 6:645.
homestead and built a palisade around his home. Scurrying for cover, a small group of his neighbors joined him. Only thirteen men in their numbers, the group inflated their numbers by dressing the “women and girls … in men’s clothes, to be paraded with the men.” Finally fleeing the settlement by “dark of night, & with silence & haste,” the group “ascended the mountain” and made their way to Carlisle before their settlement was “plundered & burned.”\textsuperscript{166} By November, squatters had cleared from major river settlements around the Juniata as well. Of the fifteen hundred inhabitants killed and one thousand, predominantly women and children, captured, the first assaults produced the majority of human loss.\textsuperscript{167}

Only after active warfare transformed farms into battlefields, with multiple murders and seizures of Northern Susquehanna Valley inhabitants, did the mixture of British regulars, provincial soldiers, and militia construct defensive structures near squatter settlements in the north of the valley.\textsuperscript{168} Built late in 1756, the British hastily constructed forts “Shirley” and “Granville.” A small enclosure, Fort Shirley protected a negligible fifty individuals at a time. Despite its designation as a fort, Granville was only a fifty-foot stockade, or wood pillar enclosure, and provided little more protection than Fort Shirley. “Not having three Rounds per man,” the inadequately armed and trained militia stationed there failed to defend northern inhabitants. Just months after their

\textsuperscript{166} June 27, 1773, entry from The Diary of David McClure Doctor of Divinity [The Diary of David McClure], 1748-1820 (New York: Knickerbocker Press,189), 128-9.
\textsuperscript{167} Armstrong to Richard Peters, November 2, 1755, PA, ser. 1, 2:457-8.
\textsuperscript{168} Morris to Washington, February 2, 1756, Morris to Burd, February 3, 1756, PA, ser. 1, 2:564 & 566.
construction, warriors burned Fort Granville and forced settlers to flee Fort Shirley.\textsuperscript{169}

The experience of established settlers in the southern region of the Susquehanna differed greatly, as the British concentrated building efforts on protecting the settlements along the disputed southern Pennsylvania border, hoping a wall would safeguard the “thousands… seated” just east of the Susquehanna River.\textsuperscript{170} The British military planted southern forts with only ten miles between each other, as opposed to the twenty-mile distance between the two northern Susquehanna forts.\textsuperscript{171} Fort Augusta, built on the Eastern banks of the Susquehanna, and Southern forts including Cumberland and Ligonier withstood battle through Pontiac’s War.

Northern settlers had no choice but to flee the region. One eastern onlooker attempted to “describe the Confusion and distress of those unhappy people,” saying, “Our Roads are continually full of Travellers. Those on the other side of the Men, Women & Children, most of them barefoot, have been obliged to cross those terrible Mountains with what little they could bring with them in so long a Journey thro’ ways almost impassable.”\textsuperscript{172} The memory of the Indians’ campaigns—“Ravages,” “Murders,” and “Devastation”—kept Euroamericans from resettling the area for nearly a decade.\textsuperscript{173}

Dispossessed northwestern settlers of the Susquehanna River Valley scattered for

\textsuperscript{170} Morris to Shirley, November 21, 1755, PA, ser. 1, 2:457.
\textsuperscript{171} George Arthur Cribbs, \textit{The Frontier Policy of Pennsylvania} (Pittsburgh: NP, 1919), 77.
\textsuperscript{172} William Parson to Richard Peters, October 31, 1755, PA, ser. 1, 2:443-4.
cover in the forts of the southern and eastern regions of the Valley. When the war spread to the valley’s south, it did so under French military leadership. The French objective, gaining imperial control of the territory, guided the aims of southern campaigns and thus the type of warfare used. The French concentrated on military targets and supply lines. As such, southern settlements witnessed fewer civilian casualties per capita than the desolation of those in the West Branch region.\textsuperscript{174} Often having lived in the region for generations with established well-rooted family networks, settlers living in the southern region of the Susquehanna Valley had family and alternative homes in which to hunker down. As Captain James Burd noted, despite the “confusion” consistent with the imminent military strike, Shippensburg grew “full of People, they being all moving in with their Familys 5 or 6 Familys in a house.” Although Shippensburg did not have a large quantity of munitions on hand, they did have the government representation in the form of Burd. Burd appealed to Philadelphia for a “private Donation of Swivels, a few great guns, small arms & ammunition.” Unlike their northern counterparts in the valley the southern settlers also had the resources to retrieve the munitions, as Burd offered “we would send our own Wagons for them…”\textsuperscript{175}

The Delaware, Shawnee, and Euroamerican violence further exacerbated the social differences that existed between the north and south of the Susquehanna valley between 1755 and 1768. Despite somewhat similar origins, as people who both initially

\textsuperscript{174} “Memorial to the Honorable Robert Hunter Morris,” Indian Affairs & A brief narrative of the incursions and ravages of the French Indians in the Provenance of Pennsylvania, December 3, 1755, both located in Penn Family Manuscript, HSP, Preston, \textit{The Texture of Contact}, 152-3 & 166.

\textsuperscript{175} James Burd to Edward Shippen, November 2, 1755, PA, ser. 1, 2:455.
settled land without colonial land warrants, the resources available to each group during the Indian wars exposed rampant instabilities among the northern communities as a distinct socioeconomic group and widened the chasm, between those latecomers of the valley inhabiting the newer settlements on northwestern branches of the Susquehanna and the older southern and eastern and branches. Illuminating differences between the northern and southern inhabitants served as an important precursor in reframing the identities of both groups, the northern valley inhabitants as inferior and illegitimate, the southern valley inhabitants sound and superior. Ethnicity, culture, circumstances of residency, access to urban resources and overall volatility showed as lines of distinction between squatters in the Susquehanna’s north and south valley.

Exemplifying the differences between northern and southern valley inhabitants, in July of 1754, a “very considerable Number of the Inhabitants” from the lowland counties in Lancaster, Paxton, Derry, Cumberland and Donegal petitioned the Pennsylvania Governor for “arms and ammunition” as well as military manpower. In response, that Lieutenant governor of Pennsylvania, James Hamilton, informed the Pennsylvania Council that their protection was “of the greatest Importance, and well worthy of your most serious Attention. You may be assured, that nothing which depends on me shall be wanting towards affording them the Protection they desire…”176 Hamilton and the council set in motion a process for fortifying the southern Susquehanna River Valley and protecting its inhabitants, but did not make comparable consideration of families living in

176 Richard Peters to the Assembly, Votes of Assembly, 1754, PA, ser. 8, 5:3721-4. The dates of the Petitions include July 15, 1754, July 22, 1754 and July 26, 1754.
the northwestern region. In related efforts, during intermittent periods of heightened Indian attacks older authorized settlements enlisted a wider assortment of strategies. Exemplifying the capacity of southern families to avert misfortune, on rumor of an imminent Indian attack, five Wright’s Ferry families removed with their servants to a large house in Philadelphia.¹⁷⁷

In defending their property, southern settlement leaders remained in harm’s way and successfully called on Pennsylvania officials for support.¹⁷⁸ Additionally, when the military sought to enlist established settlers to serve in local militias or colonial regiments, long-term settlers had the tenure to demand pay for their services.¹⁷⁹ Squatters, however, fled enlistment and earned their name scattering throughout the countryside in search of any cover had. Targeting civilian settlements in focused attempts to push Euroamerican settlements east, Delaware and Shawnee warriors forced civilians to participate in the Pennsylvania’s backcountry theater by confronting them at their homes.¹⁸⁰

“Exposed,” squatters generally returned to the Susquehanna accusing the “French

¹⁷⁷ Rhoda Journal, HSP.
¹⁷⁹ Peter Spockery to William Denny, May 24, 1757, Conrad Weiser’s Papers, vol. 2, HSP.
¹⁸⁰ A Declaration and Remonstrance of the Distressed and Bleeding Frontier Inhabitants of the Province of Pennsylvania, Presented by them to the Honorable The Governor and Assembly of the Provinces, Shewing the Causes of their late Discontent and uneasiness and the Grievances under which they have labored, and which they humbly pray to have redres’d (William Bradford: Philadelphia, 1764), Library Company of Philadelphia [hereafter cited as LCP].
Indians” of capturing their family members and selling them in Canada.\textsuperscript{181} False, exaggerated, and inaccurate words traveled easily through a forest with moving people. Unconfirmed stories surfaced; one recounted a small band of unnamed settlers who had not yet finished constructing the first house of their community when Indians from the west and/or south, likely Cherokees, slaughtered them.\textsuperscript{182} Other stories returned with the sole survivors of attacks, putting a dark gloss on regional sentiment, cultural understanding, and relationships with Indians. One such account told of two unlucky families, the Tygarts and Files who in 1754 made up one of the first Euroamerican migrations from the Susquehanna to the northern tributaries of the Monongahela. The group’s supplies proved too few and their crops did not thrive. Finally, on the eve of the French and Indian War, as the group made their way back to the Susquehanna, an Indian attack left David Tygart’s family unharmed, but killed the entire Files family except for the eldest son. The tale of even such a relatively small loss lingered in the historical memory of the region. When subsequent squatters resettled the land eighteen years later, they referred to the region as Tygart’s Valley. When these second settlers found bones “bleaching in the sun,” they identified them as belonging to the fallen Files family and buried them.\textsuperscript{183}

\textsuperscript{181} June 28, 1754, Albany proceedings, 1754, proceeding at Albany by John Penn and Richard Peter, Indian Affairs, vol. 2, HSP.
\textsuperscript{182} Patrick Burns Deposition, November 17, 1755, Indian Affairs, HSP.
\textsuperscript{183} Wills De Hass, \textit{History of the Early Settlement and Indian Wars of Western Virginia}, embracing an account of the various expeditions in the West, previous to 1795. Also, biographical sketches of... distinguished actors in our border wars (Wheeling: H. Hoblitzeli, 1851), 72 & 83.
The influx of northwestern Pennsylvania refugees after the attacks of 1755, reshaped southern communities to be more multicultural and pluralist. “English, Welsh, German,” Dutch, Swiss, and Scot-Irish with Anglican, Protestant and Catholic religions temporarily worked together as Euroamericans united against a general Indian threat. Even with a common enemy, however, settlers from the Susquehanna’s north and south struggled to agree on leadership or strategic planning, and the social gap between warranted and unwarranted setters continued to increase. Seeking to locate blame for the attacks further separated the socially divided groups all the more.

According to settlers in the Susquehanna’s south, those in the north of the valley had broken the law in settling without proper authorization. By squatting, they destabilized Indian-Euroamerican relations and made “Enemies” of once friendly Indians. According to Pennsylvania Governor William Denny, squatters triggered the “frequent Melancholy acts” that burdened the entire region with terror. After all, the “Murders committed by the Indians on the Western and Northern Frontier…filled the minds of People in general with a spirit of Indignation and Resentment against [Indians]…” Squatter actions sat squarely in the center of a violent cycle of Euroamerican and Indian retaliation. No one blamed the land speculation of Sir William Johnson or his deputy George Croghan. Instead, Quakers, and other Euroamericans in the south blamed squatters in the north for the “unhappy rupture” with the Indians and in 1757 offered

---

funds and a return of two million acres in northern Pennsylvania land to the Delawares to correct offenses done to their “Ancient Steady Friends” now at war with Great Britain.  

Moreover, squatters in northern valley settlements did not share the same vulnerabilities, access to resources, and traditional powerbrokers in American port cities and England as did the southern settlements. Nearly a decade later, during Pontiac’s War, settlers of the southern portion of the Valley continued to live in the protective shadow of the British Army at forts Bedford, Loudoun, Cumberland, and Ligonier. Another illustration of social fissures preventing the construction of a single regional Euroamerican identity occurred during a smallpox outbreak in 1763. At Wright’s Ferry, along the eastern side of the Susquehanna at the Maryland-Pennsylvania border, Quaker families bought protection from smallpox, paying a physician from Philadelphia for inoculations and other treatments. Without membership in urban networks or financial resources, recently emigrated squatters living on the northwest branch of the same river did not share in the same options. Instead, squatters fled their villages and carried the pox west to an already overcrowded Fort Pitt.

The rapidity of displacement in the late 1750s and 1760s left marginalized Euroamerican and Indians with few options outside of military protection. When possible, both groups sought sanctuary with the military at forts and encampments. 

---

185 “Memorial to William Denny, The address of the trustees and treasure of Friendly Association for regaining and preserving peace with the Indians,” 1757, Indian Affairs, vol. 3, HSP; Hinderaker, Elusive Empires, 142-3.
186 Peter Silver labels this a “class” difference. Silver, Our Savage Neighbors, 116 & 135.
188 Rhoda Journal, HSP.
189 William Trent Journal at Fort Pitt, 1763, HSP.
April of 1759, 164 men, women, and children of the Delaware arrived at Fort Pitt, “naked” and in need of provisions. In July of 1760, Colonel James Burd labeled the population around Fort Pitt as French and Indian War refugees. With settlers still building nineteen cabins, Burd calculated the civilian population at eighty-eight men, twenty-nine woman, and thirty-two children. One year later in the spring of 1761, a new wave of families arrived including widowed heads of households, children, and numerous Indian traders with grown sons, brothers, and trade partners in tow. Bakers, carpenters, smiths, and sawyers found work, if only temporarily, supporting the military and a new community assembled around Fort Pitt. The civilian population living outside the fort, numbered one hundred and sixty-three men, forty-five women and twenty-five children; the vast majority having come from the Susquehanna Valley.\footnote{“Pittsburgh Census,” July 6, 1760, in History of Pittsburgh and Environs, from Prehistoric Days to the Beginning of the American Revolution, George Thornton Fleming, vol. I (New York: The American historical Society, Inc, 1922), 467-9; “List of Houses and Inhabitants at Fort Pitt,” April 14, 1761 in The Papers of Henry Bouquet, Louis M. Waddell, John L. Tottenham, Donald H. Kent, ed. (Harrisburg: The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1984), 5:407-21. It should be noted that an uncounted population of women and children also lived within the fort.}

While the French and Indian War left commoners destitute, a handful of men like William Johnson profited from the colonial turmoil. Johnson had left Ireland to work as a colonial agent for his better relations. While in New York Johnson participated in the fur trade with the Six Nations, a success that reaped him a near monopoly on New York pelts and provided considerable inroads with the Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca and the Mohawk. In the 1740s he began assisting in treaty negotiations with the Iroquois and accepted the commission as New York militia colonel over Six Nations warriors. In 1753 he began using this relationship and knowledge of local Indians to obtain Indian
grants, including one purchase of 130,000 acres from Mohawks on the Charlotte River in the Susquehanna Valley and another—Kingsborough, in the Mohawk Valley—of 20,000 acres. Johnson’s connections enabled him to snatch up all of this for less than seven hundred pounds. Owing to his knowledge of the frontier and diplomatic skills during the French and Indian War, Johnson’s stature increased and in 1755 he became the first superintendent of Indian Affairs in the northern district. Johnson initially feared that his personal interests might prevent the crown from accepting his appointment, but when the Board of Trade approved it, Johnson choose George Croghan as his deputy due to the latter’s relationships with the Mingo, Delaware, and Shawnee—and in spite of Croghan’s reputation for corruption. Just prior to his appointment, rumors circulated that Croghan had committed acts of treason in communications with the French.191

West of the Alleghenies, the Crown’s proclamation required every individual to obtain military authorization to settle, hunt, or trade.192 As the protection yielded by Fort Pitt came only at the pleasure of military commanders, Colonel Henry Bouquet had settlers sign a Renunciation of Property Rights. As one document read, “Renounc[ing] all Claim and Right … to any Hause, hauses, Lotts, or Gardens & [etc.] in or about the Garrison of Fort Pitt.”193 Proactively, Bouquet established the grounds for nonpermanent settlement stating, “…no Houses, Lotts, Gardens, or Improvements are to be sold[,] let or

given, as the inhabitants have only the use and not the property of the same.”194 Fort Pitt settlers lived under a strict military authority and law. As was the case with soldiers, temporary settlers faced court martial for any wrongdoing.195 Unlike mutinous soldiers, who faced brutal whippings and worse, troublesome settlers had their dwellings destroyed and were “Banished” from the settlements.196 When civilians burdened the military or political conflicts cooled, fort commandants marched entire groups of people back to the still active battle zone in the Susquehanna.197

With few other choices settlers, like some local Indians communities, moved to land reserved for Indian hunting grounds between Forts Cumberland and Fort Pitt. The vast majority of these settlements did not last. Bouquet attempted to warn away Susquehanna people from the Ohio Valley by posting a “Proclamation Against Settlers.”198 Newspapers may have generated better results in keeping inhabitants out of the hunting zone by publishing accounts of slaughtered attempted-settlers. The report of Nathaniel Tomlinson’s migration party detailed the dangers of moving “Westward.” As the group began planting a small farming community near the Monongahela River, Indians arrived, torched their cabin, and asserted, “they would not have their Hunting Grounds spoiled by plowing.” Many of the migrants were killed in the fight that followed; the few survivors carried details of the event back to the Susquehanna Valley.

---

197 April 20, 1759, William Trent Journal 1759, HSP; Henry Bouquet’s “Expedition Against the Indians,” Journal 1764-65, WCL.
where by word of mouth they traveled to Philadelphia.\textsuperscript{199} Other larger groups made good on attempts to settle in the southwestern segment of the Allegheny Mountains of Virginia at Jackson River, Big Levels, and Muddy Creek in 1762.\textsuperscript{200} A year later however, during Pontiac’s War, fifty Shawnees led by Cornstalk besieged the settlements. The warriors saw that every man at Muddy Creek was killed and captured nearly every woman and child. Settlers faced similar fates at Big Levels and Jackson, killed as they attempted to scramble to forts eastward.\textsuperscript{201}

During the French and Indian War and Pontiac’s War, few living in the Susquehanna Valley escaped the brutal force of Indian warfare. To an extent, violence pushed off even some warranted landowners from the southern portion of the Susquehanna Valley. Phoebe Byerly escaped on horseback with a three-day-old infant in her arms, a toddler clinging to her back and, fleeing on foot, two small boys--including a lame three year old. In fleeing, Byerly abandoned a home the military had authorized them to occupy as well as the family business, an inn and tavern. Families like the Byerlys fled first to forts, followed by refugee communities, and finally joined westward migrations. Physical destruction and material loss possessed socially leveling qualities by way of contributing to the ethnogenesis underway.\textsuperscript{202} Backcountry inhabitants provided lists of their members killed or carried away and circulated a petition to the

\textsuperscript{199} Annapolis, May 25, 1762, \textit{Newport Mercury}, Newport, Rhode Island.
\textsuperscript{200} Hass, \textit{History and Indian Wars of Western Virginia}, 42.
\textsuperscript{202} Cyrus Cort, Col. Henry Bouquet and his campaigns of 1763 and 1764 (Lancaster: Steinman & Hensel, printers, 1883), 23-4.
crown “for redress of” their war-born “grievances.” According to one account, “[t]he houses and improvements reduced to ashes: the cattle, horses, grain, goods and effects of the Inhabitants either destroyed, burned or carried off by the Indians,” the impoverished withdrew from the region without many material markers of their class standing. Describing the social calamity, one report portrayed once affluent inhabitants as forced to live together in “crowded” stables and corn houses, “plenty reduced to the most extreme Poverty and distress, flying before their merciless enemies and in want of the common necessaries of life.” One petition for relief singled out the experience of “Planters,” —settlers generally from developed plantations in the southwest—who with “… Servants …threw themselves on the Charity of the other Inhabitants within the interior Parts of the Province….” However, all Susquehanna Valley captives shared the status as “unhappy wretches” and all survivors, “the people,” shared in the “Panicky and Damp upon the Spirits.”

In 1762 as he traveled toward Pittsburgh John Heckewelder noted the scarred landscape of the southwestern Susquehanna, describing “the ravages committed by the Indians [during the French and Indian War as] visible almost in every direction…” “Farms laying waste, with stacks of chimneys standing in the midst of a heap of ashes, where the houses had been burnt down.” The Indian wars of the 1750s and 1760s “drove thousands to beggary” and directly reduced entire settlements to the

---

203 Conrad Weiser to William Denny, December 20, 1757, Conrad Weiser Papers, Correspondence, HSP; William Ball to John Gibson, March 15, 1764, Gibson Collection, Gibson Family Papers, 1777-1820, HSP.
204 “Memorial to the Honorable Robert Hunter Morris,” September 20, 1755, Indian Affairs, vol. 2, HSP.
206 John Heckewelder, A Narrative of the Mission of the United Brethren Among the Delaware and Mohegan Indians, from Its Commencement, in the Year 1741, to the Close of the Year 1808 (Philadelphia, 1820), 59-60.
contents of makeshift rafts and crates mounted on horses for the transport of bed cloths, small children, and otherwise irreplaceable metal goods. Woodsmen, skilled traders, and scouts led the procession of desolate families and collectively herded the few livestock spared enemy slaughter over the Allegheny Mountains.207

In general, most squatters, other than a few small groups of predominantly single men, did not attempt to establish new settlements during the Indian Wars. For example, a pair of brothers in their early thirties, John and Samuel Pringle, deserted the colonial militia at Fort Pitt in 1761 with two other men, Childers and Linsey. The men, like so many in the early 1760s, lived on the move, foraging and hunting in woods along the northern Monongahela and Youghiogheny before joining a secluded squatter settlement on Looney Creek for three years. Discovered to be deserters, and with two members of their party arrested, the Pringles hid from authorities in the thick wilds of western Virginia, known as the Glades, before taking residence at the fork of the Buckhannon and Turkey Run. Yet even these outlaws camped out only in “the cavity of a sycamore tree,” not bothering to attempt to erect so much as a cabin in the region until 1769.208

Unsanctioned settlements founded before 1768 had low success rates and little staying power. Between 1750 and 1768, the Six Nations and European imperial powers uprooted and drove off latecomers to the Susquehanna Valley numerous times.

208 Hass, History and Indian Wars of Western Virginia, 31-34; Henry Haymond, History of Harrison County, West Virginia: From the Early days of Northwestern Virginia to the Present, (Morgantown: Acme Pub: 1910),19.
Latecomers lived in a state of diaspora with military burnouts removing would be settlers several times between 1750 and 1755, flight from the French and Indian War to the southern branches of the Susquehanna in 1755; and notwithstanding attempts to reestablish themselves in the northwest between 1755 and 1758. During those same years the groups shifted between forts in the east and west of the backcountry, with only rare attempts at forming new settlements on the Alleghenies in the early and mid-1760s. The vast majority of hopeful migrants moved further into volatility by pushing west, only to return east in sporadic migrations.

During the nearly two decades of warfare, a state of flux most aptly described the plight of former settlers of the northwestern region of the Susquehanna as they fled from one fort to another, sometimes scurrying west over the mountains for cover only to return east in similar flight. Pontiac’s War and other Indian attacks rendered the western fringe of the Ohio valley unsustainable for permanent Euroamerican settlements.209

209 “Intelligence given by Adam Long,” September 30, 1756, Indian Affairs, vol. 2, HSP.
In 1765 and 1766 George Croghan left the Susquehanna Valley to collect oaths of allegiance to the British Crown from former French subjects and the Natives who allied with them during the French and Indian War. Throughout his journey, Croghan covered extensive ground, traveling from western Pennsylvania through the Illinois Country, and he recorded meeting few other Euroamerican settlers along the way. While Croghan busied himself with settling the aftermath of the previous imperial war, a new war fought by multiethnic Indian refugees, predominately Shawnee and Delaware, kept the backcountry seething in violence and prevented organized migration to the West until 1768. Following Pontiac’s War Indians and Euroamericans began to cross the Allegheny Mountains and to forge an interethnic neighborhood founded on the commonalities shared by Euroamerican and Indian migrants as subalterns, peoples disenfranchised from traditional forms of political power and self-determinism. The devastations of war gave way to the formative stages of ethnogenesis.

Pontiac’s War originated in 1763, when the French-English peace did not offer a resolution for the Delaware, Mingo, Shawnee, or other Indians who had attached their Indian independence movement to France’s imperial war. England’s only diplomatic gesture toward appeasing western Indians spoke to concerns of geopolitical sovereignty and took shape in the Royal Proclamation line of 1763. The line prohibited individual Euroamerican settlement beyond the Appalachian Mountains, yet did nothing to end British military occupation, prevent official land sales, or thwart trading settlements.

---

210 George Croghan Private Journal, Fort Pitt to the Illinois Country, 1765 and 1766, Croghan Papers, HSP. There are two different copies of the 1765 journal. Another transcription other copy, corroborates this claim and is found in George Croghan’s 1765 Journal in The new régime, 1765-1767, Clarence Walworth Alvord & Clarence Edwin Carter, ed., Illinois State Historical Library, British Series, vol. 11 (Chicago: R.R Donnelley & Sons Company, 1916). The same information is corroborated in Thomas Hutchins’ A Description of part of the Country Westward of the River Ohio with the Distances Computed from Fort Pitt to the several Indian Towns by Land & Water, Thomas Hutchins papers [hereafter cited as Hutchins papers], HSP. This document is undated, but the use of Fort Pitt indicates that Hutchins set out after the fort’s construction in 1761.

211 Dowd, A Spirited Resistance, 34-37.
Instead, the line attempted to segregate local Euroamerican and Indian communities while maintaining Pennsylvania and Six Nations geopolitical control over the peoples of the greater Ohio country. Speculators proved the Proclamation Line’s greatest supporters, as men like William Franklin supported the line of demarcation in hope that it would keep westward lands clear of problematic settlers and thus protect their own vast land schemes.

As applied, however, the Proclamation Line created an obstacle for land companies. While the Crown enforced the Proclamation, no one could obtain a royal title for tracts west of the Allegheny Mountains. Prior to 1774, squatters generally did not seek legal land tenure, but merchant companies aimed to control space as a means of monopolizing Indian trade and acquiring access to the Mississippi River and the port at New Orleans. Without Crown approval, nothing prevented the many competing land companies from attempting to appropriate the Ohio Valley. In the 1768 New Purchase, the Penn family issued minimal land titles on the western side of the Allegheny Mountains, but courts only awarded once-squatting settlers with improved or occupied tracts—not land speculators—the right to Indian grants.

The Proclamation Line did not mend relations between western Indians and the colonial officials or the Six Nations. The Delaware and Shawnee, in particular, acted as

---


“Enemies, Rebels, and Traitors” against colonial and Six Nations subjugation. The Shawnee rallied Seneca, Mingo, and other groups behind the precepts of Pontiac’s nativist movement. Leaders, including the Ottawa who spearheaded the rebellion, Pontiac, militarized the rebel Indian groups in attempt to rebuff the Six Nations land sale to Great Britain. Focused on holding the eastern edge of the Ohio Valley, the first attacks in western Pennsylvania occurred during the spring of 1763 at isolated cabins of backwoods Indian traders and small farmsteads. Over fourteen families -- including Andrew Byerly, his second wife, and two sons -- lived scattered between Forts Ligonier and Pitt. The traders and farmers had gained informal authority to build their homes from local officers in exchange for providing supplies to the army stationed in backcountry Pennsylvania. The survivors of the attack took refuge eighteen miles east at Fort Ligonier, “their houses and Furniture Being all Burned; and … Crops all Destroyed.”

The British military and merchants encouraged increasingly grisly reprisal against Indian innocents. In 1764 Shawnee, Delaware, and Mingo warriors killed a hundred backcountry settlers; furious families and neighbors called for retaliation. The British military, in alliance with the Six Nations, offered bounties of 130 to 150 Spanish dollars for male and female scalps of Indians ten years old and up.

Ironically, the most likely supplier of arms and ammunition used to kill

---

backcountry inhabitants came from the Philadelphia merchant firm Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan.\textsuperscript{218} John Baynton and Samuel Wharton comprised the core leaders of the company while George Morgan, a British Indian agent, and, in 1768, George Croghan obtained only small shares in the company. Morgan and Croghan’s contribution to the company came by way of their preexisting influence with Indians, their positions within the department of Indian Affairs, their location on the frontier, and their standing in the backcountry as traders.

Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan operated a network of merchants that circled the Atlantic basin. For over a decade, the company had exchanged goods with ports in Great Britain, France, Germany, the United Provinces, the Mediterranean, the Caribbean, and Canada.\textsuperscript{219} When the French and Indian War ended, the company’s attention focused on fixing a monopoly over western trade, government contracts, and securing use of the port of New Orleans.\textsuperscript{220}

Within seven months of the Treaty of Paris, the company had established a merchant network and organized trade to replace French merchants in Canada, the Mississippi Valley, and Louisiana.\textsuperscript{221} When Pontiac’s War interrupted their trade

\textsuperscript{218} Rich & Winston to Baynton, Wharton and Morgan, November 14, 1765, Baynton, Wharton and Morgan Correspondence [BWM Correspondence], BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR.
\textsuperscript{219} John Tillotson to Baynton and Wharton, March 7, 1759, John Watson to John Baynton and Samuel Wharton, August 7, 1760, John Steinmetz to Baynton and Wharton, August 4, 1763, Anthony Merry to John Baynton and Samuel Wharton, November 8, 1763, Correspondence of Baynton and Wharton, BWM Papers, reel 3, DLAR. These letters are a sampling of examples from a larger breadth of documents supporting the Atlantic network that composed the Baynton and Wharton Atlantic network contained on reels 2 and 3 of the BWM collection.
\textsuperscript{220} Croghan to Frazser, Fort Pitt, March, 12 1765, Croghan Papers, Croghan to General Gage, March, 2 1765, Croghan to General Gage, Fort Pitt, March, 21 1765,Croghan Papers, HSP.
\textsuperscript{221} Anthony Merry to John Baynton and Samuel Wharton, November 8, 1763, Correspondence of Baynton and Wharton, BWM Papers, reel 3, DLAR.
schemes, the company ensured a favored position with Indians by passing contraband trade goods into the Indian Country through George Croghan.222

Local traders had unsuccessfully lodged complaints against Croghan for the illegal sale of rum, powder, and lead from the British commissary to Indians as early as 1761.223 Now more brazen, the company trafficked their illegal munitions under the guise of military supplies and Indian presents. In doing so, the British Crown may have unknowingly funded many of the enemy arms their subjects and soldiers encountered from 1763 through 1768.224 In 1765, a western Susquehanna Valley-based mob of men with blackened-faces sacked a pack train of the company’s goods headed toward Fort Pitt. In destroying eighty-one horse loads, the “black boys” successfully exposed Croghan and the company’s illegal gun trafficking. The “black boys” action specifically targeted the movement of a “large quantity of ammunition: Powder, lead & scalping knives” to the western Indians during wartime.225 According to Colonel Henry Bouquet, “Opening the clandestine Trade with the Savages, under cover of presents,” “incensed” the people, and did not represent general British Indian policy. Even if Croghan had transported the goods with the intention of using them as Indian presents, Bouquet charged that Croghan gave unnecessary large quantities of gifts and had charged the

222 Croghan to Sir William, March, 12 1765, Second letter of the day, Croghan to Sir William, Fort Pitt, March, 12 1765, Croghan to Thomas Gage, Fort Pitt, May, 12 1765, Croghan Papers, HSP.
224 Croghan to General Gage, March 21, 1765, Croghan Papers, HSP.
225 Petition, Cumberland County Inhabitants to Gov. Penn, March, 1765, Bouquet Papers, 6:777-8.
Crown an “Exorbitant” price.\textsuperscript{226} John Armstrong, now a colonel, called Croghan’s act “Some parts scandalous & base, the whole of it illegal, ill-timed [and] ill-judged.” According to Armstrong, the company had transported “30,000 pounds worth of goods and ammunition” and he had heard “reports” of “yet a greater quantity.”\textsuperscript{227}

George Croghan continued his attempts to monopolize trade through the restricted distribution of licenses to trade with Indians and his persistence in exaggerating the danger of backcountry inhabitants trading trade with Natives. With regional leaders like Croghan and Sir William Johnston clamoring for the establishment of a new colony and proprietary titles, backcountry authorities purposely kept the region destabilized and only reported anarchy among settlers and Indian communities.\textsuperscript{228}

Two years later in 1768, the company continued to traffic in powder and lead, audaciously hiding the munitions inside shipments of rum. In March 1768 an anonymous informer urgently wrote British Colonel Wilkins warning him of a clandestine letter circulating throughout the frontier. The letter urged inhabitants to “clean [their] guns” for an attack on pack trains from Philadelphia carrying Indian trade goods.\textsuperscript{229} Supporting the informant’s claim, a rumor spread threatening that “inhabitants of Virginia and Maryland [were] determined not let any Indian goods or ammunition for the Indians pass…”\textsuperscript{230}

After “several of the town people” accosted company agent Joseph Dobson about Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan’s unlawful trade, “asking whether I had got Powder and

\textsuperscript{226} Bouquet to Gage, April 10, 1765, Bouquet Papers, 6: 780-1.
\textsuperscript{227} John Armstrong to Croghan, March 26, 1765, Croghan Papers, HSP.
\textsuperscript{228} Croghan to Benjamin Franklin, October 2, 1767, Croghan Papers, HSP.
\textsuperscript{229} Chester to Col. (John) Wilkins, March, 1768, Croghan Papers, HSP.
\textsuperscript{230} Croghan to Gov. Penn, Carlisle, March 27, 1768, Croghan Papers, HSP.
Lead in the Bundles to Kill the Scotch Irish,” Dobson suggested the company send “lead and ammo” into the backcountry by separating the shipments: “4 horses load of lead with every 12 or fourteen horses and then if [the Black Face Boys] offer to Destroy it the loss won’t be great and we shall know how to act with the Rest.” Dobson also used decoy shipments by “parading” one packhorse train of sugar and coffee on the main roads while ten horses guarded by the Royal Irish took “undisclosed” paths into the Ohio Valley laden with lead. Well aware of the danger that could come of their shipments, Dobson secreted himself away from prying eyes as he repacked boxes carrying “147 Dozen Cutlass and 47 Dozen and four butcher knives - 194 Dozen and 4 Knives,” nearly 5,000 knives in all “for the Indian trade.” Croghan used his official position to urge William Johnson and the crown to allow him to reopen trade with western Indians, arguing that he had only “promote[d] the good of the Majesties Indian interests.” Croghan insisted he ordered the goods only to sell to western Indians following peace.

Croghan desperately suggested that denying western Indians trade in alcohol, gunpowder, lead, and arms would renew the French and French-Indian alliance and reignite the French and Indian War. Without trade in powder, lead, and rum, Indians felt “uneasiness”; the “Tweatweas, Ottawas, and Potawatoweys” and other Indians would

---

231 Joseph Dobson to Baynton Wharton and Morgan, May 11, 1768, Joseph Dobson to Baynton Wharton and Morgan June 18, 1768, Correspondence of Baynton and Wharton, BWM Papers, reel 3, DLAR.
232 Joseph Dobson to Baynton Wharton and Morgan, October 7, 1768, Correspondence of Baynton and Wharton, BWM Papers, reel 3, DLAR.
233 Croghan to William Johnson, Fort Pitt, March, 12 1765, Croghan Papers, HSP.
turn on the British Empire.\textsuperscript{234} Croghan’s misconduct resulted in his forced resignation from the Indian Department in 1771.\textsuperscript{235}

War fatigue brought Pontiac’s War to a truce in 1763, with intermediate localized violence continuing in 1764 and 1765 and spurts of localized violence into 1768.\textsuperscript{236} As the violence decreased, the Penn family attempted to reassert order in the west through the formation of the Land Application System. Through the Application System, the Penn family hoped to strictly regulate Euroamerican settlement in the eastern Ohio Valley, but more importantly the Penns sought to curtail large land speculation syndicates, like the Grand Ohio Company, that threatened the geopolitical power of the Penn family.

The Land Application System responded to the needs of squatters, allowing adventurers to locate land, have a county deputy survey the tract in question, and then submit an application to purchase land for five pounds per hundred acres with “one penny sterling per acre quit-rent.” Additionally, after paying quitrents due, the Application System allowed settlers without warrants to gain a title to land they had already improved—in effect, an amnesty for unwarranted settlers able to pay fees.\textsuperscript{237} Yet, demonstrating the continued lack of interest in purchasing land among residents of the

\textsuperscript{234} Croghan to General Gage, March 2, 1765, Croghan to Gage, March 12, 1765, Croghan to Johnson, May 13, 1765, Croghan extract, September 2, 1765, Croghan to Benjamin Franklin, October 2, 1767, Croghan to Gage, May 26, 1765, Johnston, July 12, 1765, Croghan extract, September 2, 1765 all found in Croghan Papers, HSP.

\textsuperscript{235} Croghan to Samuel Wharton, April 14, 1771, Croghan Papers, HSP. The date given on this document is 1768, but the information contained with in it illustrates that it was written three years after the 1768 treaty at Fort Stanwix, meaning 1771.

\textsuperscript{236} Dixon, \textit{Never Come to Peace Again}, 218-234 & 239-43.

northwest Susquehanna River Valley, only a fraction of applications for improved land arrived from there. Hundreds of claims did arrive from the Susquehanna’s southern counties: Berks, Northampton, Northumberland, and York.\textsuperscript{238}

Complaints lodged by Senecas, Shawnee, and Delaware suggest that the path was chosen by those unable to take advantage of the Application System. They had reason to worry, as the Euroamerican population had begun to increase on the east side of the Ohio River. Meeting with George Croghan, one Six Nations council of Native leaders described “the English” as “robbing them all of a tract of Country lying between the Ohio River and the Settlements of Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania and made large settlements thereon….”\textsuperscript{239} With little of their previous existences left to return to, and as one speculator described, land so poor in quality it produced “great cry & little wool” not being worth “powder or led,” good reason existed for squatters to believe that better lands might exist beyond the “Endless mountains.”\textsuperscript{240} Those occupying the small area of rich land in the northwest had to contend with corrupt officials, including Surveyor General John Lukens and George Croghan, looking to claim this land from beneath their feet.\textsuperscript{241}

The now money-poor southern Pennsylvania and western Virginia inhabitants -- along with furloughed British, Swiss, and Scottish Highlander soldiers, new to the region -- joined the body of war refugees and displaced people from the Susquehanna’s unsettled north. Together the convoys passed over the Alleghenies and into the eastern environs of

\textsuperscript{238} 1766 land applications, Land Records, Roll 1.8 Applications, east side and west side applications, Pennsylvania State Archive [hereafter cited as PSA], Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.
\textsuperscript{239} October 24, 1767, George Croghan Journal, 1767, Croghan Papers, HSP.
\textsuperscript{240} William O’Brien to Croghan, April 15, 1765, Croghan Papers, HSP.
\textsuperscript{241} Charles Lukens to Lukens, April 30, 1771, Lukens-Lenox Papers, Land Office Papers, PSA.
the Ohio River Valley. With them came nearly two decades experiences of violence and distrust for self-interested local officials.

*Over Mountains and Down Rivers: Land Jobbers, Scouts, and Migrants, 1768-1771*

Water systems played the largest role in transporting these migrants, and the Susquehanna’s West Branch in particular allowed families to cross central Pennsylvania and bypass the steep ridge of the Allegheny Mountains. Of the first wave of 1768 squatters, the transitional generation, few Euroamerican migrations ventured farther west or south beyond the eastern boundaries of modern-day West Virginia. Those who attempted longer distance relocations generally traveled to join preexisting settlements beyond the Ohio River Valley.

Many who attempted to travel beyond the eastern Ohio Valley failed and returned east. In one 1769 account, forty Virginian families “embark’d in a Schooner” set to resettle in Natchez on the Mississippi River. Instead, the bulk of the group “were made Prisoners & pillaged by the Spaniards,” and only a few survivors returned to Virginia. With the exception of an English settlement near St. Louis and the smattering of predominantly English, German, and Acadian settlements dotting the swampy coast of the Mississippi, the vast majority of the moving population first settled just west of the Appalachian Mountain range and to the east of the Ohio River. Before 1770, the journey of most Virginians and Pennsylvanians ended within the upper Ohio River watershed.
Meanwhile, travelers from Northern Virginia and Maryland relied heavily on passes through the Blue Ridge Mountains leading to the Cumberland Gap. The most recognizable gap may have been Cumberland, but several other gaps including McAllister’s and Sidney’s created passes through the Appalachian Mountains in western Pennsylvania and southwest Virginia, acting as a natural guide to fertile ground into western Virginia and modern day Kentucky.\(^{242}\)

Most settlers leaving from the upper Susquehanna Valley traversed the Alleghenies via Forbes Road, a military supply road cut during the French and Indian War connecting Carlisle in the Susquehanna to Fort Pitt on the Ohio River. Those from northern and western Virginia tended to follow Braddock’s Trail.\(^{243}\) The French and Indian War did more than expand England’s land holdings in North America; in carving supply lines through the wilderness, the military opened up new territories and encouraged movement by easing travel burdens. Roads fell into disrepair once the military’s need for them dwindled, and yet migrants continued to follow them. Less than a decade after its clearing, Captain H. Gordon noted that Forbes Road, the most noteworthy pass over the Allegheny Mountains for those traveling west across Pennsylvania, was “near impassable.”\(^{244}\)

More complex supply roads and military expeditions facilitated a relationship between the military and preexisting frontier settlements in the east. Military roads

---
\(^{242}\) “Remarks on the Situation, Soil, Climate, Settlements, and produce of the Western Country,” (1770), Hutchins Papers, HSP; April 24, 1773, entry in The Diary of David McClure, 118.

\(^{243}\) Journal of Captain H. Gordon 1766, HSP; Doddridge, Notes, LCP, 100; April 20, 1759, May 21,1759, May 14, 1763,July 27, 1763, William Trent Journal, 1759-63, HSP & William Trent Journal, 1763, HSP.

\(^{244}\) Journal of Captain H. Gordon, 1766, Hutchins Papers, HSP.
further stimulated the migration of groups already in central Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Maryland by providing set paths into territories unknown. Additionally, having marched soldiers along the roads and into the forested interior, the military taught men suitable routes, landscapes, and availability of choice land. Just as certainly, wherever the military cleared roads, migrants followed, with veterans often leading the way.  

In 1769, one Captain John Stuart, of an unknown company, and the Pringle brothers took steps to establish settlements on favorable land that they identified along the Monongahela during the war. During earlier military expeditions Indian agent and merchant trader George Morgan had taken careful note of his surroundings. Spotting a deposit of lead, Morgan’s imagination went wild with the possibility of a silver mine hidden beneath the earth’s surface. Thus, Morgan secreted away coordinates of the location with a description of rocks, riverbeds, and land as an on-the-go survey. Following the war, Morgan reasoned he “could again go directly to the spot…” and claim the land.

Veterans more commonly returned home, often to the Susquehanna, with reports of land in an attempt to generate interest in their own settlement schemes. Before Joseph Skelton Jr., the son of an affluent Penn’s Neck, New Jersey family left his parent’s home for a plot near Fort Pitt he explained that he had “a number of friends and relations both in Pennsylvania and New Jersey who [were] desirous of moving” and “forming a settlement on the Ohio.” With the backing of investors, Skelton wanted to bring industry

---

245 Benjamin Lightfoot, Survey Notes, 1759, HSP.
246 George Morgan to Abel James, November 8, 1769, Correspondence of George Morgan, BWM Papers, Roll 2, DLAR.
to the region with a pair of mills, grist and saw. Commonly, future settlement leaders organized collective male labor to clear land, plant a small first harvest, and build initial structures before their families and other interested parties followed. For groups planting themselves on preselected tracts, 1769 to 1771 represented a time of slow, if unsure and fractured, settlement construction.

When migration leaders did not have exact plots to return to, settlement began with male exploration parties usually leaving from older settlements or military forts in the Susquehanna. Working as land scouts, these men set out during winter months. These key settlement leaders, who often performed family labor as hunters, traders, or farmers, could leave for the West as families could withstand the loss of their labor during the winter season. Although cold months exposed scouts to the elements and offered fewer hours of sunlight for travel, winter months also witnessed far fewer Indian American attacks and thus provided a general sense of safety for scouts and for those who remained in the settlements and alike.

Few individuals dared set out alone; even the most noted or frequently traveled trails and rivers could, and sometimes did, conceal danger at every bend. Travelers met with bears, wolves, cliffs, swollen streams, and rivers. Horses tumbled or “lost footing” crossing rivers, and goods along with children were lost. Natural obstacles separated

---

247 Joseph Skelton Jr. to George Morgan, February 18, 1775, Correspondence of George Morgan, reel 2, DLAR. Despite the year, Skelton had been to the region during the 1760s.
248 Hass, History and Indian Wars of Western Virginia, 42.
249 W. H. Hunter, “The finders of Jefferson Country Ohio,” Ohio archaeological and historical publications, vol. 8 (Columbus: Fred J. Heer, 1900); Deposition, February 12, 1773, Northern Interior and Western counties, Pennsylvania Papers, 1744-1859, HSP.
family members and traveling companions, sometimes for good. Yet migrants pushed on from dawn’s break to dusk.  

Exploration proved difficult even for seasoned scouts such as French and Indian War spy Isaac Williams. Born in Chester County, Pennsylvania, Williams first migrated with his family to the “frontier town” of Winchester, Virginia. Williams spent his late teens as a contracted ranger spying on Indians. In his twenties, Williams enlisted as a private in the provincial military and spent the war marching munitions over mountains and across Pennsylvania. At thirty-one, in 1768, Isaac Williams knew the woods and highlands well and guided his mother and stepfather to new land in western Virginia. A year later, in the winter of 1769, attempting to strike out on his own with a small group of men, including Ebenezer and Jonathan Zane, obstacles delayed his crossing into western Virginia for nearly a year. High up in the Alleghenies, six feet of snow trapped the men on the mountain’s tablelands. Held up for over a month, one adventurer died of malnutrition and disease; another compatriot’s toes and one of “his feet froze and fell off.” Following his ordeal, Williams returned to his parent’s home for nearly a year to recover before setting out for western Virginia and successfully locating land on Buffalo Creek, where he lived for nearly two decades.

Speculators and squatters had diametrically opposed motivations for procuring rights to western land. Speculators speculated as a profession, squatters squatted as a life

---

style. Contemporaries defined a land jobber—another name for speculator—as “one who makes a business of buying and selling land on speculation.” Similarly, speculation only indicated “the action or practice of buying and selling goods.” The label squatter, however, referred to the experience and expectation of a dispossessed people. Speculators sought profits from land sales while squatters hoped to find sustainability on unoccupied land. Despite different intentions for using land, both groups often held overlapping interest in the same land, underwent similar actives, and at times supported their right to land with the same ideological arguments. These reasons have led modern historians to confuse and combine the two groups.252

Most often, squatters are mistaken for speculators when they engaged in for-profit land scouting. Squatters who operated as land scouts did so for themselves, groups they belonged to, or as independent parties working by commission for families east of the Allegheny Mountains. Isaac Williams serves as one example of a squatter who worked as a land scout. Williams squatted on Buffalo Creek, and throughout his adult life, he earned a small living, “a few dollars, or the value of a rifle-gun” at a time, as a land scout using his knowledge of the woods to locate tracts for others.253 When these land-scouting squatters met business competitors in the woods, they were not always neighborly: they cut down marked trees or gave unwanted scouts a “sound whipping.”254

Rarely did squatters also attempt to engage in speculating, and when they did, they claimed and sold minimal acreage in comparison to most speculators. One example

252 OED, both the definitions for land jobbing and speculating are from the mid-eighteenth century.
253 Hidreth and Culter, Biographical and historical memoirs of the early pioneer settlers of Ohio, 478.
254 Doddridge, Notes, LCP, 131.
is Mary Ditcher, a German settler residing in the Susquehanna Valley who traveled the woods with an old horse and her knitting. Ditcher, an elderly woman dressed in sheepskin, constructed small fires and hung stew pots over them to claim choice land. Ditcher made a living off her “improvements,” selling them each “for a trifle.”

Irish born Polly Mulhollin fled indentured servitude in eastern Virginia to squat and speculate in western Virginia and Kentucky. Disguising herself as a boy, with a hunting shirt and moccasins, Mulhollin cleared land and erected at least thirty cabins. For her work, Mulhollin acquired land warrants totaling 3,000 acres.

Although land speculation clearly affected those inhabiting jobbed land, investors generally lived outside of the region. Among companies like the Grand Ohio, the bulk of investors plotted their western Ohio Valley seizure from the safety of Philadelphia, New Jersey, and London. The distance involved in speculation had two important ramifications. Firstly, land jobbers had nothing to lose when their speculating destabilized the Ohio Valley. Second, companies employed land scouts and surveyors, sometimes from the local squatter population but more often than not from men connected to company members through military service; hiring these experts meant profiting from their knowledge of the region. Hired to oversee land scouts, companies employed agents, or men with similar knowhow as scouts. Companies paid agents who knew local Indians, Indian language and or culture more for their services. Some were

---

255 Rhoda Journal, HSP.
double agents: John Connolly and Michael Cresap infamously worked for both the Ohio Company and the Grand Ohio Company.\textsuperscript{257}

Speculators asserted ownership over substantial tracts by having trees in liberal numbers marked throughout their land claim. Far from the visible disclosure squatters left in plain view for those passing by, the scouts of land companies climbed high into trees to score hidden claims on whole areas.\textsuperscript{258} Land Jobbers sometimes hoped that squatters might take up tracts they had claimed. Men like George Washington, who jobbed thousands of acres in Indian country, understood the chances of gaining a successful title to a large preemptive claim increased if colonists, as potential tenants, already occupied the land in question and accepted him as a quitrent collecting owner. Companies like the 1751 Greenbrier Company actively lured squatters to their tracts with advertisements and the promise of selling land fee simple once the Crown had purchased the Indian land that encompassed it.\textsuperscript{259}

Unlike absentee speculators, squatters had a direct interest in maintaining peaceable relationships with neighbors. The challenges of moving into a desolate region required the small population of Euroamerican survivors of the French-Indian and Pontiac’s War to band in greater numbers for protection, labor, and legitimization. These squatter settlements relied on a basic collective organizational structure found frequently among common peoples throughout British North America, New Spain and New France

\textsuperscript{257} Deposition of Isaac Williams, January 30, 1784, in Crumrine, \textit{History of the Washington County}, 146.
\textsuperscript{258} Doddridge, \textit{Notes}, 134.
during the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Necessity, environment, and practicality advanced a cooperative culture among early squatters. Instead of attempting to displace other Euroamerican or Indian settlers, early Ohio Valley squatters needed new community members.\textsuperscript{260}

\textit{Interpreting a New Language of Symbols and Ceremonies}

Advance land scouts like Isaac Williams “Locat[ed]” plots that met predetermined criteria of the families that they represented. Land laden with key resources, such as water, salt deposits, game, and nutrient-rich soil offered potentially sustainable settlements. Once scouts identified a satisfactory tract, they often skinned a few tree trunks of bark with the blade of their tomahawk. Called “barking” or “girdling,” the tree died slowly but stood out against a forested backdrop of living trees. Other scouts made notches, etched initials or symbols into the body of tree. Often referred to interchangeably by settlers with warrants, British officials, and modern historians as a form of “preemption” -- an “Indian right,” “blazing,” or “taking land by tomahawk” -- these acts each held a distinctive meaning far greater than the declaration of exclusive tenured land possession.\textsuperscript{261} Dissecting the settlement process and ceremonies of transient people reveal clues to their immediate and long-term motivations for squatting and the

\textsuperscript{260} Greer, “Commons and Enclosure in the Colonization of North America,” 367-8, 372-3, 375 & 383.
\textsuperscript{261} Walter Scott Dunn, \textit{Choosing Sides on the Frontier in the American Revolution} (Westport: Greenwood publishing, 2007), 54-6. It should be noted that modern historians have readily repeated the use of the phrase “Tomahawk Right” from histories written in the mid to late 19\textsuperscript{th} and early 20\textsuperscript{th} century. Yet modern historians have done so without much, if any, investigation into the phrase’s meaning. An example is Kevin Kenny’s use in \textit{Peaceable Kingdom Lost}, 31. Kenny’s quote supports my argument that squatters only intended to live “temporarily” on squatted land, yet in the same paragraph, with no evident citation, Kenny also states “… they claimed title to their land by ‘tomahawk right,’ cutting their initials into the barks of trees to demarcate their territory.”
transformation of the social and legal realm, as well as the burgeoning formation of a frontier Euroamerican identity occurring in the middle grounds of backwoods European and Indian Country. Behavior easily interpreted as a poor man’s version, or extension, of imperialism in reality represented a juncture of performances. In a shared Indian and Euroamerican space and with shared tools, a tomahawk claim combined Indian methods of land occupation with European survey customs.  

After the 1763 Royal Proclamation, no law or right existed in Pennsylvania for assumptive ownership of land by individuals or groups without the confirmed approval of the Crown. When warranted settlers and officials described land claims -- made by others, as “taken” by “tomahawk,” or other such phrases -- they pointedly separated squatter claims from legal language typically used to describe property rights. The language purposefully suggested that backcountry settlers had regressed into savages. These practices were not recognized as legal in the common law of Great Britain but existed distinctively within the cultural confines of North America, more specifically in frontier spaces. Traditionally, Europeans accepted that land ownership was transferred through an exchange of species, material, or labor in which individuals worked land to pay off indentures and improved tracts to prove active occupation. Both forms of labor engendered rights and interests of individuals to specific land or to land in general.

264 Patricia Seed, *American Pentimento: The Invention of Indians and the Pursuit of Riches*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 13-15… Seed also argues “physical detention usually implied legal possession and ownership as well.” I on the other hand argue that not all possession is an indication/application/intent of permanent ownership.
Most colonial regulations stipulated that land ownership occurred through a European system of surveys, applications, and the transfer of a deed or similar paperwork. Procedures for taking control of land in the Pennsylvania and Virginia backcountry, however, regularly took the form of local rituals. While often compared to their British counterparts, such as “turf and twig,” a ritual in which a person symbolically cleared and committed the land to husbandry with no more effort than scooping up a handful of the earth or breaking a branch from a tree, the ceremonies repeated by frontier settlers contained direct and more substantial meaning.265

The vast majority of applications made for land settled by squatters from 1768 to 1772 did not propose a right to land based on tomahawk or any other rudimentary markings. Instead, most claimants requested a land warrant on the basis of “Improvement” or long-term occupation. While many squatters filed their application for improvement years after the six-month allotment granted by the Application System, it is important to note the absence of tomahawk claims. Assertions that most eastern Ohio River Valley squatters exploited laws and cultural understandings of land claims through superficial improvements, by planting a single or few acres of corn or constructing only a “crude cabin,” are problematic in light of the intricate processes and environmental factors present in squatter migration and settlement.266 Squatter land-scouring parties undertook a lengthy search and settlement process.

A reinterpretation of simplistic improvements recognizes that the realities of distance traveled, timing, labor, and transience prevented greater land development. Traveling the backcountry, squatters constructed simple shelters throughout their search. Importantly, squatters in the process of scouting land of their settlement did not stake claim on the collection of simple lean-to’s, fire pits, and hollowed out trees constructed along their trails. Additionally, necessity paired with time and labor constraints minimized the amount of corn scouting parties planted. Squatter scouts needed to plant their crops in early spring to ensure enough time to return home and lead their families to the new settlement. A small crop did not lessen the importance of the harvest in providing sustenance for the incoming settlers. Planting a small number of crops also did not indicate an attempt to claim land by nonexistent or symbolic improvements. Essential improvements, those required to sustain settlement, if not life, took real time, organization, and greater labor than the small band of land scouts who located land.

Benjamin Briggs’ efforts illustrate the convoluted process involved in an individual’s claim of land by “improvement.” In 1770 Briggs (and presumably several other men) assisted James Moore in clearing the land on Short Creek in western Virginia. “Grabbing and reaping the bush,” the men cleared Briggs’s tract, cutting down trees and hewing logs for a “considerable number of rails” to mark out Moore’s property line. With split logs, the men fabricated a house frame, “Rais[ed] the house,” and completed

---

267 Seed, *Ceremonies of Possession in Europe's Conquest of the New World, 1492-1640*, 17-20 & 24-5. Ohio River Valley squatters would most likely not have planted small amounts of corn or other crops on their initial scouting trip as they traveled during the winter.

the job. According to the Pennsylvania Land Office and Benjamin Briggs, individuals had a right to land if they “had built and resided on the land they applied for, and had a just claim to, as an improvement....”

In the event of multiple claimants, courts required a detailed deposition of neighbors. Locals compiled lengthy histories of land improvements and occupants, what they had witnessed firsthand, and what they considered common knowledge or the history of a tract.269 A publicly-appointed surveyor traveled to the land to support an improvement claim, and courts only paid out the real value of the improvements constructed.270 Courts judged improvements by ostensibly objective, formulaic criteria. For a man to claim 300 acres of land, the law required that he fully clear all 300 acres and that none remained as woodlands or without enclosure. As a result, men like Benjamin Briggs, already living in the backcountry, could not simply claim land until they met the specific criteria for improvement. In the case of Briggs, three years passed before he improved his own 400 acres.271 Even an unscrupulous man like George Croghan claimed forty thousand acres by Indian Grant and another sixty thousand acres by Royal survey and improvement. By viewing his land application one sees the only actual improvements Croghan claimed came in the form of buildings, roads, fences, and twenty

269 Deposition of John Williams, January 30, 1783, Deposition of Isaac Williams, January 30, 1783, Deposition of Alexander Bowling, July 3, 1783, Williams, January 30, 1783, and Deposition of Hugh Sidwell July 4, 1783, in Crumrine, History of the Washington County, 146.
acres of continuous field cleared. Furthermore, only one person could occupy the same space at the same time. When two squatters intended on settling the same tract of land, they either purchased the right from the person who built on the land first or selected a new tract. In 1770 Henry Taylor employed John Williams to help improve land that he had paid Baltzer Shilling to scout for him. Yet when the men returned to the tract after a winter hunting trip, Shilling had re-scouted the land for Hugh Sidwell and Sidwell had built his cabin promptly. Instead of quarrelling, Taylor paid Sidwell 12 pounds and a rifle for the improvement.

When squatters could not resolve their differences, courts intervened. Courts took their time verifying claims, but disputes between individual squatters, as opposed to between squatters and land jobbers, tended to be resolved fairly in favor of the actual occupant. In 1770, several claimants like Drury Murphy and Michael Wicks applied for duplicate patents to the same land along the border between the Susquehanna and Ohio Valley. In each instance, the Virginia council sided with the true "Inhabitant" the land.

From 1770 to 1773, squatter improvements commenced one creek at a time throughout the eastern edge of the Ohio Valley. Demonstrating a conscious understanding of land claims, Alexander Rowlin claimed 100 acres near Redstone by "Preemption." In essence, settlers established a right of preemption by occupying

---

272 Wainwright, George Croghan, 244-5 & 256.
273 Deposition of John Williams, January 30, 1783, Deposition of Isaac Williams, January 30, 1783, Deposition of Alexander Bowling, July 3, 1783, Williams, January 30, 1783, and Deposition of Hugh Sidwell July 4, 1783, in Crumrine, History of the Washington County, 146.
land, but the right itself only indicated the settler had a right to continue to occupy the
to a higher authority. A claim of Preemption
did not assert an actual claim of ownership, only a first option to purchase land if the
right to continue to occupy the

Most squatters waited nearly a decade to make a formal land claim for their
improvements and, when they did so, they claimed modest agricultural tracts. John
Lemon represented one of the few inhabitants to request a tract as large as 400 acres for
his improvement on the Shenandoah. So did widow Leanne White, who claimed 400
acres in her husband Samuel White’s name for land on Short Creek. More commonly,
warrants read like those of John Wetzel who claimed “Wetzel’s Run,” a tract of 300
acres…including [his] settlement made in the year 1773 on the Bank of Wheeling
Creek.” George Pumphrey warranted only his “settlement” on the “Waters of Buffalo
Creek,” as did a man named Hawkins, who in 1770 “made his home [on] Indian Creek”
with only a half an acre cleared. Still smaller claims included that of Daniel Barnes who
“built” and, claimed, only “a cabin” neighboring Hawkins. Other individuals who had
constructed only dwellings now had to obtain larger land grants to include a pasture or
field. Even tenants who lived in homes built by other squatters and paid rent to squatter

275 OED, entry on preemption.
277 Laina White, land warrant, February 4, 1780 and John Leman Improvement Land Grant, December 1779, both in
279 George Pumphrey, Improvement Land Grant, 1779 or 1780 and Samuel Williamson land grant for Hawkins both in
landlords sometimes successfully, though generally requiring a court appeal, claimed land by “Right of Residence”, though this generally required vindication by a court appeal. Men like William Biggs obtained 200 acres of farming land, necessary to support his only improvement, and a house on the waters of Buffalo Creek. With the same reasoning, an illiterate man named George Jenson received a warrant for his home “at the mouth of Lick Run” with an additional grant of 400 acres of farm land on Grave Creek. 280 Only settlement leaders, such as David Shepherd, who took on duties as field officers and militia leaders during the Revolutionary War, warranted tracts upwards of 1,400 acres. 281 Squatters reasonably produced functional improvements, inhabited, or worked land they claimed in order to meet the rules, expectations, and standards established by the Land Office.

Warranted settlers or officials often complained that someone else had “taken” or “claimed” land by tomahawk, blaze, or barking. This grumbling insinuated that the squatters had left European civility or progress by engaging in acts that crossed European-Indian cultural boundary lines. 282 In their depictions of squatters as others, valley outsiders noted the ethnogenesis underway. The supposed tomahawk claim is a particularly illuminating example of how custom, law, and perception transformed in the shared Indian and Euroamerican space was yielded by the frontier. The eighteenth-

280 George Genson Jenson, Right of Residence, March 1, 1780, David Shepherd Papers, DM, ser. ss, vol. 1.
281 David Shepherd, land warrant October 27, 1780, David Shepherd Papers, DM, ser. ss, vol. 1. There are at least 20 additional land warrants in this collection demonstrating a similar process for obtaining land by preemption or improvement.
The century tomahawk itself originated as a tool whose engineering owed to both Indians and Europeans. Depending on region and demand, eastern aboriginal peoples had created the tomahawk, originally “otomahuk, meaning to ‘strike down’,” and over hundreds of years refined the size, shape, and materials used. After contact, both French and English merchants engineered steel, brass, and iron-headed tomahawks for Indian trade. After over a hundred years of European development, tomahawks closely resembled a hybrid of the French hatchet and a scaled down English axe, adapted to confront the unique conditions of North America. Small, light, sharp, weight-balanced, and able to withstand hard use, by the 1750s the tomahawk represented the staple tool of the frontier, wielded by both the Indians and Euroamericans who shared the space.

Indian and Euroamerican hunters, traders, soldiers, land scouts, and surveyors all relied on tomahawks as weapons and tools. Squatters and North American frontier surveyors employed the tomahawk to bark and notch trees, as instruments for constructing a physical three-dimensional parameter or property line. Dating back to the late seventeenth century, the North American geography and the existence of vast underdeveloped land required new surveying techniques. In England, surveyors conducted a process called “radiation,” often using a plane table and eyeing out straight lines across already cleared fields. The American wilderness, however, called for “traverse” surveys, in which men with generally inadequate mathematical skills towed sixty feet of iron link chain around natural and artificial landmarks to measure awkward

---

boundaries. The survey documentation also was adapted to the American experience, breaking into three physical forms: a written narrative description of the tract, a sketch of the boundary lines and finally, physical marks, including tomahawking, barking, wood stakes/polls, or man-made rock formations all primarily marking out plot corners.\textsuperscript{284} For squatters in the early 1770s—unlike surveyors, land scouts, or speculators—much of the land application took place locally. In this negotiation for acceptance among local inhabitants, groups of local men walked the perimeter and shared information pertaining to the plot’s history while examining and solidifying the boundary lines.\textsuperscript{285}

Mathew Duncan’s application for 300 acres illustrates the combination of frontier language and old world process in action. Duncan described his plot as “begin’g at 3 dead black oak trees supposed barked by the Indians some years ago, and so going down sd. Creek about 4 or 5 miles from the forks … of the Susquehanna west branch.”\textsuperscript{286} Eleven months later, while on a surveying expedition for his father, Surveyor General John Lukens, Charles Lukens’s description of the tract relied on the identical landmarks. In another instance, Thomas Smith claimed 200 acres on a small stream “emptying into the Frankstown branch of Juniata…to a place with several trees deadened and one mark.”\textsuperscript{287} Smith had built at least one improvement on the tract, but did not include it as part of the survey as it was not a part of the natural, semi-permanent geography important for surveying and claiming land. Men and women claimed acreage with the language of the

\textsuperscript{285} Price, \textit{Dividing the Land}, 352-3.
\textsuperscript{286} Mathew Duncan, land application, April 3, 1769, Land Records, West side applications, Roll 1.9, PSA.
\textsuperscript{287} Thomas Smith, 1766. Land records, Applications, East Side and West Side Applications, Roll 1.8, PSA.
marking out system. When they later applied for larger tracks or additional property they wrote the addendum “to include” specific “improvements.” Over several decades of Pennsylvania and Virginia records, land application after land application reveals settlers repeating the language of tree markings for surveying as opposed to using these marks as a hollow act of preemption or a ceremonious improvement claim.

Symbols, tree scrapings, and initials acted as visual field markers akin to local public records by documenting information and indicating borders to a tract, not only as proof, but as a recognizable language of signs to strangers. Symbols could also function like maps, containing layered information pertaining to the intended use of the space, and the future envisioned for the vicinity as well.288 Symbols or initials carved into the natural topography remained semi-permanently. As land changed occupation from one squatter family to another, the official marks, these permanent boundaries, went unchanged or challengeable, beyond even that of the paper survey. When in 1754 George Gabriel gained an “Indian grant” of land along the Susquehanna, he notched a line of trees around the perimeter of his tract of “two hundred and ninety-five and one half perches,” or just under two acres. Even after Indians and later colonial officials drove him from his improvements, his marks and claims persisted, and in 1765, he was able to obtain a warrant for his land claim.289 The persistence of boundary lines is also

288 Christopher Tomlins, “Law’s Wilderness: The Discourse of English Colonizing, the Violence of Intrusion, and the Failures of American History” in New World Orders: Violence, Sanction, and Authority in the Colonial Americas, John Smolenski and Thomas J. Humphrey, ed. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2005), 34-6. Tomlins contends that the map as a multifaceted instrument in which the cartographer engages a dialogue about how he defines a space, and its future, through his physical representation. I argue the same can be said about locally laid boundary lines and other symbols employed in the backcountry.

demonstrated in the repetition of land applications referencing initials carved into trees mismatched with those of the current occupant or claimant. As was the case with John Bott’s claim to 300 acres “beginning at a tree marked Z.B.,” or John Lowans “on a creek called loyal sock… to begin at a tree marked “m.w.”

Migrants commonly reoccupied the land that others had marked, adopting the previously marked boundaries as their own. The frequency in which people lived on land marked out prior to their arrival occurred often enough that the action dismissed any pretense that the current occupant had “discovered” the area first. Owing to the commonality of tree markings, tomahawking took on shared Indian-Euroamerican meaning as an understood strategy to cope with the distance between frontier land and official documents, not a scheme to skirt colonial regulations in their entirety.

Far from an act of land theft against Indians or the Crown, before 1774 the use of tree markings connected common people to the official language of North American surveying and partially to the demands set by the Survey General’s office. Importantly, tomahawking and barking represented the ideas and the intent of their creator and crossed ethnic boundaries. Ohio Indians understood tomahawking as an explicit system for marking the perimeter of a tract that the notcher expected to occupy. In 1762 when Moravian missionaries John Heckewelder and Fredrick Post sought to establish themselves semi-permanently near western Indians along the Muskingum, they “marked out three acres,” an act which startled local Indians who limited Post to a plot of about

290 John Botts, land application, April 3, 1769, Land records, West side applications, Old rights, vol. 1, Reel 1.9, PSA.
fifty feet. Challenging them, an Indian objected, saying: “Brother! .... You have marked out a large spot of ground for a plantation, as the white people do every where; and bye and bye another, and another, may come and do the same....”\textsuperscript{291} In another instance, deputies of the Canajoharie requested Sir William Johnson send them a “Surveyor” “to run round their Lands, that they might mark the Trees, and set up Monuments of Stone at several angles thereby to prevent disputes between them & the White people.”\textsuperscript{292}

Like Indians, including the Iroquois, Euroamerican inhabitants of the backcountry used tree marks, organized rock piles, and other natural and manmade symbols to communicate more than spatial boundaries. Similarly, as people who lived in the woods, both groups advertised directions with notched trees and plotted out fixed trails to settlements.\textsuperscript{293} Departing from the Euroamerican desire for exclusive use of resources and space in more settled areas near the coast, squatters, as leaders and land scouts, marked a single tree or a “few at the head of a spring” to indicate the imminent formation of a settlement.

Needing trade partners and larger numbers for sustainability, Indians and squatters did not hide away in their wooded sanctuaries but lived openly. Both groups commonly left inviting directions formed of notched tree paths, among other markers, to

\textsuperscript{291} John Heckewelder, \textit{A Narrative of the Mission of the United Brethren Among the Delaware and Mohegan Indians, from Its Commencement, in the Year 1741, to the Close of the Year 1808} (Philadelphia: McCarty and Davis, 1820), 59-64. The phrase “mark out,” as in to claim a ownership of land through tree lines, which marks out the area of the land in question, is also used in Conrad Weiser to Richard Peters, March 8, 1755, Conrad Weiser Papers, HSP as well as multiple times as a facet of the surveying process in William Byrd’s \textit{William Byrd’s Histories of the Dividing Line Betweext Virginia: and North Carolina} (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1929), 62 & 98.


\textsuperscript{293} Crammer, \textit{History of the Upper Ohio Valley}, OHS, 157.
lead outsiders and latecomers to their settlements for trade or new membership.\textsuperscript{294}

Despite sharing a common European background with their squatter cousins just beyond the Alleghany Mountains, warranted settlers and officials differentiated themselves as a superior and distinctive group.\textsuperscript{295} Although Indians, Euroamericans, and surveyors shared in the practice and language of tree notching, only officials and warranted settlers tended to refer to squatter occupation of land as a “tomahawk claim.” The phrase “marking” or “marked out” described the same process when employed by officials and landowners; the use of different names to describe identical behaviors by different groups suggests the creation of an implicit hierarchy and the hardening of anti-Indian views.

The 1760s marked a moment of social and cultural transformation for those inhabitants who remained in the Susquehanna Valley. In direct contrast to those settlers who had migrated to the Ohio Valley, for those in the Susquehanna the deaths and destruction of the French and Indian War had forged strong feelings of hate for Indians as a single racially defined group.\textsuperscript{296} Overall behavior, sociopolitical views on land use, and settlement became points of division advancing the eastern perception of squatters as socially disorderly people. At the most basic level, the shared space, squatters occupied with Indians, and the resulting conditions and ideological responses that compelled landless Euroamericans to express a composite old world and Indian view of

\textsuperscript{294} Taylor, \textit{The Divided Ground}, 35; Crammer, \textit{History of the Upper Ohio Valley}, OHS, 57.
\textsuperscript{295} Seed, \textit{American Pentimento}, “Visual Forms of Distinction,” 131-4. Seed identifies how forms of “racism” develop between groups through prejudices that comes by way of misinterpreting dress, behavior, and other physical identifiers.
\textsuperscript{296} Silver: \textit{Our Savage Neighbors}, 203; Merritt, \textit{At the Crossroads}, 8-15.
landownership and use, fed Susquehanna settler perception of squatters as a different people. Furthermore, European ideology increasingly tended to rank civilizations based on their technological advancement, the accumulation of material possessions, and the structure of societies, measures with which Euroamericans had decided to regard Indians as inferior. The familiarity and dependence of squatters on Indian tools, languages, and spaces similarly made them savages in the minds of more established and wealthy Euroamericans.  

*Creole Concepts of Land Use & Resource Rights*

The acceptance of hybrid Indian-European land practices did not represent a completely unexpected change, as their shared needs exposed commonalities between Indian and Euroamerican frontier conceptions of land control, occupation, and use. Most Pennsylvania and Ohio Indian communities, including the Iroquois, opposed absolute possession of land instead preferring “flexible” land sales and agreements allowing usage.

---

297 Taylor, *The Divided Ground*, 35. The othering, dislike, or fear of settlers as a people is similarly found in the reaction of Euroamericans to individuals who shared in European and Indian practices or moved easily between the two groups as “go-betweens” as described by Merrell, “Fitt & Proper Person to Goe Between:” Paths to the Woods” in *Into the American Woods*, 54-105. Merrell has identified how frontiers people and governments perceived individuals employed as interpreters, traders, and hunters in a particularly elevated and necessary status. However, those people who depended on go-betweens also distrusted them for their ability to move between Indians and Euroamerican societies. Importantly it should be noted, and will be addressed in a later section, that these groups often made and found homes in squatter settlements. In conjunction, Jane Merritt addresses the importance of defining racial lines by way of an individual or group’s behavior, tools, methods, or processes such as “drawing boundary lines on a map” to mark out boundaries, *At the Crossroads*, 267-8. My argument extends Merritt’s. I contend that instead of drawing maps on paper, squatters carved symbols into the landscape. In doing so squatters demonstrated different behavior from those people who inhabited urban or more developed regions. For these differences outsiders incorrectly identified squatters as culturally and racial other and inferior. Hunting is also a comparable example of an action preformed by squatters and Europeans, but deemed as a mark of inferiority by Europeans when conducted by squatters. As discussed in Stephen Aron’s essay, In England hunting was preformed as a sport enjoyed by elites, yet when squatters hunted for food it demonstrated a sign of their becoming “white Indians.” Stephen Aron, “‘Rights in the Woods’ on the Trans-Appalachian Frontier” in *Contact Points*, Cayton & Teute ed., 180.
rights to non-owners. An individual’s membership in some Indian communities automatically allotted equal usage of natural resources within the territory claimed by the community. Furthermore, in Indian and European communities alike, the natural movement of game, fish, birds, and water prevented strict boundaries or claims to resources or the land they might occupy. Even land rights deriving from continuous occupation proved problematic with “Seasonally Nomadic” Indian communities such as the Iroquois and northeastern tribes, generally categorized as Algonquians, who inhabited a variety of spaces at different times of the year to meet their hunting and agricultural needs.

As British leaders’ speculative interests came into direct conflict with the needs of local Indian communities, leaders of Six Nation tributaries attempt to mediate European concepts of private property with those the Indians held. Northeastern Indian communities objected to the restrictions that Europeans placed on the use of land and natural resources by non-owners after a land sale. In the 1750s, the Conestoga questioned how their sale of Susquehanna Valley lands to the Penn family minimized the ability of local Indians to use the land or its resources. With the treaty at Albany in 1754, the Six Nations leaders continued to sell their tributaries’ land to the Penn family. In response, the Conestoga urged British officials to construct more porous boundary lines and permit the cohabitation of land and the distribution of resources by Indians and

---

Euroamerican settlers.\footnote{July 6, 1754, “Proceedings at Albany” by John Penn and Richard Peter, Indian Affairs, vol. 2, HSP.} Similarly, in 1762 Oneida leader Thomas King spoke out on behalf of the Munsee and Delaware in criticizing the Six Nations’ land sale to the British. King contested the British concept of exclusive land ownership and control of resources. Despite the land sales, King argued that local Indians should have retained their ability to “[hunt] the Wild Deer or [use] a Stick of Wood when they should have occasion.” King challenged imbalanced property rights offering a vision of equity in the distribution of natural resources saying, “The Cattle you raise are your own; but those which are Wild are still ours, and should be common to both.”\footnote{Indian Conference, Treaty of Easton, October 17, 1758, “At a Conference with the Northern Indians held at Lancaster,” August 19, 1762, “Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, containing the proceedings of Council from January 13, 1757, to 4th of October. 1762,” PA, Colonial ser., 8:195-201}

Largely a British imperial ideal, exclusive land ownership and permanent control of resources disheartened many individual Indian communities. Importantly, Indians like the Delaware preferred to establish “use rights” for an agreed time, thereby ensuring others an opportunity to take advantage of the land.\footnote{Weaver, The Great Land Rush, 152. For the Delaware, Conestoga, Oneida, and Mohawks, as well most other Six Nations communities, boundaries marked important limits on space and resources, but they did not hold boundaries so strictly that those Indian communities in good standing as allies, neighbors, or trade partners could not traverse them.\footnote{Taylor, The Divided Ground, 35-8.}

Landless Euroamericans held views similar to those of most Indian communities. Government officials and warrant-bearing settlers complained that the Scots-Irish in

\textsuperscript{301} July 6, 1754, “Proceedings at Albany” by John Penn and Richard Peter, Indian Affairs, vol. 2, HSP.
\textsuperscript{302} Indian Conference, Treaty of Easton, October 17, 1758, “At a Conference with the Northern Indians held at Lancaster,” August 19, 1762, “Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, containing the proceedings of Council from January 13, 1757, to 4th of October. 1762,” PA, Colonial ser., 8:195-201
\textsuperscript{303} Weaver, The Great Land Rush, 152.
\textsuperscript{304} Taylor, The Divided Ground, 35-8.
particular held similar fluid views of landownership. Regulations regarding land tenure in England prevented the vast majority of British vassals from owning fee simple titles to land. The common sort held no right to exclusive or permanent control over land, but more often had access to land and specific rights to its use with caveats and limitations.\textsuperscript{305} In the place of private property laws, British culture and society had organized villages and manors, spaces occupied by common people, as semi-communal and preserved by the community. By cultural expectation, British subjects demanded a usufruct right to use fallow land, knowingly owned by others, for their own sustenance or profit. Dating from the seventeenth century through the eighteenth, usufruct rights provided the landless with the legal ability to “temporarily [possess],” or occupy, vacant land and use any natural resources located therein.\textsuperscript{306} As long as occupation did not diminish the land’s value, the physical presences of a non-owner did not conflict with someone else’s legal ownership.\textsuperscript{307}

With roots traceable to the Roman law, \textit{res nullius} (meaning, no one’s property), the concept that unoccupied and “idle” land automatically converted to commons became embedded into European legal culture and everyday knowledge in the early eighteenth century and helped legitimize colonization.\textsuperscript{308} Indeed, in the thirteenth century, the Charter of the Forest in England confirmed the right of individual non-landowners to

\textsuperscript{305} Sir William Holdsworth, \textit{An Historical Introduction to the Land Law} (Clark: The Lawbook Exchange, Limited, 1927), 38-40.
\textsuperscript{306} OED, usufruct.
\textsuperscript{307} OED etymology for “usufruct”
\textsuperscript{308} Kenny, \textit{Peaceable Kingdom Lost}, 32; Cronon, \textit{Changes in the Land}, 62-5.
\textsuperscript{308} Anthony Pagden, \textit{Lords of all the World: Ideologies of Empire in Spain, Britain and France, c. 1500-c. 1800} (New Haven: Yale University Press,1995), 76.
make commons of, and take freeholds in, the King’s wood.309 By the eighteenth century, the laws in British North America, as well as Europe, reflected a complex diversity of views and needs involving land ownership, occupation, and the use of resources. Landowners sometimes, but not always, owned specified rights to the natural resources on their land.310 In the Hudson Valley, when owners of large land tracts did not use the land’s natural resources, occupy it, or use it for production, non-landowners argued that the land had returned to the King and become available for the use of the common.311

Landless people also recognized abandoned structures as property returned to the common and available for public use. Typically, settlers even abandoned improved land or returned it to the “commons” when it no longer proved useful to them.312 Property abandonment influenced settlement culture while complicating land ownership. Some squatters had originated as landowners, sacrificing their land patents for more opportunities elsewhere.313 Migrants commonly took up improvements constructed by others. A vacant cabin stood as an invitation for respite or settlement, and migrating families delighted in coming across a “deserted cabin” for temporary possession as a

310 Friedman, The History of American Law, 59-60.
312 May 30, 1763 & April 5, 1763 entry dates in William Trent’s Journal, 1763, HSP; Croghan to Samuel Wharton, April 14, 1768, Croghan Papers, HSP; William Moore to Irvine, December 17, 1781 & John Marshall to Irvine, April 2, 1782, Irvine-Newbold Family Papers [hereafter cited as Irvine Papers], 1760-1955, HSP; Doddridge, Notes, LCP, 134.
313 The Report of Benjamin Chew, Alexander Stedman, William West, and Edward Shippen, Philadelphia, April 21, 1756, Indian Affairs, vol. 2, 80, HSP.
“secure shelter.” In 1769, William John Crawford constructed a cabin west of the Alleghenies before moving on. Three years passed before Crawford returned to his improvement, at which point he found Roger Roberts had taken up residence in it. With little choice Crawford sold his “small improvement” and crossed the Monongahela River began to build anew. Vacated French and British forts made choice settlements, as did the vestiges of Native American villages. Twelve families resettled an abandoned Indian settlement and adjoining corn fields on Stone Creek and the Quamahone, tributaries of the Allegheny River. According to Richard Peters, officials adopted a policy of burning out unauthorized settlers, specifically targeting them due to the tendency of squatters to return after an eviction or to seek refuge in whatever empty shelter they found.

Likened to many Indian beliefs that observed land as a spiritual spatial offering, Europeans also shared a cultural understanding, rooted in Christianity, that God created the earth for man to labor and sustain himself. While governments structured land policies, philosophers like John Locke and David Hume debated the positive contours of property rights, and wealthy men used those philosophies to profit in land distribution,

315 John Crawford to Draper, 1831, Interviews of Adult Children of the Frontier, Pittsburgh and Northwest Virginia Papers, ser. nn, vol. 6. I have created the subcategory Interviews of Adult Children of the Frontier to indicate first hand accounts sent to Draper from individuals, though sometimes groups, who lived in eastern squatter settlements as children or young adults. It is important to single out these accounts from the primary documents and the plethora of second and third hand accounts collected by Draper for the unique insight they yield.
316 George Croghan, 1770 Journal, Indian Conference, Croghan Papers, HSP; December 30, 1772, entry in The Diary of David McClure, 107.
common people land held to have practical and spiritual implications. Productive land that offered sustenance represented an intimate temporal contract between mankind and God. Owing to speculation, “The Rights of the People,” had gone asunder and one group of “Indigent” backcountry memorialists wanted to “Revive the ancient Cultivation Law” allowing for man to exchange his labor on the land to sustenance. Against the desires of the landed gentry and regardless of changing land patterns, common Europeans recognized land left in waste as a sin and a denied opportunity for the landless to meet their everyday needs. Championing the cause of the common person, philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s 1754, *Discourse on Inequality* argued that privatizing property and/or resources originated outside of man’s natural state, and that the distribution of land remained beyond most of the common sort, preventing their economic rise from within the uneven system. A Connecticut squatter leader named Waterman Baldwin vehemently expressed this sentiment, threatening that he would “not be taken alive” in his pursuit to “live independent” in the backcountry, declaring the “corn we will have, and the ground too,” charging that the “strongest party” had “over kept” the land and prevented the use of it by those who were weaker.

Delaware and backcountry Euroamericans alike deemed the exclusion of landless peoples from natural resources and space problematic at best. Both experienced the

---

ongoing commodification of their land, which transitioned from the divine and invaluable gift of sustenance to a trade good. While most landless Europeans had lived on and developed rented land in Europe, tenancy in British North America offered less stability. European renters signed leases securing their families intergenerational access to the land. Colonial landlords, however, preferred short leases with terms of just a few years. Local Indians and landless Euroamericans may have found common ground in preferring long-term, often informal means of occupying or leasing land.  

Cash quitrents and land sales presented considerable obstacles to hopeful new landowners who formerly depended on the ability to make payments in crops. Alienated from control over land, resources, and thus self-determination, Delaware and Euroamericans mutually depended on their ability to use land on the frontier. The land at the eastern fringes of Indian country and westward of British territorial boundaries butted up against and overlapped one another’s holdings. Most importantly, the region sectioned off by the Proclamation line of 1763 represented an attractive “outer commons” that could supplement the daily needs of Delaware and Euroamerican squatters alike.  

A line laid to separate the two groups instead kept larger populations at bay and in doing so preserved the vacant land as both a space and access to resources.

Perception of British Laws

From the late 1760s to around 1774, traditional lawmaking occurred east of the

---

322 Humphrey, “‘Extravagant Claims’ and ‘Hard Labour,’” 146.
323 Greer, “Commons and Enclosure in the Colonization of North America,” 375-6.
Alleghenies but proved impractical in its backcountry application, especially as large numbers of newcomers greatly expanded the scope of Euroamerican settlement far ahead of legal institutions. Modifications of formal legal codes took time to circulate and sometimes did so only in corrupted forms, and often or not at all. State assemblies instituted new laws and altered old laws from distant seats of governments, but formal legal policies realistically had little bearing with most colonists residing in the Pennsylvania and Virginia backcountry. As one petition signed by just over one hundred and fifty western Virginia squatters attested, “from our remote situation [laws] either experience losses [in meaning or] their good intentions before we heave timely notice thereof.” Even those residents who might have adhered to the land laws governing the frontier reasonably claimed they were “unacquainted” with current laws.\textsuperscript{324}

Eastern Ohio Valley squatters most accurately, and often, described their relationship with governing law in terms of their “Expectation” as “British Subjects.”\textsuperscript{325} As a composite population of German, Swiss, French, African, and other non-English migrants claimed British allegiance, Ohio Valley inhabitants invoked rights that they assumed were due to them as British subjects. Despite diverse origins from throughout the north Atlantic, British nationalism allowed for a common civil identity and understanding of legal rights. The rights proclaimed and demanded by colonists consistently represented an interpretation of British ideals, often with roots in the

\textsuperscript{324} Memorial written by Western Virginia-Kentucky Inhabitants, Memorials Addressed to Congress, 1775-88, Papers of the Continental Congress, roll 50, NARA.

\textsuperscript{325} Memorial written by Western Virginia-Kentucky Inhabitants, Memorials Addressed to Congress, 1775-88, Papers of the Continental Congress, NARA Petition of the Dutch Reformed Church, September 27, 1783, Memorials Addressed to Congress, 1775-88, Papers of the Continental Congress, roll 50, NARA.
experiences and expectations of England’s middling sort. The surge of commercial presses provided innumerable examples of military supremacy, material comfort, economic mobility, market participation, and politicization—the Britishness colonists attempted and expected to replicate.326

Throughout the second half of the eighteenth century urban and backcountry colonists in North America carried and imposed their assumed understanding of British law, centered on the Magna Carta and increasingly the rhetoric of John Locke’s “natural rights,” along with their particularly commercial focused entitlements as “Liberties.” Only after the French and Indian War, just prior to the American Revolution, did urban and frontier colonists come to appreciate the gap between their provincial interpretation of their British civil identity and that held by British leaders and subjects in England.

Backcountry Euroamericans lived largely unaware of the creolization process transforming their legal culture.327 As had occurred throughout small villages in Great Britain and Europe, the seeds of frontier law originated in the multiplicity of ethnic groups, culture, education, and the legal memory of inhabitants in any given locale. As

---


327 My research on the transformation of legal culture, or the process by which squatters’ interpretation of laws and rights evolves into a new system, furthers one of Jack Greene’s main theses in Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 169. Greene holds that Creolization may take place within a single European or Euroamerican identity as colonists, forced by their location to confront new environments, realities and obstacles, make decisions that are different from traditions, norms, or expectations in Great Britain. “Introduction” in Robert Olwell and Alan Tully, ed., Cultures and identities in Colonial British America (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006). Instead of comparing Old World Europeans and those living in Colonial North America, my work with Ohio Valley squatters shows a “clash” of ideas occurring between frontier Euroamericans and those Euroamericans who inhabited older established cities in the colonies as well as Europeans. Each group held distinctly different ideas about laws and environment. I came to this argument independently of, though in agreement with, John Smolenski’s Friends and Strangers, 7-11, 302n10.
one petition, signed by over two thousand “Inhabitants of the country West of the Allegheny Mountains” stated, people from “every Province of America” populated the backcountry, having lived under “various different & in many respect discordant & even Contradictory Systems of Laws & Governments….” The influence of competing ideas, expectations, experiences, and environments affected frontier law and order more than did English common law. In the earliest days of settlement, backcountry inhabitants negotiated and then constructed law in a piecemeal local process, pulling from whatever legal capital they had been brought with them across the Atlantic or from a smattering of North American colonies with dissimilar legal structures. Likewise, those people living outside of established cities in Great Britain, throughout Europe and North American metropolis commonly constructed laws according to the needs, motivations, and obstacles that suited their circumstances. Frontier laws gained support through practice, custom, and perceived understanding. Without a community of legal practitioners, most men relied on legal knowledge specific to their professional training, as veterans of the French and Indian War familiar with military codes and a few clergymen often informed and interpreted law and political ideology for the larger community on an ad hoc basis.

---

329 William M. Offutt, “The Atlantic Rules: The Legalistic Turn in Colonial British America” in Elizabeth Mancke and Carole Shammas, ed., The Creation of the British Atlantic World (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 160-3. Offutt’s focus is the development of the “legal imagination” during early British colonization of Northing America in the seventeenth century. The same argument, that the variety of groups who people North American shaped colonial law before legal institutions added structure and consistency is equally arguable in the legal formation on going in frontier communities.
While Baptist minister John Corbly’s preaching led migrants to travel upward of ten miles to hear him in western Pennsylvania’s Muddy Creek, Corbly also anchored the community by serving as a Justice of the Peace who presided over an informal local court. When cases beyond his authority presented themselves, Corbly continued to dispense his own vision of the law. In one notable instance, at the height of a crackdown on Tories in 1777, Corbly marched a group of treasonous men to the court in Williamsburg, Virginia. Intentionally stalling to dilute the crowd’s fury, Corbly took additional days before delivering the men to their fates and in doing so spared their lives.  

Similarly, when John Penn wished to disseminate and immediately enforce the Proclamation Act of 1768 and its prohibition of Euroamerican settlement on Indian land, he sent a “number” of copies of the “LATELY” written law to his Susquehanna Valley commissioners and directed them to “proceed with all possible Expedition to the [Ohio Valley] Settlements.” Commissioners were then to take three men, one of which Penn urged should be a Clergyman,” “to read the Proclamation and explain the Nature of them and to expostulate with them upon the Folly and injustice of their settling upon the Indian Lands…” Furthermore, one of Penn’s commissioners, Reverend John Steele, a Presbyterian minister, served also as a captain in the British Army, a fort commander, and a sheriff of Cumberland country.

As was the case with the 1768 Proclamation, even when officials carried laws

---

332 John Penn to the Pennsylvania Commissioners, February 24, 1768, PA, ser. 4, 3:385.
directly into the woods, leaving paper copies “in the hands of such of the Settlers” and “dispers[ed]” along the road, settlers gave little weight to the longevity of law. Regional royal courts, local sheriffs, and military officers who attempted to enforce common law from outside of squatter communities failed to rule consistently in land claims cases and thus did little in the way of establishing precedential law in the backcountry. Even Royal acts and Proclamations had little staying power, as with the procession of treaties, the 1758 Treaty of Easton, the Royal Proclamation Line of 1763, and the 1768 Treaty of Fort Stanwix. All conveyed new laws and shifted the permissible geographic boundaries of Indian and Euroamerican settlement.

To conclude that the lack of solid legal infrastructure and enforcement led to a lawless space, however, is inaccurate. Repeated pleas demonstrate that their recent dispossession from the Susquehanna Valley heavily influenced how squatters, as members of a landless farming social class, understood the rights that they demanded during the early 1770s. Simplistically, the right to land was the right to labor for sustenance, a standard ensuring British subjects a basic quality of life set forth by the Charter of the Forest. To the displaced and impoverished squatters, common land and the resources found there offered the bare essentials.

335 Peter Linebaugh, *The Magna Carta Manifesto: Liberties and Commons for All* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 165. Linebaugh addresses how experiences, either first hand or carried as an aspect of cultural memory, shape common people’s interpretation of laws. Supporting Linebaugh’s argument, when squatters petitioned for access to their rights as British subjects, and later United States citizens, they referenced connections between past events, motivations, and their current circumstances.
As the squatters living at the mouth of Short Creek in western Virginia stated, “Distress and Difficulties Had Drove [them] Out from the interior parts;” they had “immigrated in to this desert Wilderness in order to support [Their] families and better [their] Condition by Cultivation of the Soil…” A petition written by English trader John Dodge similarly explained that Pontiac’s War had forced squatters into scavenging: “the poor and fortunate [were]… obligated to [retreat] into the thick [unsettled] country and live off the charity of the country.”

Occupation of the backcountry provided subsistence for the poor. As one group of some fifty-nine male squatters, representing families, described in a bout of “desperate circumstances they “[had] Neither house nor lands to move too,” but had “every Necessary to procure[,] by our labors for the support of our families and stocks…” Another group of eight men, four of whom struggled to form their signature and four more including Adam House who could not sign at all, detailed their decision to occupy land by saying “our case seemed Desperate But viewing as it appeared to us an Advantage Offering of Vacant Lands which with the Alarming Necessity we were under Joined with the Future prospect of Bettering our Circumstances invited us to Enter on these lands…”

The model of European colonialism offered Susquehanna refugees little ideologically as they entered the eastern Ohio Valley, as its imperial conceptions of preemption had little relevance to their situation. Between 1768 and 1773, the first peak

---

338 Letter to Fort Harmar, April the 15, 1785, Letters from General and Other Officers, 1776-89, M247, Roll 180, NARA.
339 Ohio River Memorial, April 1785, Memorials Addressed to Congress 1775-86, M320, Roll 51, NARA.
of migration to the region, migrants to the eastern Ohio Valley had no grounds to declare a “right of discovery” to any of the land they occupied, and according to land records, they did not.\textsuperscript{340} Less than a decade earlier, the British and French troops had populated the region with fixed structures, including Forts Duquesne and Pitt as well as the supply houses such as Redstone. Moreover, the population of Indians sharing the eastern Ohio Valley with Euroamerican settlements informed migrants of the valley’s function as an Indian hunting ground and a refugee for displaced eastern Indians. Euroamericans founded their right to occupy the eastern Ohio Valley on their inability to meet everyday needs without access to land. Through \textit{res nullius}, the Ohio Valley Euroamericans and Indians created a commons. The region did not appear entirely uninhabited or idle to valley newcomers. Instead newcomers considered the valley as underused, a state which met the Euroamerican and Indian cultural requirement that allowed them to take from the valley what they required to sustain themselves.

As the application of land laws and perception of land laws changed, so too did squatter settlements. Backcountry inhabitants revived a distinctly pre-French and Indian War vision for the region in which dispossessed Delaware and Euroamericans might successfully inhabit the same space. Furthermore, Euroamericans did not migrate into the region alone. Indian refugees from the French and Indian and Pontiac’s War joined Euroamericans who had similarly been displaced. As George Croghan was conducting Indian affairs in July 1770, he took note of the Six Nations’ complaints of “English”

\textsuperscript{340} \textit{Land Records West side Applications, Records of the Land Office, PSA; Pagden, Lords of all the World} 80.
settlements on the west side of the Allegheny Mountains and counted the boats. One right after another, Susquehanna Indian and Euroamericans floated down “branches of the Susquehanna” and those of the Juniata sub-basin into western Pennsylvania. In less than two weeks’ time, Croghan noted twenty-four canoes. One convoy he described in detail consisted of four canoes “full of women and children from the Susquehanna with ten men belonging to them who had kept the opposite side of the river in the path with horses.” A concentrated community of Shawnees and Delaware, but also Wyandot, Mingo, “Ohio River Iroquois,” Cherokee, Miami (Twightwees), and a small portion of Tuscarora, formed on Beaver Creek, while Europeans settled the Redstone and Cheat River.  

Families and former neighbors like Alexander and his younger brother Adam Poe left their homes on the Maryland-Virginia border of the Susquehanna to construct the first Euroamerican settlements on the Harmon Creek (Burgettstown, Pennsylvania). Two years later, the men returned to Maryland to gather their families, twelve in all, and transport them to their new homes in the Ohio Valley. The Poes added to the growing multitude of some 3,000 refugee families planted in the small sliver of valley west of the Allegheny Mountains.  

---

341 George Croghan, Journal, Indian Conference, Pittsburgh 1770, Croghan Papers, HSP; Thomas Hutchins A Description of part of the Country Westward of the River Ohio with the Distances Computed from Fort Pitt to the several Indian Towns by Land & Water, HSP. This document is undated, but the use of Fort Pitt indicates that Hutchins wrote it after Fort Pitt was built in 1761; Ronald C. Carlisle, Final Archeological Report of Hanna’s Town [hereafter cited as Hanna’s Town Archeological Report], Westmoreland Country, Westmoreland County Historical Society [hereafter cited as WCHS], 2005, 9.  
Allegheny Mountains. They were not alone and made homes in an area that Virginia Governor Lord Dunmore described as already providing “Shelter to a few Scattered Tribes of Indians.”

*The Commons Between the Indian Country and His Majesty’s Middle Colonies*

Eastern Ohio River Valley settlements remained in a formative stage of development in the spring of 1768 when diplomatic tension rose. A year earlier, the ongoing southern boundary disputes between Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia had been resolved with a new survey and the Mason-Dixon line. The now-fixed colony borders temporarily assuaged concerns that confronting squatters might lead to the loss of loyalty and thus land, and the resolution thus prompted officials to shift their attention to clearing the southern boundary of unwarranted settlers. Six Nations leaders, the Pennsylvania proprietors, and the Pennsylvania Assembly came to loggerheads about the future of western Pennsylvania and western Virginia.

Violence had reignited between settlers and Indians living in the Susquehanna River Valley. In January, a Lancaster County native now squatting in the Susquehanna River Valley near Fort Augusta, Fredrick Stump, and his recently migrated German servant, John Ironcutter, killed six Shawnees and Mohicans as the Indians slept off a

---

343 “Remarks on the situation, Soil, Climate, Settlements, and produce of the Western Country etc.” (1770), Hutchins Papers, HSP. Remarks are undated but information contained within specifies the year this document was written was 1770.

drunken stupor in his cabin. Stump had killed the Indians thinking they might kill him, and, fearing retribution, the two men then killed the wife and three young daughters of one of their victims and set the Indian’s cabin ablaze. In response, another group of Indians “Murdered” ten settlers and a cycle of retaliation made safe travel of the local roads impossible.345

A horrific example of Euroamerican and Indian violence, Indian and European leadership alike began using the Stump-Ironcutter massacre to support their own political and diplomatic agendas. That spring, at a Six Nations meeting held following the massacres’ fallout, Tohonissahgarawa, a Six Nations leader claiming to represent several absent local communities, including Delaware, Shawnee, Munsee, Mohican, and Wyandot, declared the Six Nations’ opposition to squatter settlements in the Ohio River Valley. He requested that the British military “remove the People from our Lands,” complaining “…Settlements are still extending further into our Country. Some of them are made directly on our War Path, leading to our Enemies’ Country, and we do not like it.” According to Tohonissahgarawa, no good came from the two peoples living in close proximity.346 Of the 1000 to 2000 Indians in attendance, only the Six Nations presented a remonstrance against the squatters, but they rescinded their complaint shortly thereafter.

346 May 1, 1768 & May 2, 1768, Indian Conference at Fort Pitt, George Croghan’s Journal, 1768 in Israel Daniel Rupp, Early History of Western Pennsylvania: And of the West, and of Western Expeditions and Campaigns, From MDCCCLIV to MDCCXXXIII (Pittsburgh: D.W. Kauffman, 1846), Documents Appendix XIX, 192-9.
when local Indians refused to push Euroamericans off the land.\textsuperscript{347}

Tohonissahgarawa’s grievance referred to a collection of startup settlements along the waters of the Monongahela River basin in southwest Pennsylvania and the northwest backcountry of Maryland and Virginia. Some 150 predominantly farming families, most of whom came from Pennsylvania, inhabited the area prior to 1770. Likely to have arrived during the previous spring and summer, the migration parties established at least five settlements: Turkey-Foot, Guesses’, Stewart’s Crossing, Cheat River, and Redstone Creek. When Fort Pitt commander William Murray “destroyed many of their Habitations” and warned them to leave the region, they responded by encouraging and leading new families to their settlement and thus strengthened their numbers.\textsuperscript{348} Such recruitment efforts proved successful. Situated along the southeastward turning Catawba Path, leading through the Cumberland Gap, and waterways leading south, east, and west, Redstone soon contained the largest population in the region.\textsuperscript{349}

A decade earlier, a party employed by the Ohio Company of Virginia and under the command of William Trent, an investor and British Captain, had constructed a “strong Square Log House with Loop Holes sufficient to have made a good Defense with a few men” on Redstone Creek at the forks of the Monongahela and the crossroads of the Catawba Path. The company established the post to fulfill an agreement with the Six Nations that they would establish the traders on a substantial land grant in western

\textsuperscript{347} Veech, \textit{The Monongahela of Old}, 93-5.  
\textsuperscript{348} Gage to Johnson, November 9, 1767, Sir William Johnson Papers, 12:378-80.  
Virginia. The manpower to build the fort had come in the form of soldiers and conscripted squatter labor from the outskirts of the Susquehanna River Valley. Despite insufficient provisions, a harsh winter, and the attack of French Indians, the fort had proceeded as planned. Shortly thereafter, however, the company and the military abandoned the strong house. In vacating the area, they gave way for the squatters who built the fort and their Indian and Euroamerican neighbors from the Susquehanna to take over the space.350

Despite over two hundred miles of mostly rugged mountain landscape between the Stump-Ironcutter murders and the settlements of the Upper Monongahela Country, the Six Nations leadership, Governor Penn, and the Pennsylvania Assembly used the spark of violence in the Susquehanna Valley to compete for geopolitical and economic authority of the Ohio Valley. Government and military officials used the Stump massacre, along with the Paxton Boys’ 1763 massacre of Conestoga Indians and sporadic Indian-Euroamerican violence in the Susquehanna Valley, to justify Crown passage of a royal act in February 1768 entitled, “An Act to remove the Persons now Settled, and to prevent others from Settling on any Lands in this Province, not purchased of the Indian.”351 Although the bill targeted all settlement of land unauthorized by the British Crown, in 1768 officials focused on the settlements around Redstone. As a result,

351 “A Message from the Governor to the Assembly,” January 25, 1768, and “A Message from the Governor to the Assembly,” February 11, 1768, both published in the The Pennsylvania Gazette: John Steel to John Penn, April 11, 1768, Colonial ser. 9:506-10; An Act to remove the Persons now Settled, and to prevent others from Settling on any Lands in this Province, not purchased of the Indian, February 3, 1768 in The Statues at large of Pennsylvania from 1682 to 1801, James Tyndale Mitchel and Henry Flanders, ed., (Harrisburg: Clarence M. Bush, 1900), 152-5.
colonial officials and Carlisle sheriff and minister John Steel attempted twice to dispose the squatter families with a barrage of tree tack broadsides and public readings proclaiming squatting a crime “under the Penalty of Death.”

The new punishment for squatting dramatically exceeded previous laws. Over the preceding three decades Pennsylvania officials had maintained the less draconian precedents established by Pennsylvania Governor Thomas, whose 1742 proclamation had declared “all such as have presum’d to possess themselves of any Lands there, are manifest Intruders” and demanded “forthwith” that squatters “leave their possessions and remove off them with their Families and Effects…” Unlike the death penalty in the 1768 law Thomas had only threatened that his agents would arrest “Prison and severely [Fine]” those squatters who refused to remove from the land. The ability of Pennsylvania officials to connect John Ironcutter’s acts with the Redstone squatters meant that this more liberal policy was over.

Although each settlement in the Redstone area governed itself independently, the communities depended on one another as members of a broader neighborhood and assembled on Sundays for worship and general housekeeping. A unified body of settlers from a mixture of ethnic backgrounds, including at least two squatters of African descent, desired to legitimate their occupation by incorporating the support of local

---

352 John Steel, John Allison, Christopher Lemes, and James Potter to John Penn, April 16, 1768, John Steel to John Penn, April 11, 1768, PA, Colonial ser. 9:506-10.
353 Proclamation of Governor Thomas Against Settlers on Lands in Lancaster, October 5, 1742, PA Archives, ser. 1 vol 1, 629-30.
354 John Steel, John Allison, Christopher Lemes, and James Potter to John Penn, April 16, 1768, John Steel to John Penn, April 11, 1768, PA, Colonial ser. 9:506-10.
Natives. At first, hearing the complaints lodged against them by the Six Nations at Fort Pitt, the communities “determined to move off.” Yet once they “affirmed… [local Indians were] very Peaceable, and seemed sorry that [the settlers] were to be removed…” the squatters saw no reason to leave. Additionally, a group of Mingo from a nearby Mingo Town arrived and, after meeting with local Indians, reinforced the settlers’ position. Now authorized by the local Mingo, at least until an official land treaty could take place, the settlers refused to leave. At a loss, the colonial military requested the Six Nations send Indian messengers to warn out the settlement, again illustrating the divide between local needs and outside leadership. Local Mingo and “all… other young Men” selected to deliver the message refused, citing their long term interests in avoiding bad relations with future “Neighbors” by “remov[ing]” the settlers.

Mutual local Indian and Euroamerican support threatened the Six Nations, proprietors, and other groups who held an interest in the eastern region of the Ohio River Valley. The occupation of Euroamericans on Indian land held the potential to strip the Six Nations’ ability to negotiate the terms of land use, ownership, or sale. The Iroquois had relied on their control of tributary Indian communities and land to underpin their sovereignty in negotiations with the British Empire. Squatters negotiating with local Indians legitimized local Indian (largely Delaware and Mingo) self-determination. The

357 From messengers going to Redstone, John Frazer and William Thompson, May, 1768, Letter to messengers going to Redstone from John Allen, Joseph Shippen Jr., May 9, 1768, Fort Pitt Meeting May 9, 1768, Principal Warriors of the Six Nations and Croghan, PA, Colonial ser., 9:539-543.
Delaware and Mingo’s authorization of Euroamerican settlement also endangered the Penn family’s geopolitical control in western Pennsylvania.

The Penns’ claim to any additional western acquisition remained precarious as Virginia’s Ohio Land Company still claimed all of western Pennsylvania and western Virginia. The Royal Proclamation of 1763 had specifically prevented localized Indian-Euroamerican empowerment by forbidding settlers to purchase land directly from Indians. Yet, squatters continued to undermine the geopolitical control of the Six Nations and the Penns by seeking local Indian authorization for their settlements. In this regard, taking land by “Indian right” reinforced local Indian sovereignty – authority that by legal definition no longer existed under traditional British imperial preemptive rights. Settlement founders might, and later did, call the Penns’ authority into question, along with their land sales which were already underway. Unwarranted settlers of the Ohio Valley saw no reason they should abandon new homes if the Penns, or the Ohio Company of Virginia or Baynton, Wharton and Morgan’s land syndicate, the Grand Ohio Company, only planned on replacing them with other new settlers. According to the Redstone settlers, surveyors had begun scouting land around the Monongahela River for

358 “A verbal Message to the Governor from the Assembly,” January 21, 1768, John Penn to Gage, January 21, 1768, John Penn to William Johnson, January 1768, Council held January 22, 1768, A message from the Governor to the Assembly, January 23, 1768, A message from the Governor of Pennsylvania to Newoleeka, January 23, 1768, Council held January 25, 1768, Council held January 28, 1768, A Message from the Governor to the Assembly, January 28, 1768, Council held February 3, 1768, Virginia, PA, Colonial ser., 9:421-430.


unnamed “Philadelphia merchants.”

Settler suspicions and Penn family fears of ongoing underhanded land practices proved accurate. The end of organized Indian military campaigns and the land treaties that followed renewed the fervor of land speculation projects by wealthy eastern men that had laid dormant since the mid-1750s. Speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly Joseph Galloway, Indian agent George Croghan, and London ally and fellow investor Benjamin Franklin, among many others, connived to speculate beyond the Alleghenies, including the Redstone Creek region. Self-interested investors and Pennsylvania Assembly members sought any means by which they could exert more control over the backcountry, including replacing the Penn proprietorship with a royal government more favorable to their needs. Speculators used their official positions and influence and the surge of violence in the Susquehanna Valley—now including the armed jailbreak of Stump and Ironcutter, who again lived two hundred miles eastward of the Allegheny Mountains—to paint all squatters as ungovernable and in need of laws and government officials for order.

Seven months later, in October 1768, the struggle for geopolitical control of the Ohio River Valley remained the pressing problem for those assembled at Fort Stanwix to negotiate a new treaty. The Treaty at Fort Stanwix offered an overdue opportunity to repair the Six Nations and British alliance which had previously weakened after the French and Indian War. As with earlier treaties, however, particular interests

361 John Steel to John Penn, April 11, 1768, PA, Colonial ser., 9:509-10.
overshadowed diplomatic or local interests. For John Penn, the treaty secured control over land beyond the original boundary limits set by the Royal Proclamation Line of 1763. Pennsylvania now extended to the east bank of the Ohio River, including land used by predominantly Shawnee, Delaware, and Mingo communities. Without the consent of affected Indian communities, the treaty allotted to Great Britain new territory extending south, including land occupied by the Cherokee from Pennsylvania to the eastern borders of Spanish Florida. In all, the Six Nations sold around fifteen million acres of land for just over $10,000.\textsuperscript{363}

Much like the Royal Proclamation of 1763, however, Six Nations and British leaders also used the Fort Stanwix treaty to reaffirm their own geopolitical control over the area. John Penn described the purpose of the treaty as an opportunity to keep Indian and colonial populations separate. Authority over the land would allow the Penns to set the terms of settlement for incoming migrants as well as structure Indian-Euroamerican interactions and generate revenue from both. The treaty established a “general Boundary Line between [the Indians] and the neighboring Colonies” and promised “adequate Laws…preventing any settlements being made on the Indian land” as well as strict trade regulations.\textsuperscript{364}

Merchant-speculators and government officials imposed their self-interested goals on recently arrived Euroamerican and Indian settlers of the Ohio Valley, as officials like deputy of Indian Affairs George Croghan allowed their individual business interests to

\textsuperscript{363} Weaver, \textit{The Great Land Rush}, 157-8.
\textsuperscript{364} John Penn to the Pennsylvania Assembly, September 7, 1768 and John Penn to the Pennsylvania Assembly, January 16, 1769, PA, ser. 4 3:402-405.
shape the treaty’s proceedings. Croghan spent much of the treaty seeking the Six
Nations’ confirmation of two million acres of land in western Pennsylvania, western
Virginia, and modern day Indiana. The Six Nations, Croghan argued, had awarded the
grant to him and the merchant-speculator company that he represented as damages during
peace treaty negotiations following the French and Indian War. Dubbing themselves the
“suffering traders,” the losses amounting to £86,000 had accrued to a large number of
itinerant traders. Through the group’s attorney and partner William Trent, the men had
purchased the losses at thirty to fifty percent of its real value and used them to justify a
rightful award of restitution by the Six Nations.³⁶⁵

The land grant included 2,500,000 acres with which Baynton, Wharton, and
Morgan had formed the Grand Ohio Company. Aside from William Trent, the Grand
Ohio Company comprised additional investors, including governor of New Jersey
William Franklin and extensive Susquehanna Indian trader Robert Callender. Croghan’s
land grant and influence over the Fort Stanwix treaty negotiations created an opportunity
for the group to first gain control of the fur trade and later to organize a new branch of the
Atlantic slave trade in the Mississippi Valley.³⁶⁶

Gaining control of the land grant became an obsession for the group’s principal
members -- George Croghan, Samuel Wharton, and Benjamin Franklin-- that shrouded

³⁶⁵ Indian Land Sale to William Trent and Traders, November 9, 1768, Ohio Company Papers, HSP;
Wainwright, George Croghan, 253-5 & 257; Dixon, Never Come to Peace Again, 270-1; William J. Campbell,
128.
³⁶⁶ Clarkson & Company to Baynton Wharton and Morgan, April 5, 1767, BWM Correspondence, BWM Papers, reel
2, DLAR.
the Fort Stanwix negotiations, as it long had for the duplicitous Croghan. As early as
1751, a regional report on British Indian Affairs identified military officials who abused
their official capacity as Indian Agents for personal profit as the most significant source
of Euro-Indian conflict in the Susquehanna watershed. These men, who included George
Croghan and Sir William Johnson, committed “frauds and abuses,” and without proper
oversight the reviewer, New York lieutenant governor Cadwallader Colden, argued “it
[would] be impossible [to] otherwise preserve the affections of the Indians.” Ideally,
Colden urged, men in charge of Indian Affairs, should not be allowed to profit from
frontier trade.367 A year later, Pennsylvania’s proprietors and several Indian leaders
concurred that land sales and trade required oversight to minimize “private interests.”368
At the same time, however, the very opportunity to profit had motivated men, including
George Croghan, Conrad Weiser, Alexander McKee, and Andrew Montour, into careers
as backcountry negotiators and regulators.369 As a Representative of the Crown and Penn
family interests, Indian interpreters like Alexander Montour found more often drunk than
sober, acted unprofessionally in their official duties and reckless in their personal
business affairs, which took priority.370

When George Croghan traveled to Logstown in 1749 laden with gifts to counter
the Six Nations’ increasing relationship with the French, he used, in part, some of the

367 Colden Cadwallader, The Present State of Indian Affairs with the British and French Colonies in North America,
With some observations thereon, for securing the fidelity of the Indians to the Crown of Great Britain & Promoting
Trade Among them, Indian Affairs, vol. 1, 79, HSP.
368 June 28, 1754, Albany proceedings by John Penn and Richard Peter, Indian Affairs, vol. 2, HSP.
gifts to secure, for himself, 200,000 acres of the Ohio Country from Mingo leaders, Tanaghrisson, Scarouady, and Cosswantinice.371 One year later, £800 more in gifts disappeared under Croghan’s watch, £500 likely paying down a personal debt of his. According to Pennsylvania provincial secretary Richard Peters, Croghan had repeatedly proven himself untrustworthy.372 In one example, Croghan and Montour bettered themselves through the proceedings of the 1752 Logstown Treaty. Despite the fact that Virginia’s objectives conflicted directly with his employers, the government of Pennsylvania, Montour accepted a substantial “bribe” from Virginia to act as that colony’s interpreter during the negotiations. Similarly in 1761 during the French and Indian War British, Commander-in-chief General Jeffrey Amherst questioned the generosity of Croghan’s “very bountiful” spending on gifts for the Indians and pay for his frontier entourage.373

Little had changed between the late 1740s and 1760s, as merchants, investors, and the agents of land companies gathered at Fort Stanwix to decide the future of western Pennsylvania and Virginia. The first line of business included substantial private land purchases from the Six Nations. Johnson secured more land than the Crown had authorized him to purchase in all for Great Britain; he made no secret that his primary objective was procuring land and protecting his interests, as well as those of the joint stock companies, the Grand Ohio and Ohio Company in which he had a direct or indirect investment. Meanwhile, Croghan hurriedly bought an additional 1,270,000 acres in New

371 Jennings, Empire of Fortune, 38, 44-5 & 59.
372 Peters to Thomas Penn, July 5, 1753, Penn Official Correspondence, Penn Family Paper, vol. 6, HSP.
York on “bond” and with empty “promises” before the proceedings concluded.\(^{374}\)

With no one representing the needs of those local Indians or Euroamerican refugees who now depended on the space and resources of backcountry commons, leaders instead focused their attention on reinforcing their authority over people and land. The Six Nations looked to remain the overlords of the land, while the Penn family sought to shore up their proprietorship. Sir William Johnson, however, hoped to maintain his position as “sole manager of Indian affairs,” as well as the bounty of private Indian grants that he continued to collect by the tens of thousands of acres while representing the Indian department. Meanwhile, Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan acted in their best interest to protect their right of over two million acres of Indian land.\(^{375}\) Despite the array of competing interests, each group supported the separation of Indians and Euroamericans as a means of protecting their private land speculation, and Johnson shaped the Treaty of Fort Stanwix to meet both objectives.\(^{376}\)

Backcountry inhabitants rejected the treaty deliberations before they had even finished. Rekindling the “black-faced boys” actions of four years ago, a mob attacked the supply train of rum on its way to the treaty, drowning the horses, wasting the rum, and clearly warning that they would attack any other supplies intended for the convention.\(^{377}\) The attackers had been very careful not to rob the pack train but targeted their efforts on denying the treaty participants alcohol, a necessary part of diplomacy between Indians

---

\(^{374}\) John Baynton to George Morgan, sometimes in 1771, Correspondence of George Morgan, reel 2, DLAR.


\(^{377}\) Joseph Dobson to George Morgan, May 23, 1768, BWM Correspondence, BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR.
and British officials and a general precursor to the formalization of the actual treaty.

Resistance continued after the treaty’s ratification. Affected Delawares and Shawnee again attempted to construct a “Pan-Indian” movement against the Six Nations, namely the Iroquois, while Euroamericans settlers and local Indian allies launched a four-year attack against speculators and corrupt Pennsylvania officials. The Euroamericans, the Shawnee, the Delaware and other refugee communities moving into the Ohio Valley pointedly disregarded the land purchasing protocols set forth by the Fort Stanwix Treaty of 1768.

---

Chapter 4: Refugee Community-Building in the Ohio Valley Commons, 1768-1773

A moment of peace from imperial wars allowed migration and resettlement of the eastern environs of the Ohio River by both Europeans and American Indians coming from the Susquehanna Valley. The idea of these war refugees coming together, with Euroamericans living “in the Woods amongst those foolish Tribes,” disturbed merchant agents as well as British and Ohio Indian leaders. Yet a succession of Shawnee, Delaware, Mingo, Euroamericans, and people of African descent—men like Jacob Daniel, a Delaware Indian who married a Euroamerican woman and had two sons with her—moved into the valley intent on freely “Hunt[ing] & exchang[ing] [their] Peltry.... among one another. Exemplifying migrants, the Daniels family established a small trading post on Jacob’s Creek near the mouth of Redstone Creek. Situated at the center of a region heavily populated with Euroamerican and Indian inhabitants, the Daniels family did well selling “wild meat” at “moderate rates” to their neighbors.¹

Despite nearly two decades of bloodshed, local interpersonal and interdependent relations of one-time enemies, like Jacob and the Euroamericans he served, produced a multicultural neighborhood in the eastern Ohio Valley. By 1768 the combination of imperial wars, localized violence, and outside commercial pressures from Indian trade and land speculation had displaced marginalized Indians and Euroamericans from the Susquehanna Valley. An established region now, the Susquehanna no longer offered a commons on which people outside of urban social networks and without financial resources could rely. Moving into the Ohio Valley, war-fatigued and decimated Euroamerican and Indian refugee settlers alike needed to establish new labor and trade partners to survive. Geographic isolation actually contributed to the viability of these

joint Euroamerican and Indian settlements in the Ohio Valley, as labor demands displaced hostilities and furthered the process of ethnogenesis underway.

From 1768 to 1773 colonial and military officials had little involvement in local Euroamerican-Indian interactions, leaving space for the creation of a multi-ethnic, inclusive, and utilitarian culture suited to rebuilding families, communities, and connecting families to communities and communities to larger neighborhoods throughout western Pennsylvania. As both groups shared a political vacuum in which, according to outside British and Six Nations leaders, neither group held geopolitical power; by not contesting the other side’s occupation of the Valley each strengthened the other’s legitimacy.

Inadequate provisions or knowledge of the Ohio Country prevented Euroamerican migrants leaving the Susquehanna Valley from settling any farther west than the east bank of the Ohio River. With the exception of a few survivors like Andrew Byerly, “French Indians” had killed most of the Ohio country traders during Pontiac’s War; Pontiac had targeted and killed as many as twenty traders in his first strike alone. Settlers looking to replace them clearly lacked their predecessors’ expertise. Euroamerican men adventurous enough to travel into the Ohio Country brought with them “only some few Pounds of Bread for each Man,” far shy of the “Four Weeks Provisions” required to spend the time necessary to scout land. As John Campbell, an agent for Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan working out of Fort Pitt, attested, “There is not a man here who knows anything of that Country more than along the Bank of the Ohio.” The “richness of
the Land pleased” the few men like Joseph Skelton Jr. who arrived in the area full of optimism but “for want of a knowledge of the Woods they …confined their lines entirely to the banks of the River and Creek…”

Despite the difficulties they faced, between 1768 and 1773 Euroamericans managed to build three major neighborhood networks composed of well over fifty settlements in the southwest corner of Pennsylvania and the length of modern West Virginia. Planted along Forbes Road, the northernmost network hub in Pennsylvania was Hanna’s Town. Smaller settlements, like Edington’s, clustered around creeks for about fifty miles to its south. The next sizable collection of settlements flanked the Monongahela and Youghiogheny Rivers in a group of settlements contemporarily dubbed the “Upper Monongahela country.” The Redstone settlement represented this region’s core, with well-populated villages along Dunkards’, Tenmile, Cheat, Muddy and Decker’s Creeks. Some sixty miles to the west, a dense collection of communities lined the Ohio River and her tributaries, including Baker’s Bottom, Short and Grave Creek, fifty miles north and south of the population center at Wheeling. South of Wheeling, Euroamericans improved few areas aside from the Glades, the Big and Small Levels. The furthermost settlements in the Pennsylvania-Virginia network lay south along branches of the Ohio that flowed eastwardly back into the Monongahela country with the Little and Big Kanawha and the Greenbrier River. (MAP)

As migrants to the Ohio Valley between 1768 and 1773, Indian and Euroamerican

---

2 William Spear to Baynton and Wharton, May 15, 1759, John Campbell to BWM March 2, 1769, John Campbell to BWM, March 7, 1769 & John Campbell March 23, 1769, all found in Correspondence of Baynton and Wharton, BWM Papers, reel 3, DLAR.
settlers knowingly chose to coexist with one another. Most often, Euroamericans followed migrating Indians and constructed their towns within proximity of the Indians. For example, in 1763 an elderly Delaware named Joseph Wipey migrated from the Kittanning trail to a creek off of the Conemag River. Within six years, a man named George Findley arrived at the same creek and also built a cabin. Findley’s 1769 land warrant application described his home in relation to Wipey: “Near Wipsey’s Cabin.”

When Euroamericans arrived, most Indians did not leave for interior Ohio Country towns or warn their new neighbors away. Instead, Indian communities remained within contact of the Euroamericans settling in the Ohio Valley. The Delaware constructed three towns along the Muskingum: Monheysinch, Black Tom’s Town, and Waukautaumeka, which created an eastern population hub of almost three hundred Delaware people. The Delaware settlement did not scare off new arrivals to western Virginia; instead Euroamericans positioned their own hub, Wheeling only ninety miles away. Euroamericans also planted several small settlements in the Upper Monongahela country near flourishing Indian communities composed of Delaware, Wendat, and Mingo on Cheat Creek as well as the Indians who had moved into a fort formerly occupied by Catawbas during the French and Indian War. At the mouth of the Big Kanawha “a Number of Virginians” resided, such that by 1773 “hundreds of Families,” … seated themselves” with the express purpose of trading with the Shawnee “or others that may

choose to resort thither.”

The small village of five Delaware families who lived “at a salt spring on the Little Kanawha,” just a few miles south of Euroamerican families at the Buckhannon settlement and on the Gauley, Tygart, and Cheat Rivers, represented the least expected grouping of Indian and Euroamericans. Founded in 1768 by Delaware families from the Unadilla River in New York, the male population of Bulltown (Bulls Town) included Captain Bull, son of Delaware chief Teedyuscung, and the warriors Bull had led during the 1763 massacre of Euroamerican settlers in the Susquehanna’s Cherry Valley.6

Several small Euroamerican settlements established towns on Ohio River tributaries near an unnamed new Mingo village. Situated on the east bank of the Ohio River, Baker’s Bottom sat directly across from a mixed Mingo and Shawnee Town on Yellow Creek. An additional Mingo community inhabited Chartiers Creek and resisted Ohio Shawnee pressure to push off the Euroamericans building on the same creek. Six Nations warriors burned down the house of Mingo on Chartiers for having “encouraged the White people” to live among the Indians. Those few Mingo who disagreed with Indian-Euroamerican coexistence relocated south of Wheeling, and at least early on, made their disapproval known by “plunder[ing] every Boat and Canoe that [went] down the River” and burned down the houses of their compatriots who supported the

---

5 John Campbell to George Morgan, June 18, 1769, Correspondence of George Morgan, BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR; “Case of Virginia,” Ohio Company Papers, HSP.
Euroamericans. Although the Six Nations attempted to assert control, the Mingo’s desire to establish positive relationships with local Euroamericans won out and they, like splintered Indian communities elsewhere successfully welcomed settlers.

Euroamericans intentionally constructed their own neighborhoods within those recently constructed by Indians. Settlers lived just opposite three Delaware villages along the west shore of Beaver River, including Shenango, Friendsstadt, and Kuskuski. Other nearby Delaware at Peymatuning lived in a settlement of fifteen “houses,” with another fifty houses at the Salt Lick, and two small unnamed towns of five families and ten single men residing just north of Hanna’s Town near the Mahoning Creek. Between Fort Pitt and the former Indian town and trading post of Logstown lived a group of Iroquois. Similarly a Delaware and a Seneca village sat at the southern tip of the Allegheny River, well within striking distance of the Euroamericans populating the Monongahela country.

These interethnic communities produced a wide range of amicable social relationships. Scattered in between and on the edges of both Indian and Euroamerican settlements lived men like Arthur Crawford. After his capture by Delaware Indians during the French and Indian War at around the age of eight, Crawford had been raised

7 John Campbell to George Morgan, November 4, 1768, Correspondence of George Morgan, BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR.
10 “A Description of part of the Country Westward of the River of the Ohio with the Distances completed from Fort Pitt to the several Indian Towns by land & water, (undated),” Hutchins Papers, HSP. Although this document is undated, from the information provided on Delaware settlement and lack of Euroamerican settlement one can discern an approximate date range between 1768 and 1771. Map “Indian Villages and Tribal Distribution c. 1768” and Map “Frontier in Transition 1770-1784, Pennsylvania, New York, Canada,” in Helen Hornbeck Tanner, ed., Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 58-9 & 75
by Delaware leader White Eyes. With no home or family left to return to upon gaining his freedom, Crawford became a trapper and established a cabin at the mouth of Big Beaver, where he interacted with both communities. ¹¹ Similarly a Mohawk named Peter lived with his Euroamerican wife, who was either a French-Canadian or a once captive English woman, near the Redstone settlement. Peter farmed with his neighbors, and like other couples received both Euroamerican and Indian guests. ¹² By 1773 a town populated by Euroamericans, Shawnee, and Delaware settlers had developed at the mouth of the Muskingum on the Ohio which showed the collaborative possibility of the two peoples. There a Euroamerican migrant from Maryland and a Delaware leader jointly ran a shop that served as an inn, store, and tavern for Euroamericans and Indians traveling from east and west of the Ohio River. ¹³

Archeological evidence from excavations at Hanna’s Town offer some insight into the organization of one frontier town. The town’s root’s began with Scots-Irish immigrant Robert Hanna, who, having asserted a preemption claim dating back to 1758, had initially built a sizable log house thirty miles from Fort Pitt. Established on Forbes Road, Hanna’s cabin served as a tavern and boardinghouse for the many people traveling

¹² Lewis Bennett to Draper, June 30, 1847, Interviews of Adult Children of the Frontier, Pittsburgh and Northwest Virginia Papers, ser. e, vo. 11. In Bennett’s memory he has combined Mohawk Peter and Jacob Daniel, the Delaware; Indian Proceedings, June 16-17, 1765, Sir William Johnson Papers 11:790-94; Preston, The Texture of Contact, 218, 220 & 253.
¹³ January 11, 1773 entry in David Jones, A Journal of Two Visits made to some Nations of Indians on the West Side of the River Ohio, In the years 1772 and 1773 [hereafter cited as Journal of David Jones] (Burlington: Isaac Collins, 1776), 19; Hinderaker, Elusive Empires, 179
the road and two local tributaries of the Allegheny River. By 1769 Hanna, now the self-proclaimed town proprietor, had mapped out a town on 370 acres with plots of seventy perches, or just under a half an acre, of land, each parceled out successively east and west down the Forbes Road. With each inlot came an outlot, or agricultural land just outside the village proper, of three acres located “adjacent north and south of the town. Initially some thirty families “appropriated,” or rented, lots in Hanna’s Town. According to the surviving deeds Hanna issued after 1775 and which were recorded in the Land Office in the 1780s, he only sold plots after tenants had raised structures and made full payment for their land. Consistent with other deeds, Hanna required Captain John Swan “to build a house of at least 18 by 18 feet with a shingle roof within two years” before he could purchase the plot. Charles Foreman, who owned and operated one of the town’s three taverns, finally purchased his lot on July 12, 1780, nearly ten years after constructing the building. Five years after this first purchase, Foreman secured the three acre outlot that he had formerly rented at “15 shilling and 6 pence … in silver dollars or the value thereof in country produce.” Hanna’s terms were harsh: if a tenant missed a payment he forfeited the land and improvements. Even so, his flexible payment options—in gold, silver, or produce—and the small size of the plots he offered encouraged all social classes to purchase in Hanna’s Town.

Farming defined much of the economy. Initially the town boasted an open field

---

15 Hanna’s Town Archeological Report, WCHS, 23-4. 43-5.
16 Deed of John Jack Deed, December 13, 1775, Recorded April 15, 1780, Deed of Charles Foreman, June 6, 1780, Recorded October 26, 1785; Deed of Captain John Swan, Deed of William Lawson, William Barnes Deed, April 27, 1782 William Barnes Deed, April 27, 1782, in Hanna’s Town Archeological Report, WCHS, 23-4. 48-9.
pasture for grazing as well as a public chinking pit (area reserved for mixing crude cement to fill the gaps between log boards of cabin wall) and free access to other building resources such as stone, lumber, and labor.\textsuperscript{17} Aside from two or three taverns, Hanna’s Town soon supported a potter, a blacksmith and/or farrier’s shop, a gristmill, a sawmill, a shoemaker and/or tanner, and possibly a distillery. With rapid growth in population, the town fenced off a cemetery located at the far east of town as well as a courthouse and jail -- additions built onto Robert Hanna’s own home. By 1773, just a few years following settlement, Hanna’s Town had became an established town and the county seat of Westmoreland County.\textsuperscript{18}

While Hanna’s town saw exceptional and quick success compared to other fledgling settlements, what we know of smaller settlements yields a similar portrait of tight layouts. After narrowly escaping death on the mountain passes, Isaac Williams founded a settlement on Grave Creek in western Virginia. Twelve families and a handful of their slave labor joined Williams and built twelve cabins in a circle around a cultivated field and a community grazing pasture. Centrally located, Isaac Williams’s large farmhouse established his standing as leader over the lush and marshy landscape.\textsuperscript{19}

Southwest at Joseph Doddridge’s Station in western Virginia, each family maintained a

\textsuperscript{17} William Barnes Deed, April 27, 1782 in Hanna’s Town Archeological Report, WCHS, 44. Allan Greer differentiates commons from community pastures and fields in “Commons and Enclosure in the Colonization of North America.” It should be noted I am not arguing that Hanna lacked control over his grazing pasture or that they were open without a structure or limits as a commons. Instead, I am arguing that as a regulated community resource, community pastures still offered an important resource to a cross section of the town’s population.
\textsuperscript{18} William Barnes Deed, April 27, 1782, in Hanna’s Town Archeological Report, WCHS, 43, 46 & 47.
\textsuperscript{19} Hidreth and Culter, \textit{Biographical and historical memoirs of the early pioneer settlers of Ohio}, 469, 471 & 481-2; Intelligence from William McMahan, Magistrate of Ohio Country, September 21, 1786 and Hutchins to the President of Congress, October 12, 1786, Hutchins Papers, HSP.
small in-town vegetable garden and a “truck patch” of a half an acre to a full acre for larger agriculture production on which to cultivate “corn…pumpkins, squashes, beans, and potatoes.”

To some extent, settlers must have also constructed the settlements at Wheeling, Short Creek, and Hammond’s Creek with a consolidated residential center, as from one’s stoop a settler could see or give off a warning to the other homes. Settlers built residential cabins at Wheeling proper clustered together tightly on the three by one mile island of the same name.

Not all towns originated with a clearly nucleated central village, but the settlement pattern of tight-knit frontier towns still signifies the expectation, if not exactly the desire, to work with neighbors. In the Upper Monongahela country, families built homes farther apart in an extended open country community. On Tenmile Creek, situated ten miles west of Redstone, squatters planted themselves on multiple acre lots one right after the other in acreage rows along the creek. John Casteel’s claim of five hundred acres immediately neighbored Benjamin Dunn’s and George Clarks, and John Harrods’s 400 acres on the south fork of the creek lay besides Adam Newlin (Newland) and Stephen Preble. Clearing sizeable fields directly around their homes, as opposed to taking up outlots, put greater immediate distance between homes, sometimes as much as

20 Doddridge, Notes, LCP, 88.
21 Rachel Johnson and Francis Joseph Hedges, 1845 Interviews of Adult Children of the Frontier, DM, ser. ss, vol. 2; Poe, January 6, 1849, January 6, 1849 Interviews of Adult Children of the Frontier, DM, ser. nn, vol. 9; “The Narrative of Lydia Boggs Shepherd Cruger Covering the Year 1772-1786” in Lobdell and Draper ed., Indian Warfare in Western Pennsylvania and North West at the Time of the American Revolution. Historians often misinterpret multiple applications for land submitted by squatters as squatters attempting to claim multiple parcels of land. In reality, multiple applications represent squatter’s taking up in and out lots from town. Squatters, as did settlers, took up a variety of types of land to service multiple needs, i.e. grazing, agriculture, etc.
three miles. Far from seeking isolation, settlers cut paths through the woods to connect their cabins to one another, suggesting an expectation of frequent contact between homes and the deliberate formation of a neighborhood.  

Throughout southern backcountry regions like the Chesapeake commercial farmers or settlers hoping to profit from agriculture took up land at dispersed locations with the intention of expanding for increased profits. Building homes on adjoining lots or within just a few miles of one another, 1768 to 1773 western Pennsylvania and western Virginian settlers established a community inclined toward communal labor.

*Dimensions: Recovering Squatter Land Usage and Motivation*

According to one undated petition written by former inhabitants of the Upper Monongahela country, the memorialists specifically structured their first settlements intending to “support Our families and better our Condition by Cultivation of the Soil…” It is important to distinguish the intentions of squatters, even those who held some of the more expansive agricultural tracts but intended to live on and directly work the land from large commercial farmers or land speculators. Without this distinction, early eastern Ohio squatters appear inaccurately belligerent and profit-driven.

Determining the exact size of the land occupied by western Pennsylvania and western Virginia settlers is difficult as much of the information pertaining to their land

---

comes from retroactive land certificates. In 1779 Virginia formalized a Land Office and offered 400 acres to families inhabiting western Virginia by January 1, 1778. Working for the benefit of squatters, Virginia commissioners authorized anyone who had surveyed land after 1763 for less than 400 acres to apply for the difference and included an option to purchase an additional 1,000 acres at ten shillings per 100 acre. Pennsylvania’s Land Office enacted a similar albeit temporary policy in February 1781 with the institution of commissioners in the northern districts county of Yohogania and Ohio. The Pennsylvania commissioners immediately issued land patents of up to 400 acres to families already settled in the region, and men like James Arnold, secured his “entitled…400 acres of land on Rooting Creek at the old Field Lick to include his improvement made in 1771.” Similarly, Jesse Boyles gained 400 acres on the Tygart Valley River also “to include his settlement made in 1772.” Not everyone asked for their full entitlement of 400 acres; Jeremiah Brooks asked only for his settlement, made in 1773 on Raccoon Creek, suggesting he had what he needed or what he could afford to farm. Others applied for the full 400 acres offered, yet the language “to include his settlement,” found throughout a sampling of the applications, implied the 400 acres requested exceeded the initial improvement or the land occupied by the onetime squatter. Whether or not the inhabitants requested only their improvement or the full 400 acres,

---

their applications demonstrate that the squatters moving in between 1768 to 1772 had not taken up the land originally for resale but instead had actively lived on the land and attempted to work it.

The quality of land and the size of a family determined how much land a family needed to support itself. A small family required a minimum of 125 acres to sustain itself in the eastern Ohio Valley. In the south Susquehanna Valley, an average family of five, living on optimal limestone enriched soil, required only seventy-five acres of land to grow crops as well as an additional forty-three acres of arable land, with three acres reserved per horse and two per cow to support grazing. These eastern farmers hired hands to work their land and expected a substantial surplus. Fitting with this statistic, eighty percent of settlers in the Northern portion of the Shenandoah Valley, just south of the Susquehanna Valley in Virginia, held land patents of 400 acres or less.\footnote{Robert D. Mitchell, “The Shenandoah Valley Frontier” \textit{Annals of the Association of American Geographers} vol. 62 no. 3 (September, 1972), 474.} Those who settled on the eastern region of the Ohio Valley took up slightly smaller plots, with conservative averages of between one hundred and fifty to over two hundred acres.\footnote{Importantly, these estimates are based on applications for land that occurred according to advertised land sales or preemption offers made to settlers long after settlement, thus they are inaccurate reflections of the quantity or use of land initially undertaken by individual settlers.}

While large quantities of limestone enriched the soil located along the Cheat and Greenbrier Rivers, the shale and red sandstone beds directly north, south, and west of these rivers provided less efficient agricultural production. Farmers in western Virginia contended with different climate patterns than those in the east. Moving west from the Shenandoah much of Virginia’s northwest frontier sat at higher elevations, with
correspondingly longer cooler seasons restricting harvests to hardy crops with shorter periods of growth such as apples, corn, and wheat. According to one resident at Doddridge Station in western Virginia, long dry and cold spells during the summers challenged farmers and ruined crops in even fertile areas like the Greenbrier. Squatters on plots just under 400 acres likely held land for children or desired to produce enough agricultural surplus to participate in some local trade, at least until war with western Indians reignited and transformed private farming into community farming around 1773.30

A topography of “Rough steep hills” prevented most of 1768-73 western Virginia farmers from attempting large commercial plantations on the prized bluegrass plateau that made up the most fertile region of the Greenbrier. Nearly a decade later, migrants settled the last, warmer southwest quadrant of the Virginia frontier where tobacco crops flourished.31 Thus although early western Pennsylvania and Virginia settlers originally occupied slightly larger plots of land than their middling landowning counterpoints in eastern Pennsylvania and Virginia, both groups primarily relied on their land for sustainable family sustenance.32 In selecting reasonable sized tracts of less than 400 acres, these settlers little resembled the landlords or commercial planter who owned

---

31 West Virginia State Board of Agriculture, West Virginia Agricultural Resources and Possibilities Comprising the topography, soils and crops, the livestock industry, possibilities for the fruit grower, educational advantages and market facilities (Charleston: Tribune Printing, 1907), 17-22.
32 Kulikoff, From British Peasants to Colonial American Farmers, 160-1. Kulikoff’s work here supports the claim that the vast majority of small landowners in Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania farmed for sustenance, not profit. Kulikoff also presents key statistics on land ownership, size, and location, yet in his comparison, he does not address the effect of the lands’ nutritional value, the type of claimant, or topography on the size of the lot required of a given family for sustenance farmers. Kulikoff also indicates that squatters always took up the best lands but mapping out actual settlements shows otherwise.
1,000 to 10,000 acres or the land speculation companies who procured land by the hundreds of thousands of acres—in the case of the Ohio Company 500,000 acres, the Loyal Company 800,000 acres, and Vandalia 30 Million acres.\textsuperscript{33}

Some squatters in the southwest corner of Pennsylvania did have opportunities to purchase their land prior to 1778. As part of a push to increase revenue for the Penn family, in February 1769, secretary of the Pennsylvania Land Office, James Tilghman, advertised the sale of New Purchase lands acquired from the Six Nations at the 1768 Fort Stanwix Treaty. The New Purchase lands included much of the Southwest portion of Pennsylvania, the very destination of most migrants to the Ohio River Valley, and sold at “Five Pounds sterling per hundred acres and One Penny per acre per annum quit-rent.” Tilghman honored the squatter’s right to first refusal on land already improved but required all land applications, partial payments, and surveys be submitted to the land office by September of the same year.\textsuperscript{34} The Land Office could not enforce the limited window of opportunity, however, and claimants took up to six years to fulfill their application requirements.\textsuperscript{35}

The steep costs associated with purchasing land during the New Purchase may have prevented some cash poor squatters from participating in Pennsylvania’s land sales. Pennsylvania land laws specifically encouraged new improvements to occur in

\textsuperscript{33} Weaver, \textit{The Great Land Rush}, 105; Turk McCleskey, “Rich Land, Poor Prospects: Real Estate and the Formation of a Social Elite in Augusta County, Virginia, 1738-1770” \textit{The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography}, vol. 98, no. 3 (July, 1990), 449-86.

\textsuperscript{34} Land Office Advertisement, February 20, 1769, \textit{Pennsylvania Chronicle}; “To the Public,” May 9, 1771, \textit{Pennsylvania Gazette}.

conjunction with preexisting settlement. An August 1765 regulation specified that “when a piece of land applied for joined a settled plantation, the secretary should grant a warrant, with interest and quit-rent, from the time of the settlement of the older plantation.”36 By this regulation improved but untitled land transferred into secure warranted land but at higher prices. Back payments owed for quit-rents and interest made the actual purchase of improved land more difficult, if not out of reach for many.

Although the inability to purchase land prevented most squatters from applying for land warrants upon settlement, the slowness with which squatters often applied for improved land, and others’ failure to do so altogether, indicates that landownership was not always the most pressing objective for squatters. Given the convoluted and rapidly changing land laws, some squatters chose to wait for better deals or the return of head rights instead of immediately purchasing land. Compared to their Pennsylvania counterparts, in western Virginia Euroamerican inhabitants acted with even less expediency in purchasing the land they occupied. According to one 1774 petition written by Greenbrier residents, their population included remnants of those people who had attempted settlement along the river in 1754 in response to a land sale advertised by the Ohio Company of Virginia. While the group claimed “lands were surveyed and surveying as fast as the nature of time and other circumstances would permit” some twenty years later they had yet to submit their surveys or apply for titles for the land they

36 Sergeant, View of the land laws of Pennsylvania, 58.
occupied.\textsuperscript{37}

\textit{Survivors Traveling an Uncertain Path}

As displaced refugees rebuilt their lives in a new region, a battery of obstacles kept squatters in motion, settling and resettling on different tracts within the eastern valley. Migrants to the eastern Ohio Valley commonly shifted around the valley before finally planting themselves on a plot with semi-permanence. Second-generation Ohio Valley squatter John McDonald summed up the transient lifestyle of a squatter as “travels through this world of trouble, vexation, and disappointment.” Within an eight-year span, the McDonald family had moved from Scotland, to the Susquehanna Valley, to Redstone, to the settlement at Wheeling, and into the mountains along the Ohio River before finally crossing the Ohio River in 1780 and some nine years later moving to Kentucky.\textsuperscript{38} Uncertain how long they would or could remain in a given locale, little reason existed for families to commit to the arduous process involved with securing land warrants.

This constant shuffling and distinct pattern of behavior meant that colonial officials recognized an Ohio Valley squatter subculture in which occupants held a unique cultural understanding of land use and occupation laws. Officials failed, however, to correctly identify the motivations behind what they deemed a chosen transient lifestyle.

\textsuperscript{37} “Petition for land granted for the Green Briar,” undated, Ohio Company Papers, HSP. The date for this document is between 1773 and 1774 according to references made about Lord Dunmore.

\textsuperscript{38} John McDonald, April 7, 1845, Interviews of Adult Children of the Frontier, Pittsburgh and Northwest Papers, DM, ser. e, vol. 11.
In 1772 Lord Dunmore believed squatter behavior stemmed from an “avidity and restlessness” saying squatters “acquire no attachment to Place: But wandering about seems engrafted in their nature…”\textsuperscript{39}

Rather than being a question of temperament however, squatters’ compulsion to wander stemmed from a variety of material reasons. The McDonald family’s story repeated itself throughout the eastern valley. Isaac Williams struggled to find the best location to plant his settlement and moved from the Upper Monongahela country, around Redstone, first to Buffalo Creek in the west and then finally south to Grave Creek in 1770.\textsuperscript{40} Similarly, twenty-three-year old Ebenezer Zane, whose Danish family had migrated through France and then England over two generations before settling in the southern portion of Susquehanna Valley near Winchester, moved to Redstone with his brothers Jonathan and Silas around 1769. The young men picked up once more and constructed a cabin on the Ohio River in 1770, but failed to induce families from Redstone to join them. A year later the Zanes joined an unidentified settlement where they lived until 1773 before successfully leading other families to settle on the Ohio.\textsuperscript{41}

A number of forces within and outside of one’s control might keep a family moving, and many Ohio Valley settlers continued to live in a transient state until after the 1780s. War, local violence, and poor social relations uprooted the Newport family. The Newports spent much of the time between 1772 and 1775 attempting to establish a

\textsuperscript{39} Lord Dunmore to Earl of Dartmouth, December 24, 1772, DHDW, 371.
\textsuperscript{40} Hidreth and Culter, Biographical and historical memoirs of the early pioneer settlers of Ohio, 469.
\textsuperscript{41} Hass, History and Indian Wars of Western Virginia, 334; Crammer, History of the Upper Ohio with Family History and Biographical Sketches, 297-8.
household, moving from Maryland to Middle River, Virginia before joining a convoy of
migrants headed into the Ohio River Valley. In the valley, an Indian attack drove the
Newport family, along with their neighbors, from Mount Pisgah to Hanna’s Town.
Shortly thereafter, William Newport began quarrelling with his neighbors who chased his
family of four from Hanna’s Town north to a vacant cabin sixteen miles north in
Loyalhanna. After the onset of the Revolution the Newports relocated once more, south
to Miller’s Fort. Fearing a new wave of Indian-Euroamerican violence in 1773-4,
families in the Upper Monongahela Country began sending land scouts to prospect new
regions; within a year small groups left the region to resettle south. Even families who
established productive farms relocated. In 1770 Phillip Doddridge, his young family of
four, in-laws and a twelve-year-old nephew migrated from Maryland to the Dunkard
Creek settlement. There Doddridge built a “comfortable” homestead farm where the
family lived until seven years later when Wyandot spies burned the cabin, killed his
father in-law, and took captive his three young daughters. After losing half their
members, the family left the creek to regroup with Phillip’s brother, John, at Doddridge
Station in Western Virginia. Even simple things like unfamiliarity with the land
prevented families from settling. One couple built their cabin near Redstone during the
spring; when summer returned so too did the rattlesnakes that seasonally inhabited the

42 Sarah Harvey Porter, The life and times of Anne Royall, (Cedar Rapids: Torch Press Book Shop, 1909), 18 & 27. I
have not identified the exact location of Mount Pisgah, Pennsylvania. Modernly, there are four in Pennsylvania, but
none are located in an area that geographically make sense for Newports to have lived.
43 “Remarks on Kentucky,” undated, Hutchins Papers, HSP. Material in document suggests the date of this document
falls after 1782, possibly in the 1790s.
44 Doddridge, Notes, LCP, 310.
same space, leading the family to abandon the plot for another.45

Early Ohio Valley squatters resigned themselves to land occupation and use over the pursuit of immediate and/or permanent landownership. Squatters expressed the temporality of their situation by building simple semi-permanent dwellings, log cabins.46 Known for the speed at which they could be built, log cabins could be constructed, abandoned, and built again elsewhere in little time, with minimal effort or labor and requiring few tools. Men abandoned their cabins so often and with such little thought that a frontier adage dubbed the action simply “leaving,” as one colloquialism went: “when a man left his cabin, in the language of the New Testament, he took up his bed and walked” away.47

Like the tomahawk, the late eighteenth century log cabin became a definitively North American structure as it developed over time through an amalgamation of interethnic cultures and frontier necessity. Log cabins and log houses originated from advances in building techniques in north eastern Indian communities as well as

---

46 “The Voyage of Tilly Buttrick, Jr” in John W. Harpster, *Crossroads: Descriptions of the Western Pennsylvania 1720-1829* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 1938), 265. Buttrick wrote his travel diary in the early nineteenth century, but his description of log cabin villages that he saw near the Alleghany River are exceptional in specifying the nature of the log cabin as a temporary home. Buttrick states, “[I]nstead of a few log huts as before there were forty or fifty shanties, or temporary log houses, built up, and completely filled with men, women and children....” Additionally, according to the OED, the term “log-house” came into use around 1784 to mean a “temporary habitation,” earlier use of the term indicated a prison. My use of log cabins to form the argument that squatters did not initially believe that their settlement of land could be permanent is, in part, building off of Richard Bushman’s conclusion that the type of houses colonial Americans built yields insight into their perceptions. Bushman’s argument does differ from mine in that he argues houses show hopes as opposed to realities. My overall argument is that for frontier peoples not addressed by Bushman, reality was more pressing than hopes. Richard Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993).
throughout Sweden, Finland, and Germany. As Europeans and Indians interacted in Pennsylvania’s Delaware Valley, they borrowed from and built on the techniques and styles offered by each culture. Log structures evolved from simple round, tent-like, structures to square/rectangular dwellings as knowledge of them disseminated with westward and southward moving migrants. With no log-dwelling tradition of their own, English, Welsh, Scottish, and Scots-Irish colonists adopted the architectural strategy out of necessity and added their own adapted understanding of stone house construction to the mix of ideas. Indians, in turn, picked up the Europeans’ improvements; as early as 1725, Delaware, Seneca, and Shawnee displaced from the Delaware Valley had established log cabin villages with the construction of towns like Logstown, on the Ohio River. Accounts left by military surveyor Thomas Hutchinson of the new Delaware towns in the Ohio Valley suggest their inhabitants continued to build log cabins or houses. Traveling minister David Zeisberger reported that by 1771 the Delaware, who formerly built a number of different types of dwelling structures, now built only log cabins in refugee communities like Newcomer’s Town.

Over time, log structures improved through the exchange of experience and a negotiation of information between North American and European cultures. By the late eighteenth century settlers constructed simple log cabins with one first floor common

---

49 “A Description of part of the Country Westward of the River of the Ohio with the Distances completed from Fort Pitt to the several Indian Towns by land & water,” 1768-1771, Hutchins Papers, HSP.
room and sometimes a partial loft for sleeping. Settlers often constructed cabins with split or whole logs, stacked one row after another with notched ends, rarely with chinking, to hold the structure together. Compared to log cabins, log houses had a more finished appearance with hewn boards, weatherproofing chinking, windows, white washed interior walls, large stone hearths, ornate shutters or hinges, and Dutch-styled doors that could be opened at the top or bottom, one section at a time. Just east of the Ohio Valley in the southern region of the Susquehanna and Shenandoah Valleys, homes ranged from small single room log cabins to palatial plantations with most of the population living in two story houses with multiple rooms. East of the Alleghenies, rural settlers commonly lived in farm homes with attics that served as granaries or smoke chambers, and cellars dug for food storage or positioned for access to spring water. Yet prior to America’s Independence, even well planned villages like Hanna’s Town, with higher than average building requirements, were crude structures without even as much as basements—little more than “20 wretched houses, all windowless…” to use the description of traveling minister John Heckewelder.

Throughout the more settled parts of British North America many eighteenth-century EuroAmericans intentionally constructed homes to differentiate themselves from slaves and American Indians, a non-existent practice on the frontier. In a separate

---

process of “white” ethnogenesis, Euroamericans built separate quarters to house slaves, and new architectural practices separated servants, labors, and business dealings from private rooms occupied by families. This did not apply in the backcountry, where Euroamericans, American Indians and Africans all lived in the same type of simple wooden homes and sometimes even sharing the same home across ethnic lines. The difficulties of frontier life and its common pressures on all ethnicities meant there was little reason to reinforce racial categories with homebuilding.56

Following the mid-1770s, as squatters gained a greater sense of permanence and had successfully applied for land warrants, men like John Doddridge replaced their one story stacked log cabins with two story log homes, complete with multiple rooms and finished interior walls. Charles Martin developed more of this property by adding stonework and several new outbuildings. Those families who had decided to stay but chose not to build new structures refaced old structures with stone or brick walls.57 Migrants arriving in the Ohio Valley would have become aware of a number of these common building plans, yet squatters continually and deliberately chose single room log cabins over other types of dwellings, suggesting both the creolization of refugees and their anticipation of short-term settlement.

The conscious choice squatters made to build with wood over more durable brick or stone that would have yielded more familiar, British style structures is telling of their sense of impermanence. It made little sense to invest in permanent housing when

57 Doddridge, Notes, LCP, 167; Charles Martin Land Register, March 24, 1780, “Archaeological Investigations at Fort Martin, Monongalia County, West Virginia,” WVHPO.
outsiders often contested squatters’ occupations of land by destroying settlements. Settlers sometimes had to burn their own structures and crops to prevent resources from falling into enemy hands. Backcountry leaders commonly described western country inhabitants as having “been obliged to evacuate their possessions by the savages and fly to forts for the security of the Lives and Families.”

If the log cabins at Doddridge Station can be taken to be suggestive of other frontier homes, cabins offered a bundle of economic solutions to a mobile people. With a community working together, the entire building process might take only two to three days. Men separated into teams, with axe men spending one day chopping and sometimes splitting logs for walls and quick clapboard roofs while others selected and pieced together stones or made bricks for a hearth and chimney. The builders passed the second day assembling the house often leaving the dirt floor exposed. When builders worked a third day, they generally spent it constructing makeshift cupboards and shelves built into the cabin’s interior.

Squatters thus relied on the trees they cleared for lumber, intentionally disregarding the region’s rich sandstone, limestone, and free stone quarries and plethora of brick-making material. Those settlers who did favor stonework relied on a vernacular understanding of architecture from a variety of skilled and unskilled backgrounds; just as cabin builders did not necessarily have training as carpenters, those who erected stone

58 William Trent Journal at Fort Pitt, 1763, HSP.
59 Thomas Hutchins to the Executive Council of the Commonwealth of the Pennsylvania on the Boundary between Pennsylvania and Virginia, 1784, Hutchins Papers, HSP.
60 Doddridge, Notes, LCP, 88.
hearth and chimneys had not worked as masons.62

Instead, men came into the woods with skill sets representing their prior lives in urban areas. The original migrants to Wheeling included at least four blacksmiths along with Henry Jolly and “several other mechanics” with craft experience.63 Although half of Old Redstone Settlement claimed skills as mechanics, the rest of the population included Indian traders and military veterans.64 Throughout the rest of the Monongahela Upper country artisans like John Mason a German blacksmith and a chair maker known as E.W. lived sparsely. Andrea Byerly had worked as a baker in Germany, fellow German-born John Belchy arrived at Redstone a hatter, and both James Railson and William Parker abruptly ended their apprenticeships as cobbler to take the woods.65 Together a variety of skilled labor joined forces and combined knowledge with men like John Simpson of Simpson’s Creek. Simpson had spent much of his life in the woods as a fur trapper. Other woodsmen hunted or traded with Indians and contributed to the construction of scant towns. Without access to formal training as craftsmen or builders, neighborhoods relied on and gave due respect to men who mastered new skills or demonstrated an above average “natural” aptitude or ingenuity.66

Significantly, even those with the ability to command large pools of skilled labor,
such as settlement leaders like David Shepherded at Wheeling or Short Creek’s most affluent settler Van Swearengen, as well as Newcomer’s Town leader Netawatwees, lived in log houses composed of a few side-by-side log cabins. By conservative estimates, at least ninety-six percent of even the best homes in the southwestern Pennsylvania were built from logs, with less than one percent brick and only three percent built of stone. The few stone structures built stood out against the wooded landscape as symbols of permanence and a luxury not afforded to a transient people.

Whether leaving for short or long durations, families quit homes with all they could carry and left many of their belongings behind. In 1777, Isaac Williams led his wife, two families of Tomlinsons, his in-laws, and their neighbors from Grave Creek to “Monongahela River north of Redstone Old Fort.” The families remained on the Monongahela through the remainder of the American Revolution, returning to Grave Creek only in 1783. Two years after their return, the group learned of a “large war party” approaching for an eminent attack. Williams again removed the group to the larger

---

67 Weslager, *The Delaware Indians*, 291-2; Charles Bergengren argues that floor plans provide insight into a group’s sociopolitical views. He states that open floor plans were used by “egalitarian, pre-modern peasants’ culture resistant to Enlightenment rationality and hierarchy.” I would argue squatters built predominantly open-planed homes due to time constraints rather than cosmological views. McMurry and Dolsen, *Architecture and Landscape of the Pennsylvania Germans*, 44. In *Albion’s Seed*, David Hackett Fisher discusses the common act of building a “log-cabin” for newly married couples in the Susquehanna Valley. The process he is actually referring to is the construction of a log-house. Most cabins did not require wattle and clay or chinking. While the interchange of words is minimal, in referring to the commonality of this act Fisher’s point strengthens my argument that east of the Ohio Valley settlers were constructing houses, not cabins. David Hackett Fisher, *Four British Folkways in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 658-9.

68 The information provided is based on a 1798 tax list. As settlers reused building supplies and took up abandoned cabins it is improbable to assume more stone or brick houses existed before 1798 in the period I am addressing, only that equal or a lesser number stone houses existed. Koegler also specifies that stone structures symbolized permanence while log and wood structures did not. Koegler, “Building in Stone in Southwestern Pennsylvanian, 195 & 204. That squatters overwhelmingly built with wood over brick or stone is similarly corroborated by earlier accounts of the area, All of Hanna’s Town burned to the ground in 1782. John Campbell to George Morgan, March 20, 1768, Correspondence of George Morgan, BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR; Shepherd to Hand, September 27, 1777, Edward Hand Papers, DM, ser. nn, vol. 3; Indian Intelligence statement of John Leesh, 1785, Hutchins Papers, HSP.
garrison at Wheeling. As one military leader stated, the Grave Creek settlers “had abandoned their houses seemingly in a hurry as they left a good deal of their effects behind.” Indian warriors “demolished” all of the homes, including their central farm, and killed the livestock the settlement depended on. Along with other refugees, the former inhabitants of Grave Creeks remained at Wheeling a year later.

The material possessions kept by squatters inside log cabins reflected a combination of their past as displaced refugees and the uncertainty of their future. Frontier people had an extremely difficult time replacing everyday necessities like metal tools or pots and prior to the American Revolution had little use for functionless trinkets. With limited access to goods, squatters used what was available and what worked. Backcountry consumers considered most matter ephemeral and rebuilt their settlements without the physical trappings they deemed to be without long-term consequence. Squatters’ definitive migratory lifestyles and penchant toward flight necessitated their possessions provide optimal functionality while remaining mobile. Many traveled with far fewer goods than those in a 1769 list of over 100 goods, including a library, furniture, feather beds, medicine, and playing cards, “suggested for settlers who live away from towns.”

70 Hidreth and Culter, Biographical and historical memoirs of the early pioneer settlers of Ohio, 469, 471 & 481-2; Intelligence from William McMahan, September 21, 1786 and Hutchins to the President of Congress, October 12, 1786, Hutchins Papers, HSP.
71 William Gamble, 1769, “A list of goods all settlers should have who live away from towns,” HSP.
Relationships between frontier settlers and the material world are especially useful in reconstructing how the socioeconomic consequences of their transient lives affected daily life and culture. Sometimes families willingly made the decision to part with their possessions and sometimes outside forces made the decision for them. When families departed Clinch River in western Pennsylvania for Kentucky, the Scott family collected the goods they left behind. Not long after, thirteen Indians ransacked the Scott house and took Mr. Scott and all he owned with them. Following local clashes or after especially violent summers, families sometimes emerged from protective fortresses to discover their possessions ruined or looted.

Even with all traveling hands and a few animals sharing in the burden of transporting goods into the Valley, families brought limited possessions with them. Traveling Congregationalist minister David McClure provides a detailed description of how little families might travel with in his account of one family of twelve:

The man carried an ax and gun on his shoulders – his wife, the rim of a spinning wheel in one hand, and a loaf of bread in the other. Several little boys and girls, each with a bundle, according to their size. Two poor horses, each heavily loaded with some poor necessaries, on the top of the baggage of one, was an infant rocked to sleep in a kind of wicker cage, lashed securely to the horse. A Cow formed one of the company and she was destined to bear her proportion of service, a bed cord was wound around her horns, and a bag of meal on her back.

72 Hass, *History and Indian Wars of Western Virginia*, 291.
74 April 24, 1773, entry in The Diary of David McClure, 118-9.
Other accounts share similar details. Families hung a meager assortment of metal tools required for constructing homes and farming off the sides of their horse or cow. Saddle bags containing grain and seeds draped over animals. Crates were strapped on top of horses to carry bedding, clothing, and small children. 75 Most of what backcountry inhabitants brought into the woods included simple cooking and tableware like “wooden bowls, trenchers and noggins” as prioritized possessions. If lost, squatters resorted to hollowed out “gourds and hard shelled Squashes” in their place. 76 Other tools necessary for daily living—looms, hominy blocks, pestles, wood rods (for salt and oil), tan-vats (for tanning hides), hand grinders and crackers for corn and grain—were made from wood, rock, and nails found on site at their settlement. 77

Even once well-off families brought little and struggled to replace broken goods. Neighbors described Anne Newport’s family as having once lived among the better sort back in her native Maryland. Rumors circulated that her father Robert had once held a landed title in England and that the Newports accordingly lived “better furnished” than most. Yet Anne Newport’s brief list of possessions included only, “a bed, four wooden stools with legs struck in them through augur holes, half a dozen tin cups and the like number of pewter plates, knives, forks, and spoons…a tray and a frying-pan, a camp kettle and a pot.” Locals considered the Newport family’s tableware “opulent” even though the kitchen items sat on a table composed of nothing more than a split tree with

75 Crammer, History of the Upper Ohio Valley, OHS, 156.
76 Doddridge, Notes, LCP, 137.
77 Crammer, History of the Upper Ohio Valley, OHS, 274, 277, 279; Percy Burdelle Caley, Child Life in colonial western Pennsylvania (Pittsburgh: s.n. 1926), 7.
“rough-hewed” white oak table legs. Much like other early Ohio Valley families, the
Newports did not migrate with furniture but built quick, disposable versions of what they
needed after relocating. If the Newport family at one time had greater access to goods
than their neighbors, they no longer did so when Anne’s younger sister broke a spoon; the
family replaced it with a mussel shell, the utensil most other frontier families had on
hand. Nothing went to waste, not even the broken spoon: as others would have done,
Robert Newport melted the spoon down and retooled the pewter for new purposes.

According to his will, one of Hanna’s Town most affluent residents, tavern keeper
and slave owner Charles Foreman, owned little more than the Newports. While many of
their neighbors in the region were limited to an ad hoc collection of goods, like the red
earthenware pottery made in Hanna’s Town, the Foremans owned items imported from
Philadelphia and Europe, but even these affluent consumers were relatively limited in
their purchases. Though Foreman’s tableware included slightly better pieces, with a set of
five delft bowls, he owned only two of the better yellow creamware plates, “[one] set of
tea cups and saucers,” and a pot. Foreman’s dinnerware likely decreased over time as
pieces broke and others were gifted to his children as they married and set up homes of
their own. For whatever reason, however, Foreman either could not or chose not to
replace these pieces as his estate diminished: A pair of “plated candlesticks,” a spare tea

78 Crammer, History of the Upper Ohio with Family History, 274.
79 Porter, The life and times of Anne Royall, 19-20. It should be noted that Sarah Harvey Porter grew up with Anne
Royall as a neighbor in the Monongahela area. Richardson and Wilson, “Hannas Town and Charles Foreman: The
Historical and Archeological Record,” 177.
pot, a looking glass, and a candle snuffer appear as the only luxury goods Foreman listed in his will.

In comparison with men living in the south of Virginia or the backcountries of the Carolinas between 1750 and 1770, Foreman’s final inventory appears more like that of a tenant or man of lesser standing than that of a successful entrepreneur and property owner. Foreman did not own an assortment of pans and pots, nor any books, a Bible, wine glasses, hats, knee belts, cuff links, suites, playing cards, or tools, to name a few of the items middling and affluent men regularly had. In all, the Foreman family owned just ninety-seven individual household goods, and most of these were practical items. Silverware comprised one-third, or thirty-four pieces, of Foreman’s total property; everyday goods like a wooden bucket, a pair of scissors, and Charles Foreman’s two outfits, one worn during the day and the other worn for sleep, represented the rest of his belongings. Even when men like Foreman had the ability to buy the everyday items people in urban areas owned, they did not indulge in frivolous purchases, much to the frustration of Sir William Johnson. Rather than exchange their furs for his store’s supply of linens, stockings, ink, and other goods, Mohawk Valley traders deemed these items impractical and moved on with their skins.

---

81 Will of Charles Forman located in Richardson and Wilson, “Hannas Town and Charles Foreman: The Historical and Archeological Record,” 170 & 174-5. Archeological evidence from the Foreman’s refuse pit show the family had other items as well. I have eliminated goods that have been definitively identified as made or sold after the Revolution. It is important to note that once the Revolution ended and industry building began, the region underwent rapid economic growth and development.
The clothing favored by most squatters similarly reflected backcountry practicality and the need to carefully manage resources. Men less affluent than Charles Foreman generally slept and hunted in the same shirt. Women purchased or made men’s shirts, capes, deer-skin breeches, and leggings in one-size-fits-all in the hope of extending their use, and women similarly patched and darned old clothing more often than they fashioned new articles. Unlike their urban counterparts, backcountry men took to wearing skins, and women generally kept only a plan “linsey petite coat and bed gown,” sometimes one and the same. Families and settlements relied on small trunk patches of flax crops planted, tended to, and pulled mostly by women. Women, young children, and to a lesser extent men who proved themselves especially skilled at weaving passed idle time spinning thread and weaving fabric in their own homes or the loom-owning homes of neighbors. John Doddridge, one such man, proudly claimed that “no woman could spin shoe thread as well as he could.” Those people without spinning or weaving skills “[gave] labor, or barter” to those that did. At Doddridge Station, young Joseph bartered his skills at weaving belts, while a family friend’s “skill was in great request” for the wooden bowls he turned. Despite the energy put into producing clothing, women kept styles plain and “unpretending.” As Joseph Doddridge, born and raised at his father’s squatter station, attested, wolves carried off sheep—and with them their wool—and flax crops sometimes simply failed, meaning clothing remained in limited supply.83 Most families went barefoot in warm months and made a hybrid European-moccasin shoe of

83 Crammer, *History of the Upper Ohio Valley*, OHS, 158 & 279; Doddridge, Notes, LCP, 143, 164-7 & 279.
tanned deer hide “or coarse shoes, or shoe packs in the winter.” Most telling of squatters’ uncertain and temporary lifestyle was the practice by which each family member hung his or her clothing on a peg near the front door, allowing for quick dressing and departure even in the dead of night.  

Outsiders either did not recognize or did not appreciate the practicality embedded in backcountry material culture. Dress stood out as a visual marker separating those who lived in established, “civilized,” regions from backcountry people whom they disdained and feared as disorderly “half naked,” Indians.

Despite (or because of) the temporality of frontier life, settlers regarded some property as exceptionally important. In a story told some sixty years after the event, John Crawford recorded the importance of a simple family Bible. Crawford was a second generation squatter whose parents William and Mary had grown up and married as squatters in Chambersburg in the Susquehanna Valley. After several moves and the death of William during the French and Indian War, Mary married recent Scottish migrant John McKinney, and the mixed refugee family of ten squatted in the Big Conways (Kanalloway). During Pontiac’s War Delaware Indians attacked the family home and burned the dwelling to the ground. Though the family likely lost most of their possessions, Crawford took the time to specify that the fire had destroyed the family Bible, which kept records of birthdates and an account that a family called Crawford and McKinney had once existed. Its loss wounded a family who had already lost one father

---

84 Doddridge, Notes, LCP, 137, 140-3 & 145.
85 Gage to Hillsborough, October 7, 1772, CTG, 1:336.
to war, two children (Mary and Michael) to smallpox, and three more (John, William, and Arthur) to captivity with the Delaware Indians. In the aftermath of the attack, the decimated family scattered. Years later, when John and William found their separate ways to the Upper Monongahela Country, no trace remained of their family.  

Even more than maintaining the memory of lost loved ones was the need to survive, and an essential if underappreciated part of that effort was the protection of dairy cows for which parents and leaders were willing to risk their lives. The importance of milk cows to frontier families is captured in the nineteenth century poem “The Flight of Byerlyes.” A nineteenth-century oral history of the family’s flight from Bushy Run to Ligonier during Pontiac’s War, one stanza recalls their effort to save their cows.

A Three-year-old, by brother led,
   As through the wilds the Byerlys fled…
  “O, mother, dear! The cows we’ll need,
     Two babies now you have to feed,”
   The children cry: “Bring them along,”
   The Mother said, “If you are strong
     Enough to stand the toil and strain
   But haste or we shall be slain.”

Although cattle slowed down flight and limited the routes that families could take to the safety of forts, groups still drove their small herds until their efforts proved futile.  

Dairy cows also took up valuable space in small fortified houses, but in return they

---

88 Orderly Book, 8th Pennsylvania Regt, Fort Pitt, Fort McCintosh, Western Pennsylvania,1778-1780, HSP; Cort, Col. Henry Bouquet and his campaigns of 1763 and 1764, 23-4; Doddridge, Notes, LCP, 137.
offered nutrition for those held up for an uncertain amount of time. In one account of an Indian attack that lasted several days, the women of Jenken’s Fort left the stockade under guard to milk the cows. A few days later, William Crawford, John Sloan, and a slave named Cook rode out of the fort again with “clasp knives open in hand,” to drive the cows in, an act which Sloan died trying to achieve.  

The material culture of squatters represents a reaction to the difficulty in obtaining goods over the Alleghenies and the reality that when assaulted, families left goods to save lives. Stock piling material possessions weighed down a traveling people. Backcountry traders offered diverse varieties of goods from their hub at Fort Pitt, yet early Ohio Valley settlers often kept purchases to necessities of salt, iron, munitions, and shoes. Precluding price as a factor limiting purchases, when bands of vigilante settlers took to sacking merchant’s packhorse trains they destroyed all goods there within and did not pilfer. The long-term migratory reality of frontier life precipitated only passing attachment or authority over goods.

Squatter settlements, like homes, boosted few amenities, as most had few structures beyond water and horse-powered mills. Thomas Hutchinson described the Delaware villages throughout the region as simply timbered cleanings, houses, cornfields, and graveyards. Like their Delaware counterparts in the Ohio Valley, the first Euroamericans in the valley did not waste time on unnecessary buildings, constructing

---

90 Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan Fort Pitt Trade Book, 1765-1770, HSP.  
91 “A Description of part of the Country Westward of the River of the Ohio with the Distances completed from Fort Pitt to the several Indian Towns by land & water,” (1768-1771), Hutchins Papers, HSP.
few outhouses and even fewer common space buildings. Without independent physical structures, unwarranted settlers made do with fields, forest canopies, and residents’ homes filling in for designated meetinghouses, churches, and schools. When David McClure led Presbyterian services at settlements in western Pennsylvania, the closest structure he found to a chapel was at Long Run, eighteen miles north of Pittsburgh. And even that structure was new: inhabitants at Long Run had constructed that “small house…for public worship” only in 1772, possibly in anticipation of McClure’s approaching visit.  

In his settlement “rotations,” McClure, “preached in the open air” (of an orchard) to a mostly “intoxicated” congregation, led worship in a tent at Mr. Carnahan’s Jacob Swamp and in Robert Hanna’s home, as well as taking it upon himself to construct “the model of a church & a Session” on Jacob’s Creek.  

School settings were similarly improvised, with some settlements like Hanna’s Town and Fishing Creek operating open-field community schools. These schools met irregularly with mostly male teachers, but both boys and girls enjoyed the benefit of lessons. 

Most other settlements got by without physical institutions.

While backcountry inhabitants made do without most structures with ease, access to a fort was particularly desirable. However, prior to 1773-4, Ohio Valley squatters had yet to build one, and the only British military fortification, Fort Pitt, stood about forty miles north of Redstone until the crown ordered it dismantled and sold in 1772, at which

---

93 November, 4 1772, January 3, 1773, June, 6, 1773, The Diary of David McClure, 107-9 & 123.
time settlers repurposed much of the “pickets, stones, bricks, timer and iron.” According to Commander-In-Chief General George Gage, “[Fort Pitt] is no Asylum to Settlers at any distance from it, nor can it cover or protect the Frontiers at any Distances from it.”

The Ohio Company’s abandoned supply house at Redstone remained the only civilian fort on the east side of the Allegheny Mountains. Even it was not terribly impressive. According to Redstone’s original plans, the Ohio Company had built a small log house, at thirty-nine square feet, surrounded by a sixteen-foot high palisade of wood poles and a ditch, twelve feet deep and twenty-four feet wide; this small fort could provide safe haven for only some fifty souls.

The settlers’ hesitation to maintain even the minimal protection offered by Redstone suggests their sense of confidence between 1768 and 1774. By the spring of 1772, settler neglect left the fort in a state of disrepair. After establishment of the initial flourishing settlement on the banks of the Ohio River, several years passed in which the settlers declined to build any forts. Only after 1773-4 and continuing into the 1780s, did the area’s squatters establish local forts upon settlement, often building their cabins inside the stockade walls.

---

95 Gage to Governor Penn, November 2, 1772, George Dallas Albert, ed., The Frontier Forts of Western Pennsylvania (Harrisburg: Clarence M. Busch, 1896), 2:122-4.
97 Settlers constructed all of the Ohio Valley’s civilian forts that existed before 1775 in 1773-4. The consolidated rush to build forts occurred as the results of new fears that the area’s Indian and Euroamerican inhabitants were slipping into violence and about to spur a new Indian War. This is addressed in greater detail in a later part of the chapter.
99 “Archaeological Investigations at Fort Martin, Monongalia County, West Virginia,” WVHPO; Perkins, Border Life, 64.
One People: Mutually Beneficial & Interdependent Relationship Building

The decision made by these early Ohio Valley squatters to live “exposed” and in close proximity to Indian villages is striking for a group principally composed of refugees of two recent wars fought against Indian peoples. The very displacement and shared refugee status of Euroamerican and Indian settlers, however, created an opportunity for social and cultural ethnogenesis. The decimated population, environmental realities, labor shortage, and limited resources forced the diverse peoples of the eastern Ohio Valley to create a mutually advantageous alliance and cooperative communities.100

Valley Indians had a successful history of ethnogenesis. The Mingo living on the west bank of the Ohio had originated from the joining of individual Delaware, Shawnee, Mahican, Seneca, Wyandot, Tisagechroanu, Mohawk, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Oneida into a single community. Just before the French and Indian War, famine and the opportunity to gain autonomy from the Six Nations had encouraged these future Mingo to flee Pennsylvania and New York for the eastern Ohio Country.101 Later in 1768, after Pontiac’s War and the Six Nations’ sale of their land at the Fort Stanwix treaty, small bands from a variety of the Iroquois tributaries, including the Delawares, Munsee, and Ottawa, were relocated to land overseen by the Wyandot in western Pennsylvania and eastern Ohio Country.102 In the first years of the 1770s the Ohio Delaware under Netawatwees encouraged Christian and non-Christian Delaware to regroup in

101 Weslager, The Delaware Indians, 206.
northeastern Ohio with former Delaware refugees.\textsuperscript{103} The Mingo living on Yellow Creek had originated in the Susquehanna Valley before their displacement by the Iroquois. As refugees, they had followed Logan (Mingo Tachnedorus), the son of a Cayuga leader and a French woman. Between 1768 and 1772, the group moved at least twice in the Ohio Valley from Beaver Creek to Yellow Creek, during which time they added Shawnee members to their numbers and pointedly chose to live closer to Euroamerican settlements.\textsuperscript{104}

According to the Ohio Delaware leader White Eyes, necessity induced his people to build community across ethnic lines with Wyandot, Shawnees, and Tawas (Ottawa); these groups “bound themselves… and made us as one People.”\textsuperscript{105} The Delaware living at Newcomer’s Town in the southeastern section of the Ohio country similarly experienced a moment of social reorganization that allowed divergent groups to find common ground for the sake of community building. There, a hundred families--former members of different and divided clans of Delaware (the Wolf, the Turkey, and the Turtle)--lived as coalescent communities under the governance of Turtle leader Netawatwees. The reunification of the three political groups coincided with the rise of a Delaware origin story that gave the three groups, and a fourth, the Crow, a common

\textsuperscript{103} “An Indian Conference,” October 9, 1773, Sir William Johnson Papers, 12:1034-36.
origin, a structured order, and a natural mutual dependence on one another.\textsuperscript{106} Resettling, the Delaware built up their numbers through the inclusion of multiethnic Indian groups, Euroamericans, and both free and un-free people of color. Through diplomatic and trade networks, marriages, and child and adult adoptions, desperate people welcomed new members into their communities.\textsuperscript{107}

The desire for productive relations in the eastern Ohio Valley extended beyond Indians to include Euroamericans as well. During a 1765 private meeting held with “the chiefs and principal warriors of their tribes of the Delawares,” George Croghan observed these leaders “acknowledging different [skin] colors but that they are all brothers sharing one continent.” According to Croghan, the Delaware and Shawnees of the area hoped to rebuild peace.\textsuperscript{108} While improving their diplomatic relations with the “Shawnee, Wyandots, Ohio Iroquois, and Cherokees,” Indian leaders including White Eyes, Netawatwees, and Killbuck made good on attempts to relink the Delaware’s “chain of Friendship” with the “English.”\textsuperscript{109} By 1768 a similar process blended Euroamericans of different ethnic and culture groups living in the eastern Ohio Valley.

\textit{Without Organized Religion Comes Organized Peace}

In order to rebuild the splintered remnants of their former communities,


\textsuperscript{107} Schutt, \textit{Peoples of the River Valley}, 150-2.

\textsuperscript{108} April 29, 1765, April 30, 1765, and May 9, 1765, George Croghan Journal, The Etting Collection, Croghan-Gratz Papers, 12, HSP.

Euroamerican migrants to the eastern Ohio Valley began to overlook cultural and religious differences among themselves. Basic shared needs and outside threats forged a new identity in the eastern Ohio Valley, replacing language, culture, and ethnicity, all markers that would have remained divisive among the population of mixed heritages. New bonds occurred in spite of two decades of pamphlets published to purposely divide ethnic and religious groups in the Susquehanna Valley, pamphlets which ascribed the blame for Indian uprisings to specific groups: to ignorant frontier inhabitants, the poor, the Irish, the Presbyterians, the Quakers, the Germans, the proprietors, and the Pennsylvania assembly.110

The discourse successfully splintered social, religious, and ethnic groups in the Susquehanna Valley among those who had access to the pamphlet battle, but Ohio Valley squatters had partially left the baggage of polemics east of the Alleghenies. The willingness of Euroamericans to cross religious and ethnic lines allowed fledgling communities to replenish their numbers for protection, labor, and the formation of new trade partners. New productive relationships acted as linchpins linking individuals to families, families to settlements, and settlements to one another, constructing larger interdependent neighborhoods of people who consciously promoted peace over war.

In early Euroamerican settlement of the Ohio Valley, top down institutional religion transformed from stringent lines of divisions into minor differences. Lay and irregular practices defined religion for a transient people who lived without churches or

---

110 Silver, Our Savage Neighbors, 203-26.
formally ordained ministers. Lutherans, Reformed Lutherans, Dunkards, Mennonites, Baptists, Presbyterians, Anglicans, Dutch Calvinists, Quakers, a small number of Catholics, and eventually some of the first Methodist congregations populated the region. Prior to the American Revolution, the need for formal denominational worship services was not a priority, as lay men preached to a mixed population under a general umbrella of Christianity. At Doddridge Station, where Anglicans, a few Quakers, Presbyterians, Methodists, and likely Lutherans lived, Dunker Thomas Hardie preached on occasion. Other communities followed “a few illiterate preachers of Baptist persuasion.” 111 Few communities had the luxury of a religious leader, often taking advantage of traveling ministers, regardless of their affiliation. Within the same regional network of Doddridge Station, the arrival of one minister marked the marriage of Rebecca Martin to Isaac Williams in an impromptu ceremony: “he standing up in his hunting dress, and she in a short gown and petticoat of homespun, common wear.” The couple presumably lived as husband and wife before their improvised nuptials and likely would have continued on that way regardless of the minister’s presence. 112

In 1772 the Congregationalist minister David McClure became the only seminary-educated minister west of the Alleghenies and agreed to make annual visits to five predominantly Presbyterian settlements annually, at least two of which were predominantly military. 113 Despite the new addition of McClure to the valley, a religious

112 Hidreth and Culter, Biographical and historical memoirs of the early pioneer settlers of Ohio, 481.
113 March 19, 1772 and June 8, 1773, The Diary of David McClure, 110 & 125.
revival of faith did not occur. When McClure made rounds at settlements near the Yohogania and Monongahela Rivers, he married four couples, with two of the grooms settlers and the other two soldiers. Much like the Martin-Williams wedding, at least half took place after years of the couple living together. “They were soldiers, who for want of some one to marry them, had lived with their women, several years, & now were desirous to wipe away reproach by lawful marriage.” Despite McClure’s offers to officiate marriages, few took him up; in two years the minister only performed five weddings in total.114

Sacraments proved important mainly to officers stationed in the frontier or for those settlers hoping to maintain a high social standing in the backcountry. When Lucy Van Swearengen went against her affluent father’s wishes and spent the night in the woods with a lowly Samuel Brady, she ensured her marriage to him. When the elder Van Swearengen tracked down the couple, he insisted a minister marry them; he did not care if the attendant was “Presbyterian or Methodist,” and in the end an Episcopalian presided over the occasion.115 The relative lack of baptisms further indicates the low value that these frontier people placed on sacraments. In two years McClure baptized only six children, four the children of military officers and two others whose parents were of unknown religious affiliation. There also seemed to be a lack of demand for the baptism of older unbaptized children or infants. This marked a striking difference between settlers east and west of the Alleghenies as, upon his return to the Susquehanna Valley, McClure

115 John McDonald to Draper, April 7, 1845, Interviews of Adult Children of the Frontier, Pittsburgh and Northwest Virginia Papers, DM, ser. e, vol. 11.
baptized six children of waiting families on one day alone.\textsuperscript{116}

While Presbyterians tended to welcomed McClure, their actions made him question the settlers’ commitment to Christian principles: “Drinking, debauchery & all kinds of vice reign, in this frontier of depravity. In [the military hub of] Pittsburgh, however are to be found a few fearers of God & friends of religion….”\textsuperscript{117}

The travels of Baptist minister David Jones further suggest the region’s separation of piety from sacraments. Jones, traveling to preach to Indians, believed the area was rife with Christian faith and led open air services along the Monongahela. (One service, at George Creek, saw Jones preach to “200 hundred hearers,” and during another, Jones spoke before a mixture of Indians and Euroamericans at Wheeling.) It does not appear that Jones attended any weddings, baptisms, or funerals during his travels in 1772 and 1773.\textsuperscript{118} Thus, it is easy to see how McClure would describe the settlers west of the Alleghenies as “freed … from the restraining influence of religion.”\textsuperscript{119}

Religion was not wholly without influence, as an inclusive nondenominational feeling lingered within the valley inhabitants. Elizabeth Baldre reported that her grandfather Jesse Edington had kept the cleanest cabin and ran a prayer group open to all religions every Sabbath in it. “I remember going there among other children all dressed

\textsuperscript{116} April 13, 1772, May 13, 1772, July 12, 1776, The Diary of David McClure, 113, 115 & 124.

\textsuperscript{117} February 5, 1773, The Diary of David McClure, 108-9.

\textsuperscript{118} May 25, 1772, June 30, 1772 and July 27 1772 Journal of David Jones, 9 & 19-21. For the lack of sacraments performed see the entry text 1-95.

\textsuperscript{119} Quoted in Wright, and Corbett, \textit{Pioneer Life in Western Pennsylvania}, 145. Though at times in his diary McClure described Presbyterians as being ardent in faith, once claiming families teach “Larger and Shorter Catechisms, & almost every family has the Westminster Confession of Faith, which they carefully study”, he more often complained that they lacked spiritual leadership and desire. April 8, 1773 and June 6, 1773, The Diary of David McClure, 112 & 122.
in our clean linen and in our bare feet.” Others interpreted the Sabbath as an opportunity to break from the weekly routine and engage in “recreation, drinking, and profanity,” and many of the backcountry Christians had not sat through any formal church services for over fourteen years. Those churches that began to form in the mid 1770s took on a non-denominational shape reflecting the region’s practices and membership. When self-educated John Corbly, a one-time Ulster Presbyterian and indentured servant who married a Quaker, began offering Baptist services at the Forks of the Cheat Church, “Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists” filled both pews and leadership roles.

Without exclusive religious institutions, a spirit of religious tolerance emerged. As an adult raised in these squatter settlements, John McDonald summed up his brand of inclusive Arminian Christianity by declaring, “I am not a member of any church, tho religiously inclined, I do not believe in the marvelous – but believe the man who does the most good for his fellows is the most religious.”

Even those Indians who did not live in mission villages found shared meaning between their cosmology and Christianity, though ministers did not always agree. When

---

120 Elizabeth Baldre to Draper, April 11, 1863, Brady And Wetzel Papers, DM, series e, vol. 9.
121 August 23, 1772, and August 30, 1772 entries in The Diary of David McClure, 46-7; Don Corbly, Pastor John Corbly, (n.p., 2008,), 17, 31 & 112-3. It should be noted that in 1772, David Jones traveled through the region and claimed there were several houses of worship and while he believed the Baptist church was well underway, it was not organized until 1775. The conflicting information provided by Jones and McClure may result from the fact that Jones was only passing through while McClure actively ministered in the region and understood the religious culture better. It is also possible that the new settlements that Jones referred to were the Indian villages that he was traveling to. Importantly, the settlers that McClure and Jones interacted with seemed to pander to both, giving McClure the impression that the population predominately identified as Presbyterian, while expressing their commitment to the Baptists when talking to Jones. March 25, 1772, Journal of David Jones, 10-2.
122 John McDonald to Draper, April 7, 1845, Interviews of Adult Children of the Frontier, Pittsburgh and Northwest Virginia Papers, DM, ser. e, vol. 11.
in 1772 Delaware families living at Caapteenin on the Ohio River welcomed the Reverend David Jones to share a meal with them, the group engaged him on Christian doctrine. One Delaware, Frank Stephens, responded that he credited the Christian “God as the Giver of all good things.” According to Jones’s interpreter David Owens, a Euroamerican adopted by the Shawnee, the Delaware had generally incorporated the “Savior” into their culture. Jones regarded the Indian invocation of Christian vernacular and the integration of fragmented interpretations of Christianity alongside Indian beliefs as deceitful. David McClure argued that the Delaware had divided the natural world into a natural “good” and “bad” spirit and interchanged their preexisting titles Good Monetho and Evil Monetho for the Christian God and the Devil.123 While the Shawnee did not use the English words good or bad, they applied their own words for good (Oueffa Monneeto) and bad (Oueffa Mauchee) in reference to the Christian God and Devil.

Such mixed spirituality offered cultural, linguistic, legal, and social connections bridging communities of Indians and Euroamerican settlers. Euroamericans and Indians alike made productive use of any spiritual commonalities, no matter how much the meaning behind the beliefs might need twisting, or be purposely misunderstood, even if this understanding was sometimes nothing more than a working misunderstanding.124 A

---

124 Richard White, “Creative Misunderstandings and New Understandings” The William and Mary Quarterly, Third Series, vol. 63, no. 1 (Jan., 2006), 9-14. The concept of purposeful, and productive, mutual misunderstandings is a common theme in the contact and community building histories of Latin America as well. Importantly, the willingness to overlook dissimilarities of peoples from different cultures is a significant indication of the desires of both people to bridge divergent cultures and an essential step in the process of creating a single multiethnic community identity. James Lockhart originated this concept in the context of colonial Latin America in his work on the Nahua in Mexico. James Lockhart: “Double Mistaken Identity: Some Nahua Concepts in Postconquest Guise” in Of Things of the Indies: Essays Old and New in Early Latin American History (Stanford University Press, 1999), 98-119.
few weeks after Jones met the Delaware from Caapteenin, they joined Euroamericans at Jones’s Baptist service at Wheeling.\textsuperscript{125} The Caapteenin Delaware had no interest in converting to Christianity but instead wanted to use church meetings as an opportunity for interethnic community building. The area’s lack of organized religion created a physical and intellectual space in which ethnogenesis could occur, opportunities that Euroamerican and Indian settlers readily took.\textsuperscript{126}

\textit{Complicated Marriages and Blended Families: Building Multiethnic Communities}

War dislocated migrants from their Susquehanna communities and left families in pieces as they moved into the eastern Ohio Valley between 1768 and 1772, shattering a social order that had once seen segregated ethnic or religiously clustered communities. The spillover population of Susquehanna refugee camps comprised the vast majority of the eastern Ohio Valley’s towns, including Wheeling, Short Creek and Grave Creek., which consequently looked very different than what the settlers had left.\textsuperscript{127}

David Shepherd, the future leader of western Virginia’s Shepherd’s Town, led families including the Van Metres (Meters), Millers, and Mitchells from the Virginia-Maryland boarder town of New Mecklenburg to Wheeling, where the Shepherd family owned substantial land in the region going back to 1717.\textsuperscript{128} In the autumn of 1755, when

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{126} White, \textit{Middle Ground}, 329-31.
\textsuperscript{128} Dandrige, \textit{Historic Shepherdstown}, 192.

208
Fort Loudon and the forest region around it grew overcrowded with refugees from the French and Indian War and Pontiac’s War, the Shepherd family opened their stone blockhouse and some fifty acres to the now vagrant population. Thomas Shepherd refused rent until the war ended and promised fixed future annual rents at five shillings sterling for refugees. Following the onslaught of Pontiac’s War in July 1763, one express reported the inhabitants of an entire town, Hampshire, Virginia, had abandoned their homes for small forts on the Potomac’s South Branch River and other towns appeared as though they might join them. With new refugees numbering “642 men, 538 women, and 1191 children” officials feared that without military support those people would have nothing to return to.\textsuperscript{129} At Shippensburg, another 1,384 (301 men, 345 women, and 738 children) took refuge.\textsuperscript{130} In one decade, 1760 to 1770, the population within the thirty-mile area between New Mecklenburg, Maryland and Winchester, Virginia increased rapidly. In New Mecklenburg alone, the English and German refugee population grew from 300 to 700.\textsuperscript{131}

Before English, Scots-Irish, Scottish Highlander, French, German, Dutch, Swiss and people of Indian and African descent left the Susquehanna Valley or shortly after entering the eastern Ohio Valley, they pursued individual stability through the formation of blended families.\textsuperscript{132} The need to replenish lost numbers and the shared experience of

\textsuperscript{129}Williamsburg, August 4, 1763, \textit{Pennsylvania Gazette}.
\textsuperscript{130}Sipe, \textit{The Indian Wars of Pennsylvania}, 438.
\textsuperscript{131}Dandridge, \textit{Historic Shepherdstown}, 28 & 36; Christopher E. Hendricks, \textit{The Backcountry Towns of Colonial Virginia} (Knoxville, University of Tennessee Press, 2006), 101-3.
\textsuperscript{132}Richard White describes a similar process as occurring among Indian refugees in the mid-seventeenth century. The greater community grew mixed through small social units, namely the construction of new families through marriage.
loss in the Susquehanna River Valley secured connections in these nascent groups, trumping shared cultures and ports of origin. The incorporation of survivors from the French and Indian War and Pontiac’s Wars into new communities through families, via marriage and adoption, demonstrated the core process by which early Ohio Valley communities grew more diverse while simultaneously forming a unifying ethnogenic identity.

It is difficult to identify the exact number of women made widows by warfare in the Susquehanna Valley. If male Delaware casualties are any indication of Euroamerican casualties, in the late 1760s a noticeable imbalance existed in the adult male to female population. At Black Tom’s Town eight “Warriors” lived alongside the sixteen women and sixteen children; at Waukautaumeka another eight “Warriors” lived with 100 women and children, and a village on the Scioto River housed 130 “Warriors” and 200 women. Some Euroamerican settlements must have experienced similar gender imbalances from the loss of men. In 1760 and 1761 several women took on the role as heads of household in the refuge community outside of Fort Pitt: Nancy Thomas along with her child; Ellenor Crawford, who shared her home with another woman; and Ellenor Clark. When fifty Shawnee attacked settlements in the Greenbrier region in 1763, women and children were the only survivors at Muddy Creek, Jackson’s River, and

---

133 “A Description of part of the Country Westward of the River of the Ohio with the Distances completed from Fort Pitt to the several Indian Towns by land & water,” (1768-1771), Hutchins Papers, HSP.

210
Big Levels. In 1765 the Shawnee released many of the captive women and children whom they had also made widows and orphans over the preceding decade. Fragmented families like that of a Mrs. Renix and her five children required new communities to absorb them.

An indication of the growing, problematic widow population among Euroamericans is also apparent at Fort Pitt in 1763. During the French and Indian War, civilian and military families relocated to the fort or to the family housing located in outbuildings surrounding the fort. Widowed women fulfilled a number of commercial, cultural, and domestic duties including the gathering of firewood, bringing in water, working fields, cooking, cleaning, sewing, tending to the sick and preparing bodies for burial. (Conversely, the British military regarded unmarried women, who might offer sexual partnership to soldiers, as a disruptive “corrupting” force.) In their mere presence, however, military wives offered a uniquely important service in simply keeping their husbands active in the army. For this service, the army put up the rations and patience needed to cope with the train of women and children who followed the army.

Despite the contributions made by women at Fort Pitt, several times throughout the summer of 1763 William Trent threatened women and children with banishment for

---

137 William Trent Journal at Fort Pitt, 1763, HSP.
being “useless.” Given the innate value of both military wives and civilian wives to war mobilization, it is most likely that the women and children William Trent considered a “useless” drain were those without a male in the household -- most likely widows. When in August Trent “ordered away” a procession of women and children, back to settlements in the Susquehanna Valley, he worried women would hide themselves or their children in the fort until after the convoy left, a seemingly unusual act for civilian wives whose husbands would then leave without them. More likely, widows made up some of this troublesome population.

The fate of frontier widows is easy to miss in the records as the changing of women’s names from one marriage to the next complicates the search for them. In one example, before she married Isaac Williams, Rebecca Tomlinson migrated from Will’s Creek, Maryland to Grave Creek in western Pennsylvania, where by the age of eighteen she married and was widowed by John Martin, an Indian trader at Big Hockhocking.

In a similar story, Wheeling settlement’s Rachel Grice (Griest, Ghrist), a girl famously known for the scars she bore after surviving an Indian scalping, first married an Englishman named Howell and then a man of French decent, Henry Jolly (Jolley) of Chartier’s Creek. When Rachel died, Jolly needed a woman to tend to the children she left behind and married an unnamed widow. Other widows and widowers similarly remarried multiple times, creating complex, ethnically-blended families. Several years of

---

140 William Trent Journal at Fort Pitt, 1763, HSP.
141 Hidreth and Culter, Biographical and historical memoirs of the early pioneer settlers of Ohio, 481.
142 William Darby to Draper, August 1, 1845, Interviews of Adult Children of the Frontier, Pittsburgh and Northwest Virginia Papers, DM, ser. nn, vol. 6; Lewis Bennett to Draper, December 18, 1848, Interviews of Adult Children of the Frontier, Pittsburgh and Northwest Virginia Papers, DM, ser. e, vol. 11.
violence whittled down the size of John Van Meter’s family on Short Creek. In one attack, Indians had killed his wife, a daughter, and two sons and in another captured three elder sons. When the German Van Meter remarried, he took a Swiss widow, Marcia Dunn Bukey, for his bride. A migrant from New Jersey, Marcia had lost a husband and three sons prior to her nuptials with Meter. The two households joined, connecting her four daughters, his remaining son, and the couple’s only shared daughter. Three of the Bukey-Van Meter daughters married around sixteen years of age: Jemima to a colonial-born Englishman, Marcie to a Scotsman, and Mary to a German.\textsuperscript{143} German Andreas Byerly also married three times and fathered three families. At least one of Byerly’s wives was Swiss, another English. The third, following his death, married twice more and bore two more families.\textsuperscript{144}

Other couples reconsidered friend and foe in selecting marriage partners. A former British regular from the French and Indian War turned settlement leader, John Carpenter, married a French woman, Nancy, the sole survivor of a massacred French settlement.\textsuperscript{145} Captured once by the Mohawks in New York and another time by the Pennsylvania Delaware, captive Joseph Ross crossed greater ethnic boundaries and married at least one Indian woman. After he returned to life among Euroamericans, the Scots-Irishman married and became a widower to three Euroamerican women and

\textsuperscript{143} Doddridge, Notes, LCP, 34-5 & 282-3.
fathered at least two families at different settlements. Similarly, after Shawnees sacked her family’s homestead and took Irish Elizabeth Hawkins as a prisoner, she married a man of a French, and likely Indian, ethnicity. Years later, after returning to the Ohio country, presumably following the loss or separation of her first husband, she married into the Ohio Shawnee.

Interethnic marriages between Euroamericans and Indians offered their communities opportunities at increasing network memberships. The Cuyahoga leader of the Mingo on Yellow Creek, Logan, married a Shawnee woman while his sister married John Gibson, a well-known Scots-Irish trader. Functionality served important purposes for communities but should not exclusively define these marriages like traveling minister David McClure did. McClure discounted Euroamerican-Indian marriages as base and only a sexual and/or economic partnership, specifically when they occurred between Euroamerican traders and Indian woman. Such a characterization is unfair; Euroamericans chose to marry Indian women, and Indian women choose to marry Euroamerican men, for all the same romantic, physical, complicated and practical reasons as interethnic couples did.

In an October council among Virginia officials and the Six Nations, Wyandot,

---

146 William Ball to John Gibson, March 15, 1764, Gibson Family Papers 1777-1820, HSP.
147 Lobdell and Draper ed., Indian Warfare in Western Pennsylvania and North West Virginia, 25-6.
148 Wallace, The Travels of John Heckewelder in Frontier America, 118.
149 September 13, 1771, The Diary of David McClure, 53. An indication that McClure disregarded the legitimacy of marriages between Indians and Euroamericans. An example McClure’s diary provides is trader John Gibson. McClure derogatorily states that Gibson “k[ep]t a squaw.” More accurately Gibson married a Mingo woman, the sister of Logan. Like other families, the couple had a daughter that Gibson cared for with great affection after the murder of his wife. Modern historians, such as Richard White, often perpetuated McClure’s moral judgments as historical facts and cite McClure’s discussion of Gibson as fact. White, Middle Ground, 324.
Shawnee, and the Delaware, Shawnee leader Cornstalk made it known that even in freedom captives chose to return and to live among their new Indian families, saying of one group, “[W]e had delivered them up to the White People and they returned of their Own Accord.” While Cornstalk had no objection to returning captives, he refused to return two “Negro Children” that were the product of relationships between a female runaway slave and a Cherokee. In his reasoning, Cornstalk argued, “[W]e are not the only People who have intermixed with Negroes [and] we are not willing to give up the Children…” to slavery. In another instance, Ohio Shawnee captured an unnamed female slave of Alexander McKee. The woman gave birth to a daughter, Rachel Reno, of Shawnee and African heritage. Born during her mother’s captivity, Rachel gained freedom. While families with African and Euroamerican heritages do not show up in the records for the Ohio Valley, they do appear in other frontier towns of western Virginia. The marriage of people with multiple heritages occurred commonly enough among early Ohio inhabitants that, expecting disbelief, one of Lyman Copeland Draper’s unnamed interviewees described his own ethnic background as being “part-white-Shawnee… Irish… (and perhaps Spanish).”

With spouses and family members dying or captured by Indians, early Ohio settlers perceived marriage, if not the basic family unit, in fluid terms that supported community growth and the inclusion of new members. When Indians assaulted a village

152 Chester Raymon Young, “The Effects of the French and Indian War on Civilian Life in the Frontier Counties of Virginia, 1754-1763” (PhD diss., Vanderbilt University, 1969), 327.
153 Lobdell and Draper ed., Indian Warfare in Western Pennsylvania and North West Virginia, 25-6.
in Washington County, decimating a group of nine English and Dutch-German families, George Edington and twelve children took cover at nearby Edward’s mill. When the assault ended, the Indians took Edington and the two surviving children with them to live on the Scioto. Back at the settlement proper, only three families had survived, including Edington’s wife, Mary. Assuming her husband dead, Mary remarried. When the couple reunited two years later, his wife faced a decision: her choice of spouses. Returning to Edington, the couple went on to produce six children. Hunter and gunman, John Biugaur may have had the only intact family following the attack. As the community rebuilt, the Biugaur family of four opened their home to “a Dutch girl and man” who resided with them for some time.

*Outsiders to Insiders, for Labor*

As additional skills and labor were critical for family and community survival, families like the Biugaus welcomed in new members. New members most commonly came as orphans, the result of displacement by captivity and release, the untimely death of parents, a family’s inability to provide for their children, the total destruction of settlements, willful abandonment, or accidental separation. Between 1754 and 1763 alone, courts formally placed 479 orphans, and 86 children of indigent families, with

154 Francis Joseph Hedges to Draper, 1845, Draper Notes, DM, ser. ss, vol. 2.
155 Ibid.
156 The importance of new members for use as labor is not exclusive to the eastern Ohio Valley. This as well as the later concept of power building through dependents is similarly found in the eighteenth and nineteenth century pre-state formation communities of Angola addressed by Miller, *Way of Death*. August 13, 1763, William Trent Journal, 1763, HSP: April 13, 1765, George Croghan Journal, The Etting Collection, Crogan-Gratz Papers, HSP. Mary Muchmore to Samuel Muchmore, April 29, 1997, in Crammer, *History of the Upper Ohio Valley; OHS, 82.*
adoptive parents or into service/apprenticeships in four southern borderland Susquehanna counties (Augusta, Bedford, Frederick, Halifax). By these numbers the Susquehanna counties witnessed a tripling of orphans during the French and Indian War alone.

In reality, the effects of war dislocated a far greater number of children from their families than even these numbers indicate. Children taken in by relatives, those orphans who did not receive government or church assistance in new family placement, or those taken in by new families in the Ohio Valley are not accounted for.\textsuperscript{158} Not all adoptions occurred with children moving into family units. Hamilton Kerr, a Philadelphian born to recent Scots-Irish immigrants, lost much of his family and spent his youth squatting across western Pennsylvania and Virginia with only his father. A stocky, redheaded, illiterate boy with blue eyes, Kerr stood out among his peers in western Virginia as “agile” and with “strong reasoning.” When an Ohio Indian killed Kerr’s father, Mathew, his “athletic frame, and bold bearing” won him favor with a group of male hunters including John Wetzel and Isaac Williams, who took him under their communal wing. Upon reaching adulthood, Kerr married a German, Susannah Nighswonger,\textsuperscript{159} Similarly, the Pringle brothers took in a Welsh boy, Jesse Hughes, owing to his animal-like physicality and hunting skills.\textsuperscript{160}

Without formal institutions to turn to for relief, frontier families willingly placed their children in the care of other frontier families. After three dislocations in western

\textsuperscript{158} Young, “The Effects of the French and Indian War on Civilian Life in the Frontier Counties of Virginia, 1754-1763,” 320-3, 329-30 & 341.
\textsuperscript{159} Ibid, 473-4.
\textsuperscript{160} McWhorter, Connelley, and Maclean, \textit{The Border Settlers of Northwestern Virginia}, 34.
Pennsylvania, William and Mary Newport remained unable to take care of their two young daughters, Anne and Sally. As a result, the couple sent their children away to live with families at two neighboring settlements, where Anne’s time with the Deniston family enabled her to attend an informal field school, her only schooling. In another example, English surveyor and trader John Dodge found himself a new father and widower when well-acquainted Delaware approached him in the woods with an infant and news of his family’s demise. Dodge “carried the baby… naked wrapped in his waist coat” through the woods before leaving the child with a woman able to nurse it, presumably after the loss of her own child.

Families took in orphaned children to bring up with their own, taught them skills as apprentices, or used them as indentured servants. After his capture by Delaware Indians and sale to a Mohawk family in New York, John Crawford took eleven months to find his way home. When he returned he found his mother had died and all who remained of his family had “scattered.” As a result, an “orphans’ court” indentured Crawford to a Samuel Combs in Loudon, Virginia. At Doddridge Station, John Doddridge raised a boy as an apprentice, to whom he gifted an unsettled tract of land adjoining the station. On nearby Dunkard Creek, Dunkard hermit Thomas Hardie also brought an orphaned boy from over the mountains and raised him. Conversely, an

---

161 Porter, The life and times of Anne Royall, 29.
162 September 1770, Benjamin Lightfoot Survey Notes, HSP. John Dodge eventually became a leading squatter and enemy of the state, but later documents suggest he remained a childless bachelor.
164 Doddridge, Notes, LCP, 126 & 133.
Indian assault on Dunkard Creek separated Samuel Muchmore from his family. Decades later, an undelivered letter sent to Fort Pitt by his mother, Mary, explained in poor grammar that Samuel’s father had died in the attack, Indians had taken her and four of her children captive and sold the family in Canada and that three of his siblings had died in captivity. Samuel’s eldest sister, Abigail, and mother Mary had married Canadian men and begun new lives there. Mary knew Samuel had escaped the attack but had no other notion of her son’s fate.\(^{165}\)

Communities near Fort Pitt may have absorbed an unusually high number of former captives, as the newly freed returned to the region too poor to return to distant homes and sometimes without families waiting at former homesteads. During the spring of 1764, as part of the peace treaty that ended the French and Indian War, Indians returned a succession of women and children to Fort Pitt. In April 1764, Munsee Indians returned two English girls taken from Shippensburg and Juniata, a five and nine year old, neither of whom still spoke English. In December, the Shawnee, Mingo, Delaware, Wyandot and Mohican from the Tuscarawas and Muskingum River delivered two hundred and seven captives, one hundred and twenty-six of whom were women and children.\(^{166}\) The following May in 1765, the Shawnee produced forty-five more captives, thirty-seven of whom Indians had captured before age eleven. In all, the list of prisoners reveals that they had hailed from settlements and towns throughout Pennsylvania,

\(^{165}\) Mary Muchmore to Samuel Muchmore, April 29, 1997, in Crammer, *History of the Upper Ohio with Family History and Biographical Sketches*, 77.

\(^{166}\) April 13 1764 & May 1 & 7, 1764, George Croghan Journal, The Etting Collection, Croghan-Gratz Papers, 12, HSP; Captives Delivered to Colonel Bouquet, December 3, 1764, Sir William Johnson Papers, 11:484-90.
Virginia, and Maryland. Many like Felty Clemm and Peggy Baskin had been taken over a decade ago.\(^{167}\)

Military officials’ attempts to return captives home sometimes proved futile, especially if survivors had been taken as small children, did not know where they had lived, or could no longer locate families. In one instance, a young captive had no recollection of her Euroamerican name and could only report her name as “Dorothy’s daughter.” In another instance, a child taken at age ten and returned to Fort Pitt at twenty knew only her Indian name, Wechquessinah, having forgotten her own name, how to speak English, and where she had lived prior to captivity.\(^{168}\) As was the case for South Branch resident Ulrick Conrad, not all children returned home from their release at Fort Pitt. Indians had captured Conrad’s wife and five children, of whom two had died, two had returned, and one remained in captivity. Indians had released his sixteen-year-old daughter Barbra (Attawa) at Fort Pitt in the fall of 1764, but she had not returned to the Susquehanna Valley. To no avail, Conrad published ads in *The Pennsylvania Gazette* offering a reward for information on the girl and providing a list of men, from Tulpehocken to Philadelphia, to contact with information regarding her whereabouts.\(^{169}\) It could take years for families to reconnect with captive children. Indians from Chillicothe, Ohio captured and raised Hanna Dennis for some years. Later escaping, Dennis found her way to the settlement at Big Levels, where first the Clendenin and then

Athols family took her in until she finally located distant relatives on the Jackson River years later.\footnote{Crammer, \textit{History of the Upper Ohio Valley}, OHS, 236-7.}

Indians took captives who demonstrated an ability and willingness to accept a new Indian identity, culture, and family. While Euroamerican children raised among Indians readily adopted Indian languages, clothing styles, and culture, as apparent by the names reported by returned captives, so too did adult captives. Telling of adult Euroamerican-Indian assimilation, they returned with Indian-raised Euroamerican children --like Netumpsico, Neculissika, Pittikanothy, Thiechcapec, and Neichcumata, and adult males including Crooked Legs, Sowmouth, Tawanima, Pompadour, Cawacawache, and at least one adult female, Conogoncony, chose to retain their Indian names.\footnote{“Captives Delivered to Colonel Bouquet,” December 3, 1764 and List of Prisoners, May 1765, Sir William Johnson Papers, 11:484-90 & 720-1. James Axtell, “White Indians of Colonial America” \textit{The William and Mary Quarterly} 3d ser.,vol. 32, no. 1 (January, 1975): 55-88. Axtell’s work demonstrates the acculturation process undergone by Euroamericans living in Indian captivity, but does not address the ramifications of this acculturation on communities when captives returned.}

Owing to their acculturation, returned captives, who often possessed the ability to think and feel as Indians, assumed a central role in interethnic community building and decreased Euroamerican settlers’ perception of Indians as outsiders. Through Indian-Euroamerican adoptions, genuine family relationships had formed between captors and their captives so much so that on their return Shawnee leader Lawoughqua promised, “[T]hey have been all tied to us by Adoption…. We will always look upon them as
Relations, whenever the Great Spirit is pleased that we may visit them—"172 Once interethnic tensions cooled in the eastern Ohio Valley, adoptive Indian families began visiting their Euroamerican kin. As members of an extended family, Indians maintained a presence in Euroamerican communities. So too did Euroamerican captives who chose to remain with their adopted Indian families; some “white-Indians” even obtained leadership positions in Indian villages.173

An influx of displaced adults from multiple ethnic backgrounds, including African descent, also resulted from the return of war captives. In 1756 freed New Yorker slave Thomas Hyde (Hines) enlisted in a Massachusetts provincial regiment in New England. Captured by Indians and released at Fort Pitt, Hyde established his freedom from slavery through the depositions of former neighbors.174 Set free in the backcountry, Hyde would have found a small community of free and un-free people of color in the early Ohio Valley. During the French and Indian War, military officers had brought men like the enslaved Ready Money Jack into the region. Jack experienced exceptional later success as a settler and entrepreneur, but his early life appears atypical for a freed backcountry slave. In freedom, Jack joined a settlement in the Monongahela Upper country, and when settlers from Redstone and Cheat River left for Kentucky, he joined their convoy and established a successful tavern and inn there.175 Another free

172 “At a Meeting of the Shawnee, Delawares, Senecas and Sandusky Indians at Fort Pitt,” May 9, 1765, Sir William Johnson Papers, 11:723-34.
173 Axtell, The invasion within, 321 & 325.
174 Amherst to Bouquet, September 17, 1761, August 13, 1761 both in Bouquet Papers, 5:57-8.
175 Karl Raitz and Nancy O’Malley, Kentucky’s Frontier Highway: Historical Landscapes Along the Maysville Road (Lexington, University of Kentucky, 2012), 212; Preston, The Texture of Contact, 255.
man of color, Black Sukey, signed his name among hundreds of other free men of a variety of ethnic backgrounds in a petition protesting their ejection from land in the Monongahela country.176 When a nameless slave couple’s master abandoned them, they lived as free people in Wheeling, a settlement with a proportionally large slave population. Together, the couple “made out to pursue a measurable existence for themselves” as productive members of the community. Decades later in 1830, the couple unsuccessfully petitioned the Virginia Assembly for a military land grant for their contributions in the Revolution.177 Little more is known about these free Africans or how they interacted in a neighborhood of settlements composed of English, Irish, Germans, Swiss, African slaves, and American Indians before the American Revolution. Yet because of the region’s low population, it is inferable that the contributions made by free and enslaved people of color proved indispensable to the construction and management of settlements.

*Sam & Rachel Stories*

The African experience on the frontier was shaped by EuroAmericans’ demand for labor and defense. Although only wealthy men owned slaves in most frontier regions of Maryland and Virginia, in western Pennsylvania and Virginia, men from the gamut of social backgrounds owned human labor, though often in small numbers. An affluent man like Charles Foreman might own just one slave—in his case a female slave, seventeen-

---

176 “Memorial of the Inhabitants Kentucky,” August 24, 1780, Papers of the Continental Congress, Roll 60, NARA.
177 “Incomplete Narrative by John Stuart,” 1830, Pittsburgh and Northwest Virginia Papers, ser. nn, vol. 6, DLAR.
Around 1770, frontier inhabitants might have purchased an American-born adult male for around £45, or an “unseasoned” slave newly arrived from Africa at just £20. Even less expensive to settlers, female slaves and children of both genders might cost just over £4. A costly investment, many backcountry inhabitants likely brought a gifted or inherited slave or one purchased at discount from the slew of Shenandoah farmers who had found hard times. The investment in human labor proved the most significant investment that a squatter made.

Enslaved men and women often performed the same tasks as their masters. After assisting in clearing fields and the construction of their owner’s house, a slave’s labor remained in demand, as did the master’s. One of the best examples documented was Cook, the slave of William Crawford (the father of John Crawford). Crawford originally brought Cook over the Alleghenies to scout land, and the two men cleared five acres of land, constructed the family’s cabin, and planted the initial crop. When the men finished Crawford’s farm, Crawford and Cook preformed the same labor with William Shepherd on Shepherd’s adjoining lot. When Crawford returned to the Susquehanna for his family, Cook remained behind to tend the crops.

As with slaves throughout the established regions of colonial America, the living conditions and work performed by slaves in the eastern Ohio Valley dictated the amount

---

178 Richardson and Wilson, “Hannas Town and Charles Foreman: The Historical and Archeological Record,” 159.
180 John Crawford to 1831, Interviews of Adult Children of the Frontier, Pittsburgh and Northwest Virginia Papers, DM, ser. nn, vol. 6, DLAR.
of freedom they enjoyed as well as their place within the social hierarchy of the
Euroamerican community. Family units, settlements and regional networks depended on
slave labor. Unlike slave societies, where Euroamericans’ economy depended wholly on
slave labor, the Ohio Valley had too small a population to leave such a high proportion of
the population idle. Instead, the frontier might be thought of as a society dependent on
full employment/labor, with cooperative multiethnic relationships, if not partial unity,
supported by the stunted population growth of both groups.\textsuperscript{181}

Prior to the American Revolution, free and un-free men, women, and children of
color worked in teams alongside owners and neighbors, with or without oversight. The
rudimentary nature of early settlement also meant that un-free labor lived in equally poor
conditions as their masters and free neighbors. Since most settlers did not construct
outbuildings it is also safe to conclude that often un-free labor lived within the same
paltry dwellings as their masters.\textsuperscript{182} In the first years of Euroamerican settlement in the
Ohio Valley free and enslaved Africans shared the same space, labor, and experience as
Euroamerican squatters. Instead of constructing separate worlds divided along ethnic
lines, Africans shared in shaping the culture and life found in the valley.\textsuperscript{183}

Although no attacks occurred in the Ohio Valley between 1768 and 1773 accounts
of attacks, or threat of attack, after 1773 demonstrate slave and settler cooperation and
reveal enslaved people as key actors in protecting the settlements they shared with

\textsuperscript{182} Doddridge, Notes, LCP, 135-7. In the passage cited, Doddridge does not address slavery in western Virginia but
that on leaving west Virginia for Maryland the vast differences, including the quality of life slaves received and the
amount of violence used to punish them, and servants.
\textsuperscript{183} Berlin, \textit{Generations of Captivity}, 86.
Euroamericans. While military-owned slaves like those owned by Alexander McKee attempted flight during the confusion of attacks, as did many southern plantation slaves, those owned by backcountry settlers in western Pennsylvania and Virginia took up arms against Indians during raids. Free and un-free inhabitants alike carried firearms and they often needed to travel beyond the boundaries of the immediate settlement, either to guard the perimeter or to work in outfields. Crawford typically armed Cook, and on one occasion when Cook had no gun, a neighbor, John Moore, provided him one. Like all able-bodied men and women in the Monongahela Upper country, Cook joined in protecting the settlement. In one story he and several others risked their lives to obtain provisions for several families. In another, as Indians fell upon them during a 1774 attack, Cook guided five women and four children to the safety of a cabin on the outskirts of the settlement.

During the 1777 siege on Fort Wheeling, Indians captured an unnamed “negro,” who had set out to retrieve stolen horses. The man, likely a slave of George Spring, escaped captivity and informed settlement leaders of the Indians’ next plan of attack. In another siege during the Revolution, a man only referred to as “a negro” is credited with helping Phil Harmore “defend” some sixty women and children during an Indian attack in western Virginia. According to Ebenezer Zane, at least one man of color

---

187 Incomplete Narrative by John Stuart, 1830, Pittsburgh and Northwest Virginia Papers, ser. nn, vol. 6, DLAR
worked as a spy for the militia and warned the group that a British captain, forty regular soldiers, and two hundred and sixty Indians headed toward Wheeling. In providing detailed accounts of the Revolution at Wheeling, settlers credited several different “Negros” with heroic action, but each account misidentified every male as “Sam” and every female as “Rachel.” Two of Zane’s slaves, a man named Old Daddy Sam and his wife Kate, killed an Indian attempting to burn down Zane’s house. In 1782 another Sam died after replacing his owner, Richard Elson, in battle on the upper Sandusky.

Carrying a gun, performing the same work, and living in the same conditions as owners had equalizing effects on master and slave. The greatest difference between the two groups lay in the agency that only masters had in choosing to migrate to the frontier. For all of Cook’s relative freedom, through heavy labor and near misses with Indians he grew crippled and became known as “Old Cook.” Rachel Johnson, a “heavy-set mulatto woman” affectionately known as “aunt Rachel,” remembered clearly the “beating drum & exhibiting [of] bounty money” for Forbes’s campaign that enticed her owner, Yates Cornwell, to relocate them from their home in Lewistown, Delaware to Fish Creek in western Virginia. People of color had little choice in joining Euroamericans in the ordeals they confronted on the frontier. During Indian attacks, all lives, free and unfree alike were equally endangered, forcing all to similarly fight, flee, or hide. During an

188 Ebenezer Zane to William Irvine, September 14, 1782, in Allan W. Eckert, That Dark and Bloody River, 426.
189 Eckert, That Dark and Bloody River, 423.
190 Eckert, That Dark and Bloody River, 369.
192 Rachel Johnson, unknown date, Interviews of Adult Children of the Frontier, DM, ser. ss, vol. 3, DLAR.
Indian attack, at least one African woman smothered her young daughter to evade capture, an act not unheard of among either African or Euroamerican mothers in similar situations in the same attack a Euroamerican mother sacrificed her infant.\textsuperscript{193}

While frontier life differed greatly from the experiences of free and enslaved Africans living in urban or plantation environments, the seeming self-determination, mobility, and integration of enslaved people into frontier communities must be balanced against the lack of freedom slaves had in choosing to live in the backcountry. When Dr. David McMahn informed his slaves Sam and Ezra of his intention to leave the harshness of frontier life at Wheeling to return to Maryland, Guinea-born Sam happily rejoiced and made McMahn swear they would never return to the frontier.\textsuperscript{194}

Euroamerican owners on the frontier had neither the legal infrastructure to keep their un-free labor bound nor the time or men to track down those who absconded to Indian villages. Local military officers who owned slaves, however, had the manpower to send soldiers after runaways and as a result could also inflict greater corporal punishment for infractions. According to David McClure’s 1773 account, colonial officer Eneas McKay owned four or five slaves who frequently attempted to flee from his home near Fort Pitt. When McClure visited McKay, “One of them, who was a stout fellow, came into the house with a large iron chain fastened to his leg and wound round his body, and riveted to a collar around his Neck. His master had whipped him and fixed the chain on him on account of his stealing, and attempting to run away with a Negro

\textsuperscript{193} Crammer, \textit{History of the Upper Ohio Valley}, OHS, 236.
\textsuperscript{194} Eckert, \textit{That Dark and Bloody River}, 242 & 280.
woman of the place.”

In another instance, the Shawnee refused to return “one Negro Man” who had joined their community and insisted that further attempts to do so would result in the loss of life, explaining the man had “threatened to kill either White Man or Indian who shall Attempt to Molest him.”

At least one “mulatto” living among the Indians participated in an attack against Beelor’s Fort by lighting a “sack of hemp” on fire and attempting to use it to burn down the settlers’ makeshift fort.

Even those slaves who seemed to get on with their military owners harbored ill feelings. Captain John Donne brought “Old Cato” (Cato Watts) from Virginia to Fort Pitt and in 1778 on to Kentucky to settle on Corn Island with a group of eleven families. Cato, the only slave, kept the migrants in good spirits playing “the Virginia reel, Highland Fling, and Irish Jig” on his fiddle and providing the only music for an impromptu dance and Christmas party during the hard days of early settlement. Yet Cato’s life in bondage was not all fiddle playing. Just three years after the group’s jubilant celebration, he was the first man “tried and hung” in Louisville for murdering Donne during a hunting trip.

Early Ohio Valley squatters did not treat slaves better than military officers did because settlers identified with their slaves as a marginalized people but because circumstances and the environment left no alternative. A settlement’s survival required

---

195 June 1, 1773, The Diary of David McClure, 121.
197 Cooke to Draper, June 22, 1846, Interviews of Adult Children of the Frontier, DM, ser. e, vol. 11.
optimal manpower, and the ability to leave slaves unattended and armed proved critical. Geographic isolation, outside threats, and the need to labor for one’s food helped maintain a delicate balance of mutual dependence between squatter-masters and slaves. With their own safety and well-being in mind, free and un-free men cooperated with slave owners and the greater Euroamerican population.

The isolated geography of the eastern Ohio Valley offered a common space in which Indian and Euroamerican refugees and their slaves could put aside differences and build an inclusive, utilitarian culture in western Pennsylvania. Without formal geopolitical authority, mutual dependence enabled the valley’s mix of religious creed and ethnicities—many of whom were former enemies—to establish a peace that lasted the better part of five years.  

199 White, The Middle Ground, 2. In White’s middle ground (the pay d’en haut) common interests are “accidental” and “temporary.” I would argue that the Ohio Valley was not a middle ground but a common space, and that the problems which disturbed, and later ended, the peace between the region’s Indians and Euroamericans resulted from its geographic location as a middle ground between Ohio Indians and westward-moving imperial interests. Only to outsiders vying for geopolitical control did the Ohio Valley represent a contested space. The valley’s occupants who had purposefully constructed functional, productive, multiethnic neighborhoods recognized the importance of each groups’ role. Only tautologically should these multi-ethnic relationships be perceived as temporary. More accurately, the disintegration of peace in the Ohio Valley came as the result of altered conditions and new choices.
Chapter 5: “Peace & Quietness”:
Creating a Culture of Collectivity and Absolution in the Eastern Ohio Valley, 1768-74

Barely escaping with his life, in mid-April 1774, a Euroamerican named Stephens arrived at Fort Pitt with a startling account. Cherokee Indians had attacked Stephens, a Shawnee, and a Delaware as the three paddled their canoe on the Ohio River. The group had successfully evaded the assault and continued on their way. Ten days later, another canoe approached the men. Believing its occupants to be more unfriendly Indians, the men docked their canoe on the opposite side of the river to allow the boat to pass by without altercation. Instead of Indians, the canoe held belligerent Euroamericans who killed and scalped Stephens’s companions before turning their guns on him. At Fort Pitt Alexander McKee recorded Stephens’s story as an example of outside forces colliding in the eastern Ohio Valley.¹

Stories of interethnic violence and the warfare that overwhelmed the valley in 1774 have overshadowed the history of the middle years of peace constructed by the eastern Ohio Valley’s Euroamerican and Indian settlers. But even in the example of Stephens’s Ohio River encounters, more telling than the murders that transpired is the detail that Stephens traveled with a Shawnee and a Delaware. The group’s effort to avoid an altercation embodied the locally generated etiquette, a peace-keeping ethos that soon jutted up against outsiders intent on disturbing the intricate balance of interdependence enjoyed by eastern Ohio Valley Euroamerican and Indian settlers.

Between 1768 and 1774 little violence between the Euroamerican and Indian communities occurred in the eastern Ohio Valley, and the assaults that did occur did not impede or disrupt community development. The ability to meet daily needs through local exchange obligated refugee

communities to safeguard productive new relationships with former enemies. Functioning regional networks provided otherwise unobtainable services, labor, and goods that supported family and regional competency. A multilayered survival strategy centered on the local market and social networks perpetuated peaceable relations from individual participants outward to the greater region.

By 1768, most people understood the eastern Ohio Valley to have replaced the Susquehanna Valley as the Pennsylvania and Virginia frontier, the outermost border of Indian or British imperial colonization in North America which also served as the “furthermost” western line of the British military. The valley’s population lived as an exposed people and occupied a space contested by the Shawnee and other western Ohio Indians, creating a sense of vulnerability that forced multiethnic groups to work together. The small number of people reduced competition for natural resources and promoted collective labor and a localized frontier exchange. The exchange of labor, skills, and natural resources across communities tied Euroamerican and Indian settlements into productive neighborhoods, which in turn enabled interethnic councils to facilitate

---

2 OED. The term backcountry is defined as a place near, but outside of, a settled area—a social or political frontier. The term frontier is primarily a military term indicating a political borderland and the limits of a military occupation. The modern elastic use of the terms frontier and borderland, which can be used to indicate social or cultural borderlands is important, and useful, but the contemporary meanings and use of these words which reflect the experience and perceptions of contemporary people must also be applied. When British officials like George Croghan argued that the eastern Ohio Valley settlers acted lawlessly, he did so by providing examples of the violent events performed by settlers in the Susquehanna Valley. The indiscriminate hostility toward Indians and Quaker political leadership that followed Pontiac’s War has similarly created a modern misperception that the southern Susquehanna settlers lived in a socially and politically underdeveloped borderland. Yet Euroamericans had displaced Indians, resettled, and established the region over the preceding two decades. The Susquehanna’s southern settlers enjoyed all the necessary underpinnings of an established, society including a political and legal infrastructure. The region, organized into towns, cities and counties, collected taxes, employed magistrates, courts, and a plethora of government bureaucrats. “Back county,” a term that originated in 1775 to indicate the interior of a state and suggestive of a rural environment, not a lack of political organization, more accurately described the Susquehanna’s southern valley than a “backcountry” by 1769. John T. Juricek, “American Usage of the World “Frontier” from Colonial Times to Frederick Jackson Turner” Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society, vol. 110, No 1 (February 18, 1966), 10-33.
informal local diplomacy and a vernacular legal culture that suppressed retaliatory violence.

A lack of government funding and the post-1768 withdrawal of the military from frontier posts in Pennsylvania and Virginia increasingly blocked efforts to keep Euroamericans and Indians in the eastern Ohio Valley segregated. Without a strong military presence, local officials could no longer police settlements, enforce racially directed policies, or prevent local interethnic trade. With the decline in diplomatic communications between the Six Nations and Great Britain, little room existed for corrupt officials to advance their own merchant and speculative interests through local interventions. The absence of official interference created a space for local Indians and Euroamericans to self-regulate and live together peaceably, where, free from disturbance, the valley inhabitants flourished for five years.

*All Things Thrive in a Valley of Few and Plenty*

Modern historians typically describe the frontier as a “Garden of Eden” or a savage land that Euroamericans felt compelled to tame. Yet displaced peoples and adventurers who predominated the early eastern Ohio Valley viewed the valley as a common resource. Boasting only a small population of about two to three thousand families by 1770, the region offered the possibility of basic sustenance and later

---

commodification.⁴ The upper Ohio valley, a region over ten thousand square miles long supported a relatively small population.⁵ The combination of copious natural resources with a relatively limited demand supported peaceful interethnic relations.

Early eastern Ohio Valley Euroamerican and Indian settlers lived on relatively small grants in a region with sufficient space for each to expand. With their choice of land, settlers consciously planted homesteads and whole villages on tracts rich in natural resources or located near raw materials or the numerous creeks and rivers throughout the valley. Building on water sources offered a variety of long-term benefits: drinking water, energy for eventual mills, and serving the community as a waterway moving people and goods into larger common neighborhoods with ease.⁶

In the absence of population pressures, Euroamerican and Indian settlers could situate themselves in locations with access to a great many other natural resources, including salt and game. Euroamerican and Indian settlers depended on an array of

---

⁴ “Remarks on the Situation, Soil, Climate, Settlements, and produce of the Western Country etc.,” (undated) Hutchins Papers, HSP. Within the document, the date is given as 1770; Robert Callender to Gov. Penn, April 15, 1771, PA, ser. 1, 4:411-2. The individual population of the region was likely around 12,000 souls. In 1771 letter exchanges between Samuel Wharton and George Croghan put the population just over 10,000 souls. Had the company been able to give a larger number, they would have as their proprietorship depended on the regions sustaining a population of over 10,000 souls in need of a government. Samuel Wharton to Croghan, July 21, 1771, Croghan Papers, HSP.

⁵ Guy Johnson to Thomas Gage, May 2, 1768 & Gage to Johnson, May 29, 1768, Sir William Johnson Papers, 12:487-8 & 517-8. The last interethnic assaults took place in late 1767 and early 1768 when first French traders and a group of Chippewa from the Saguingam Bay had killed twelve traders on the Ohio River deep in Indian Country. As discussed in chapter 2, the Stump-Ironcutter massacre on the eastern side of the Susquehanna River. followed in January 1768. Historians, like contemporary officials, connected these two incidents to the instability of, or violence in, the Ohio Valley. Yet neither directly involved -- nor affected -- those Indians or Euroamericans living in the eastern portion of the Ohio Valley. White, Middle Ground, 347-51; Griffin, American Leviathan, 82; Silver: Our Savage Neighbors, 154-9.

saltpeter caves and at least twenty-seven salt springs within the immediate region. Often noted as “licks,” these salt water springs offered “deposits of sodium chloride” that supported life while also being an essential ingredient in manufacturing ammunition and preserving meat.⁷ Prior to 1774, Euroamericans and Indians frequented the same local salt licks without altercation.

According to Royal Surveyor Thomas Hutchins, the Ohio Valley offered a bounty of rich soil and lush resources. Hutchins had become familiar with the Ohio Valley while serving as a lieutenant during the French and Indian War and in 1770 recorded the conditions of westward lands for the crown, remarking, “Sugar Trees: & Grape Vines abound in almost every part -- Mullberrys also are more common than in any other part of America.”⁸ The land and climate flanking the Monongahela offered soil “capable of abundantly producing Wheat, Hemp, Flax, &c,” which was also true of the land surrounding the mouth of the Ohio River.⁹ Rooted in a cultural perception of the English commons, communities with centralized villages like Grave’s Creek and Hanna’s Town sent out their herds to graze on communal pastures.

In Pittsburgh, locals converted an expansive fruit orchard, known as the King’s Garden, into a “community orchard” near the confluence of the Monongahela and Allegheny Rivers. In the early 1760s the British Army extended the orchard to include an

---

⁸ “Remarks on the Situation, Soil, Climate, Settlements, and produce of the Western Country,” 1770, Hutchins Papers, HSP.
extensive “Publick Garden.” By 1764, when the military’s use for the garden dwindled, it was producing no less than 20,000 heads of cabbage, 400 bushels of Indian corn a season, spelt, oats, carrots, parsnips, and a variety of green produces sufficient to keep a military from succumbing to scurvy. The new population of settlers replaced withdrawing troops and made public use of the garden and orchard until a military dictate reclaimed it in 1778. 10 Aside from the King’s Garden, the Ohio Valley region had a long and substantial history of orchard cultivation, predominantly by Delaware women. Peach, plum, and apple orchards flanked major rivers including the Monongahela and Allegheny. 11

Euroamerican and Indian settlements shared in the region’s readily available and vast supply of fish and game. Creeks and rivers teemed with fish, identified by Thomas Hutchins as “Carp, Pike, Perch & Cod,” some of which reached four feet in length. Hutchins estimated that the perch and cod weighed ten to fifteen pounds each, while traveling minister David Jones wrote of hundred pounds of “Catfish,” “salmon, sturgeon,… pike, chubs, mullets,” and others. Indians and Europeans found “quail, turkey, “ducks, Geese, Swan,” “turtles, frogs, and mussels,” in abundance along the creek beds and river shores. When former squatters spoke of their early days in the Ohio Valley, they remembered the forest full of a variety of bison, wildcats, foxes, raccoons, beavers, otters, deer, bear, elk, turkey, crane, and wild boar. Although claims that a single man killed sixteen bears or seventy deer in one season alone may sound

11 Susan Sleeper-Smith, George Washington and the Kidnapping of Indian Women (Chapel Hill: University of Chapel Hill, Forthcoming), 10.
exaggerated, the basic truth of these stories is clear; early Ohio Valley settlers enjoyed ample animal protein. On the Buckhannon River and near John Hacker’s settlement on Hacker’s creek, fences went up when grazing wild herds of buffalo trampled and ruined corn crops in 1770. In contrast to established English agricultural and legal practice in which fences enclosed private property, early Ohio Valley squatters relied on their wooden pickets not to limit human access but to protect crops. With land and game aplenty, little reason existed to fear or restrain settlement or hunting in the region.

Local Euroamerican and Indian men commonly hunted together in parties, recruiting superior marksman regardless of ethnic group. Euroamericans were more likely to require the assistance of their Indian settler counterparts than vice versa, as Euroamericans generally had little prior experience in hunting, but the essential point is that men from both communities worked together. An apocryphal story expressed the commonality of interethnic hunting, as locals passed down an exchange in which an Indian approached John Cutright of the Upper Monongahela country by saying, “White

---

12 “Remarks on the Situation, Soil, Climate, Settlements, and produce of the Western Country,” 1770, Hutchins Papers, HSP; McWhorter, Connelley, and Maclean, The Border Settlers of Northwestern Virginia, 79, 92 & 94; For ample game see also January 1, 1773, March 18, 1773 Journal of David Jones, 30-1, 83-4 HSP.

13 McWhorter, Connelley, and Maclean, The Border Settlers of Northwestern Virginia, 82.

14 Seed, Ceremonies of Possession in Europe’s conquest of the New World, 1492-1640, 20-1: Daniel Brodhead to John Jay, October 26, 1779, PA, ser. 1, 12:176; Ensign Armstrong’s Report to Colonel Harmer, April 12, 1785, Ensign Armstrong’s Report to Colonel Harmer, April 12, 1785, Return of Troops stationed at For McIntosh, August 1, 1785, Letters from General and Other Officers, 1776-89, all located in Papers of the Continental Congress, Roll 180, NARA; Report of Houses situated between Yellow Creek and the Mouth of the Muskingum on the Ohio Destroyed by detachment of John Doughty, November 30, 1785, John Hamtramck to John P. Wyllys, April 27, 1786, both located in Papers of the Continental Congress, Letters and Reports from Henry Knox, Roll 164, NARA; February 28,1788, Petition of the inhibitions, Post Vincennes on the Wabash, Kaskaskia, Cahokia, Peririe du Rocher and the Village St. Phillip, Papers of the Continental Congress, Memorials of Illinois, Kaskaskia, Kentucky, 125-7, NARA.

15 Stephen Aron, “‘Rights in the Woods’ on the Trans-Appalachian Frontier” in Contact Points, Cayton & Teute ed., 179. Aron specifies that hunting and sharing needs did not support peaceful coexistence. The contradiction between Aron’s assessment and mine is simply a matter of time and geography. Aron is talking about later Kentucky settlements, and I agree with his Kentucky-centric argument. My research, however, is focused on earlier eastern Ohio settlements.
man big hunter. Get heap deer, heap bear…..Good Injun; good white man! Go hunt.”

Some Indians, including men such as Delaware leader Captain Bull, Munsee leader Bald Eagle, and the members of their respective communities, developed a reputation for their tendency to hunt with Euroamericans. Euroamerican men learned the paths of their favorite game and followed bison long distances across settlement neighborhoods to where they grazed in “innumerable herds of Buffaloes, Deer, &c” in meadows of “six foot high grass” of the Glades. Early eastern Ohio Valley inhabitants relied on the Glades in northwestern Virginia as a “common hunting ground,” as did eastern Ohio Indians and settlers from Virginia border towns. Importantly, as both Euroamerican and Indian settlers lived outside of legal settlement, their hunting of incalculable game within the shared Pennsylvania and Virginia border remained legal. Virginia law imposed seasonal hunting restrictions east of the Alleghenies, but settlers living west of the mountains and outsiders who traveled to the region could use the borderland as a year round commons for hunting deer.

In general, Euroamerican backcountry inhabitants, much like their Indian counterparts, relied on mixed production, including farming, herding, fishing, hunting, and trapping, along with an assortment of local exchanges, to diversify day-to-day

---

17 Lewis Bennett to Draper, December 18, 1848, Interviews of Adult Children of the Frontier, Pittsburgh and Northwest Virginia Papers, DM, ser. e, vol. 11.
19 Hass, *History and Indian Wars of Western Virginia*, 75.
resources. Archaeological research provides evidence of the mixed sources that supplied the dietary needs for Charles and Sarah Foreman and settlers at Fort Martin in modern day West Virginia. Forman, who worked primarily as a tavern keeper, depended on pigs and cattle as well as a wider variety of wild game including deer, squirrel, and fish. Likewise, the Foreman family’s diet consisted of eight domesticated plants including wheat, oat, rye, and corn, but they relied on even larger quantities of wild flora including black raspberry, hackberry, and elderberry.\footnote{Richardson and Wilson, “Hannas Town and Charles Foreman: The Historical and Archeological Record,” 180.} At Fort Martin, families labored primarily as farmers and secondarily as herders, yet over forty percent of their diet came from hunting, fishing, or gathering.\footnote{“Archaeological Investigations at Fort Martin, Monongalia County, West Virginia,” WVHPO.} One family would have to dedicate substantial time to any one of these sources for it to provide a family with sustenance, but the region’s settlers exchanged the goods produced of their labor for those other local families extracted from the valley’s natural resources.

\textit{Sustenance: The Fruit of Cooperation}

Individual and community survival depended on full employment and the reciprocal exchange of resources, tools, and local labor for production.\footnote{The organization of neighborhoods, labor, and the exchange of resources in 1760s and early 1770s Ohio Valley appears much like that of western Massachusetts before and after the American Revolution. The greater social division that existed among the population in rural Massachusetts and backwoods Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Ohio accounts for some of the differences. Without social division and greater access to resources, individuals did not have as great leverage or ability to control groups socially below them for their own interests, i.e. by organizing a labor system in which they did not participate equally. Christopher Clark, \textit{The Roots of Rural Capitalism: Western Massachusetts, 1780-1860} (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), 23-4, 27, 38.} To meet daily needs, backcountry inhabitants filled the greatest portion of their time laboring, and an
adage concisely summarized the developing backcountry labor culture by stating, “[N]o reward without labor, and no wealth without economy.”

Families judicially and creatively worked at diverse skill sets and earned reputations as jacks-of-all-trades for their ability to meet a variety of their families’ needs. Although settlers considered food preparation, tanning animal hides, weaving, grinding corn, churning butter, and taking care of small livestock as home industries, accomplishing even simple tasks sometimes required assistance from neighbors. Resources, tools, and simple technology exchanged hands across settlements. William Crawford loaned his butter churner to Thomas Crago in exchange for access to Crago’s dairy cows. The wife of Phillip Doddridge did the family’s loom-work at a friend’s home in a neighboring settlement. Though both sides of the full exchange are not always clear, the for-use-bartering of resources is apparent throughout many anecdotes on frontier life.

In addition to tools, individuals met needs by exchanging favors or bartering their unique sets of skills and abilities. Due to small populations, settlements often lacked the trained craftsmen or formally educated individuals to enable communities to operate with self-sufficiency. Facilitating the culture of reciprocity, the extended kin who populated communities tied neighborhoods into reliable networks for exchanging goods, resources, labor, and defense. Though Euroamerican and Indian women contributed to their communities in directly economic manners, those contributions established from intimate

---

26 Doddridge, Notes, LCP, 310.
relationships also played an important role in tying families together through local exchange networks. Marriage generated most types of kin networks including female established networks (forged through a woman’s male and female family), fictive kin, friends, and other social relations. Female kin networks proved more enduring over greater periods and across longer distances than those created by men.27

In one example, Isaac Williams’s marriage to Rebecca connected himself and the greater Grave Creek community into a social and trade network that extended over fifty miles north to Baker’s Bottom, where Rebecca’s sister Sarah lived, and included Wheeling, where her father, John Tomlinson, lived as a ranger. During Lord Dunmore’s War and the American Revolution the survival of the entire Grave Creek settlement depended on membership in this larger network, as women and children took shelter in Wheeling while much of the male population joined men from Wheeling and Baker’s Bottom to patrol and defend the region.28

Indian women served in similar bridging capacities. Delaware leader Killbuck suggested that if a Delaware woman left her settlement to live among the Euroamericans with her husband, her former community expected to remain in contact with her. When the whereabouts of one woman went unknown by the Delaware, they assumed the worst.29 In Shawnee culture, the community found it acceptable for a woman to make a

27 Tamara G. Miller, “‘Those with Whom I Feel most Nearly Connected’: Kinship and Gender in Early Ohio in Midwestern Women: Work, Community, and Leadership” Lucy Eldersveld Murphy and Wendy Hamand Venet, ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 129-30 & 135. Miller is addressing the formation of kinship networks in western Ohio settler communities predominantly in the eighteenth century. Her conclusions are applicable for settlements in the eastern Ohio Valley prior to the American Revolution.
28 Hidreth and Culter, Biographical and historical memoirs of the early pioneer settlers of Ohio, 480
“living” selling her companionship “by the night, week, month or winter,” services that undoubtedly crossed community and ethnic lines and broaden neighborhoods.\(^{30}\) With the movement of women between Indian and Euroamerican communities went goods as well. In September 1772, a group of “squaws…who resort[ed] to Pittsburgh to carry and barter” accepted pay from traders to transport goods back to their Indian communities.\(^{31}\)

Participating in a larger network widened the pool of skills that a family could gain access to as well as the number of people they might offer their own labor or crafts to. Those people without spinning or weaving skills “[gave] labor, or barter” to those that did. At Doddridge Station, Joseph Doddridge worked as the family weaver, farmer, cooper, and carpenter but also met ends trading skills, and when he fell into poor health he exchanged his self-taught talent for fixing rifles with the marksmanship of his neighbors. Additionally, as one of the few literate individuals at his settlement, John Doddridge “was of great service to his neighbors in writing letters, bonds, deeds,” and regional petitions.\(^{32}\)

Midwives’ specialized skill set of vernacular medicine was especially prized in the area. A midwife in western Virginia and Pennsylvania attended both genders for a variety of ailments; Residents described Margret McDowell, who saved lives with folk remedies as “the only physician in the [back]country” of the Upper Monongahela.\(^{33}\)

\(^{30}\) “Customs,” Journal of David Jones, 55-6.
\(^{31}\) September 26, 1772, The Diary of David McClure, 68-70.
\(^{32}\) John Doddridge’s Station Petition on the dangerous situation, April 20, 1782, Irvine Papers, HSP; Crammer, History of the Upper Ohio Valley, OHS, 158 & 279: Doddridge, Notes, LCP, 143, 164-7 & 279.
\(^{33}\) John Crawford to Draper, 1831, Interviews of Adult Children of the Frontier, Pittsburgh and Northwest Virginia Papers, ser. nn, vol. 6.
Similarly, Mary Royal, mother of Anne, “was skilled in the medicine of herbs and acted as physician to the entire settlement.” Rebecca Williams treated Grave Creek and is noted for setting broken bones and saving at least one man from an amputation with a treatment of “leaves of stramonium…warm water,” and “slippery-elm bark.” Captive Hanna Dennis gained influence among Indians for her “attention to their sick and wounded,” skills taught to her by Indian women.

The exchange and adoption of knowledge between Indian and Euroamerican men and women likely moved both ways and proved the most fruitful. As the signs of a coming famine began in 1772, many Indian communities in the eastern Ohio Valley subsisted by using Euroamerican tools, “agricultural practices,” and keeping livestock. Shifting practices from predominately hunting to including some agriculture and herding, eastern Ohio Indians expanded their nutritional options, but also reduced the amount of land each Indian family required. The resulting decrease in Indians’ hunting acreage made peaceful coexistence easier. In a region where skills and knowledge were scarce, cooperative efforts helped provide sustenance and enabled families, neighbors and regional communities to endure.

The limited workforce fostered an understanding of each individual’s importance to the survival of the greater community. Laziness or exclusive self-interest proved impractical and socially unfit in an environment that otherwise required symbiotic

relationships, and social law developed to shape reciprocity. Communities warned out or “hatted out” those people who threatened order, including criminals, belligerents, or those who simply did not participate in communality. Depending on the season and the region hatting out a family, such a serious crime might bring with it a death sentence, as occurred with Ann Royal’s family.  

During the early years of eastern Ohio Valley settlement, no one family or small elite group controlled a concentration of the region’s labor force. The size of a family’s immediate and extended family, minimal amounts of indentured servants, and bound African labor dictated one’s labor pool. With some of their only social events organized around labor, collectivity underpinned the valley’s developing society through “chopping and logging frolics,” schnitzten (the preparation for German apple butter), fulling bees (the shrinking, thickening, and softening of woven textiles), and collective spinning, knitting and weaving.  

Tasks such as “log rolling, house raising, and harvest day” along with “reaping” and many other seasonal and everyday chores needed all local hands to succeed. In one account of corn-husking in early Kentucky, Daniel Drake stated that a family notified their neighbors of “an affair of mutual assistance.” The night commenced with whisky circulating among the party and the host refilling the bottle often throughout the night. The men worked with their backs leaned against one another and kept time through song, while the group shared in a supper prepared by their female counterparts.

---

37 Doddridge, Notes, LCP, 161 & 185.
39 Doddridge, Notes, LCP, 137-138, 153 & 185.
and entertained themselves with fighting matches. By “midnight, the sober were found assisting the drunken home.”

In the instance of lengthy construction projects, like water or horse mills, neighbors willingly exchanged their labor for access to the finished product, a deal which the new mill owners obliged. Mills sharply raised the quality and quantity of product while drastically reducing the time and physical labor required, and settlers recognized the increased efficiency that came from mills’ assistance in moving from home production to community manufacturing. Having a local mill in operation marked the beginning of stabilization and successful sustenance for the community -- progress in need of celebration. As the day’s work came to an end, community projects transformed into social events, and, much like the northwestern Susquehanna squatters of the 1750s, families ate potpies, drank, and formed spontaneous bands for dancing.

Although most squatters pursued self-sufficiency, they relied on a mixture of cooperative and individualistic labor methods to achieve independence from larger markets. Prior to 1773, however, the same inability to control larger labor pools sometimes worked against the ambitions of farmers by preventing larger market participation. The yields of early Ohio Valley farming often provided crops sufficient for

---

41 Crammer, History of the Upper Ohio Valley, OHS, 277.
the support of regional communities but left little for market trade east of the Alleghenies.  

Additionally, families whose crops flourished beyond their own need expected, and sometimes did, share surplus produce with families who suffered less fortunate harvests. Settlers did not just share their foodstuff as a demonstration of their neighborliness but as a component of their needs-based communal culture. According to Joseph Doddridge, “[T]hese people were given to hospitality, and freely divided their rough fare with a neighbor, or stranger, and would have been offended at the offer to pay. In their settlements and forts, they lived, they worked, they fought and feasted, or suffered together, in cordial harmony.” Short term gestures of communal support helped reinforce a growing population, which settlers desired in order to strengthen the legitimacy of their settlement, increase their labor, and provide protection. In the eastern Ohio Valley’s early years, settlements could not rely exclusively on births to outweigh deaths and continued to proactively attract new members to their villages.

An uncharacteristically high number of migrants arrived in 1773. Owing to the sudden shortage of produces and the inability for communities in the southwestern corner of Virginia to feed the new population, settlers came to refer to that year as the “starving year”. Actions taken by the Buckhannon settlement responded to the food scarcity by recognizing that long-term survival strategy required a greater populations. Despite the

---

44 Doddridge, Notes, LCP, 187.
group’s struggle to feed preexisting inhabitants, they shared their produce with a newcomer who had not contributed any labor to the harvest.\textsuperscript{46} Regional folklore tells of one man, William Lowther, who saved the greater community from starvation by hunting enough game to support the population. Stories of Lowther held that his “house was the home of the widow and fatherless. His purse was not his own his Neighbors shared it with him.”\textsuperscript{47} In guarding the needs of his neighbors, Lowther represented the communal spirit of the region. Conversely, folklore also attested to a mysterious “hermit-like hunter” described pejoratively as a “grizzled nimrod” and a “fox” who discovered a prized lead mine but refused to share knowledge of its location with anyone. “Sly Hunter” fables and other tales of animal-like-men who used secreted resources and lived detached from the greater community circulated throughout the region. Storytellers repeated these fables to keenly make listeners aware and watchful for such sinister, hoarding outsiders.\textsuperscript{48} While the starving years comprised exceptional circumstances in a region otherwise marked by abundance, actions taken during desperate times by the Ohio Valley’s early eastern population depicts the rising prevalence of a culture centered on collectivity.

The cross-community interdependence that supported self-sufficient settlements encouraged significant local exchange within the region. Like labor, resources, and tools,
early eastern Ohio Valley inhabitants exchanged raw materials and finished household products among themselves as a means for individual families and settlements to diversify goods and meet everyday needs. Functioning outside of the larger Atlantic market economy, Euroamericans, Indians, and Africans operated a secondary frontier exchange economy.\(^49\)

The importance and multitude of local trade has led to the inaccurate labeling of most backcountry men as settlers or Indian traders, suggesting that most early eastern Ohio Valley settlers participated in the larger market economy. Yet when contemporaries used the word “trader,” they referenced by title to the specific men they, or others, contracted or employed to peddle their goods. When men like George Croghan complained about ongoing informal trade he, like Sir William Johnson, Thomas Gage, and others, confined the term’s use and instead referred to individuals engaged in local exchange networks as mere inhabitants. In order to understand the complexity of

---

\(^{49}\) The goods and services exchanged in the 1768 to 1773 Ohio Valley mirrors the “Frontier exchange” identified by Daniel Usner throughout eighteenth century colonial Louisiana. According to Usner, the small regional population and lack of skilled labor forced Indians, slaves, settlers, and soldiers to rely on their ability to exchange goods and trade for “subsistence and security.” Usner also states that interethnic interdependency occurred as a “characteristic of most North American colonies during their early years.” Community studies have found similar findings, including a study on neighboring communities in western Maryland in James D. Rice’s, “Old Appalachia’s Path to Interdependency: Economic Development and the Creation of Community in Western Maryland, 1730-1850” *Appalachian Journal*, vol. 22, no. 4 (Summer, 1995), 361. Rice additionally argues that the construction of a local market supported and encouraged settlers from divergent and conflicting ethnic, cultural, or religious backgrounds to work together for “shared interests.” The local market facilitated the larger market. My description of exchange based on bartered goods and service differs from the description provided by Eric Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires*, 177-180. Hinderaker’s argument is constructed from two sources and centered on the western Ohio Valley, Indian/Ohio country while my research is focused on the eastern Ohio Valley. Hinderaker’s sources are also descriptions of exchanges between community outsiders, either traders participating in the Atlantic trade or people passing through, such as traveling ministers. Community members used these interactions to obtain money but that does not indicate that locals predominantly exchanged goods and services among themselves in money. My research does not yield any direct indication of free African or slave labor participating in the Ohio Valley’s frontier exchange. Due to the necessity of all labor and the relationship between free and un-free Africans and early Ohio Valley settlers, discussed in chapter 3, it is presumed that blacks participated in the larger exchange via labor preformed for their masters as well as labor that they engaged in for their own profit. Usner, *Indians, Settlers, & Slaves in a Frontier Exchange Economy*, 27,42-43, 45, 54, 106-7.
backcountry dynamics, in both the preservation of peace and the unraveling of harmony, it is essential to understand that while some traders lived in the eastern Ohio Valley, not all valley inhabitants worked primarily as traders.

Backcountry traders made their livelihood by facilitating the exchange of goods between local backcountry people, regional agents, and urban companies who imported items from around the globe. Itinerant traders like David Duncan traveled among multiple homes and people. Duncan lived in three homes: Shippen’s Town; among fellow traders at the trader settlement near Old Redstone; and among Indians in the Ohio Country.\textsuperscript{50} Men like Duncan did not operate their own stores. Instead, the bulk of traders travelled established routes collecting raw goods (mostly skins from hunters but also furs from trappers) in exchange for a variety of European goods supplied by the companies that they represented. Traders working in conjunction with both the military and their employers attended diplomatic Indian councils as formal representatives or lobbyists for their companies. Local settlers tended to view full-time traders unfavorably. This perception of traders only increased after Pontiac’s War, with backcountry inhabitants viewing traders as outsiders who betrayed local neighborhoods by allying with the predatory merchants of Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan. Aside from the company’s illicit arms trafficking, its ability to use the military’s backcountry infrastructure to

\textsuperscript{50} Religion, Journal of David Jones, 64.
facilitate trade made it difficult, if not near impossible, for most settlers to compete in the Atlantic fur and skin market.\textsuperscript{51}

Extraordinarily successful traders gained employment as agents for larger outfits like Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan. Men like George Croghan, John Irwin, Alexander McKee, and George Morgan operated as agents, or middlemen, for the company and lived in the backcountry organizing traders and the transportation of goods between urban ports, outposts, and low-ranking backcountry traders. The vast majority of traders appear namelessly in documents and lived constantly in constant motion throughout the Ohio and Illinois country.\textsuperscript{52}

Although traders and backcountry inhabitants often occupied the same regions and engaged in similar activities, the two groups used their time for very different labors. Moreover, the employment of traders by men of greater means sometimes placed them in influential social, economic, and political networks with the military and government, networks in which squatters had no part. Backcountry families also differed in that they primarily engaged in agricultural production and, as only occasional consumers or suppliers in established trade networks, did not apply for or receive trade licenses for their irregular trade. Family trading usually took place with people they considered close friends or relations. As indicated by open floor plans of single room log cabins, these western Pennsylvania and western Virginia families usually traded from their


\textsuperscript{52} John Campbell to Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan, March 3, 1769, Correspondence of Baynton and Wharton, BWM Papers, reel 3, DLAR.
homes, not designated trading structures, though elsewhere these homes could include separate spaces or door for conducting business with outsiders. Like the early Euroamericans, Africans, and Indians in the lower Mississippi Valley, eastern Ohio Valley settlers operated in a frontier economy dependent on mixed production, adaptable exchange networks, and a local market orientation.

The everyday exchange of goods occurred so routinely that members of the Crown government used the interior’s secondary economy to justify abandoning the backcountry altogether, claiming that inhabitants lived outside the mercantile system. While anecdotes do not demonstrate the true extent of trade, they do suggest that local exchanges focused on everyday goods and crossed ethnic boundaries. Particularly talented at weaving, young Joseph Doddridge bartered the belts that he wove throughout his neighborhood for a day’s labor or a “hundred rails.” The unnamed father of another family earned a reputation for turning highly sought-after wooden bowls. If their refuse pits are an accurate reflection of what their cupboards once bore, Charles and Sarah Foreman kept their tavern stocked with libations from around the Atlantic basin, yet commonly served their customers with pottery made in a local indigenous community.

---

55 Croghan to Samuel Wharton, April 14, 1768, Croghan Papers, HPS; Benjamin Franklin to the Board of Trade, July 1, 1772, William Vincent Byers collection, HSP: Gage to Hillsborough, November 10, 1770, CTG, 1:274-81.
56 John Doddridge’s Station Petition on the dangerous situation, April 20, 1782, Irvine Papers, HSP; Crammer, *History of the Upper Ohio Valley*, OHS, 158 & 279; Doddridge, Notes, LCP, 143,164-7 & 279.
57 Wilson, “Hannas Town and Charles Foreman,” 176.
Indians were also participants in these trade networks. Regional leaders like Delaware George and George White Eyes took in furs and skins from Indians and Euroamericans. An early member of the region’s interethnic neighborhood, White Eyes (Koguettechton) had done well for nearly a decade. He kept a cabin outside of Pittsburgh and operated a trading post and tavern for Indians and Euroamericans just north on the Big Beaver. There, White Eyes succeeded in collecting enough furs and skins from Indian and Euroamerican hunters that he annually moved his peltry, despite remaining independent of larger firms like Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan. In 1773 alone he moved 1,500 deerskins and 300 beaver pelts from the Ohio Country “round by the gulf of Florida to Philadelphia.” At Baker’s Bottom, Mingo Indians from just across the Ohio River routinely made use of Joshua Baker’s grog house. In addition to her husband’s market participation, Baker’s wife, Sarah exchanged some of the family’s resources, including milk, with at least one group of Mingo women. The group included a woman married to John Gibson, a regional trader and middle ranking agent for Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan, and the sister of Yellow Creek community leader Logan. 

Outside forces assisted in uniting European and Indian communities through local trade. In 1769 frontier traders joined their urban counterparts in protesting the 1767 Townshend Acts, dubbing themselves “Sons of Liberty” and pledging not to sell or purchase goods imported from Great Britain. The boycott rippled into the frontier, and

60 Michael Cresap, Jr., to Draper, 1845, DHDW, 15; Earl P. Olmstead, David Zeisberger, A Life Among the Indians (Kents: Kent Stat University Press, 1997), 220-1.
within two years few European goods circulated in the Ohio Valley.\textsuperscript{61} Despite the limited number of goods that traders now imported into the backcountry, Indian communities continued to receive British merchandise in the form of presents. To obtain British manufactured goods, the nonimportation agreement may have strengthened the dependence that Euroamerican communities had on Indian communities. Baker’s Bottom was not the only place where local Indians and EuroamERICans congregated at each other’s homes for trade, and both groups sometimes even relocated to land that placed them in closer proximity to enable easier exchanges.\textsuperscript{62} The local Euroamerican and Indian exchange of home-produced goods or raw materials was the predominant form of interethnic relations in the eastern Ohio Valley, bringing groups together with, more often than not, peaceful outcomes.\textsuperscript{63}

As the vast majority of inhabitants informally exchanged home-manufactured products, labor, and skills, little of this local exchange is documented beyond anecdotal

\textsuperscript{61} Gage to Barrington, September 9, 1769, CTG; August 22, 1770 & Johnson to Gordon, February 18, 1771, Sir William Johnson Papers, 7:813-4, 821-22, 849-52 & 892-5.

\textsuperscript{62} White, \textit{Middle Ground}, 342; Croghan to Gage, August 8, 1770, Gage Papers, American Series, 94, William Clements Library.

\textsuperscript{63} Croghan, Indian Conferences, July 3, 1770, Croghan Papers, HSP; Indian Council, May 1771, Early American Indian Documents: Treaties & Laws, 1607-1789 [hereafter cited as EAMID], Vaughan, Alden T. ed. Washington D.C.: University Publications of America, c1979- . 20 vols., 3:757-61. Additionally, 1770 Council Indian leaders complained that most local Euroamerican inhabitants only brought rum to exchange at Indian settlements. Although leaders feared “traders” used rum in “design of destroying” the Indian population, for eastern Ohio Valley residents -- who owned few European goods and had little access to them – rum-making more likely represented a readily made home industry that allowed them to trade locally. The difference between traders and local settlers should be noted. The complaints are largely lodged against traders working out of Fort Pitt. September 26, 1772, entry in the Diary of David McClure, 68-73. Richard White supports the argument that local Euroamericans exchanged rum with local Indians as a means of trickery in underhanded trades and as a means of trading with Indians without building a relationship. Yet drunken quarrelling and violence threatened the peace of interdependent Indian and white relations equally, and local exchanges took place within a community that both groups had built and participated in. White, \textit{Middle Ground}, 342-3.
evidence. What can be more conclusively demonstrated is the community that resulted from consistent interethnic interactions.

Peace defined the region. Neither local Indians, mainly Delaware, nor their Euroamerican neighbors contested one another’s place in the eastern Ohio Valley, leading one surveyor to report, “I assure you and every other person with you I have not heard any Indian this three years past, complain or dislike any settlements between this place [likely just south of Wheeling] and the Great Canaway.”64 Within six years of settlement, the influence of cooperative labor, local exchange, and peaceful relations transformed the eastern Ohio Valley’s “desolate wilderness” into “well cultivated farms.” According to David McClure, “[M]any families west of the Mountains, now [began] to realize their hopes” in sustenance farming.65 Within the valley’s unique formula of low population, high resources, and cooperation, most families accomplished competency.

At Fort Pitt, the complaints of Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan agent James Campbell provide insight into the stability achieved by local settlers. According to Campbell, “This Place is not like Philadelphia or a Town in the Country where things may be got to suit either in our Shop or another -- unless such things have been some times in your Store they never were in any others in this Place.”66 Yet, just as the region’s settler population grew, the company store at Fort Pitt sold goods to few outside the military, despite holding a monopoly on European trade goods entering the Ohio

---

64 Michael Crispos to George Croghan, Croghan Papers, HSP. Although this document is undated, material contained within this letter places it about 1773 or early 1774. This indicates the three-year time frame was about 1770 to 1773; Azariah Thomas to George Morgan, June 13, 1773, Correspondence of George Morgan, BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR.
65 April 24, 1773, The Diary of David McClure, 119.
66 John Campbell, June 18, 1769, BWM Correspondence, BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR.
Valley. Likewise, traders for other regional merchants including Philadelphia merchants
Bernard and Michael Gratz lost money on trade in the Fort Pitt region and directed their
efforts elsewhere.\textsuperscript{67} Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan had expected to employ the local
population as trappers, traveling traders, boatman, skilled and unskilled labor at Fort Pitt
and posts in the Illinois country, but the success of cooperative labor and exchanges
meant the area’s families did not depend on outside employment. Campbell described
the region’s labor shortage as the result of independently working settlers making
themselves “busy” with their own agriculture and hunting.\textsuperscript{68}

According to Campbell, only a few men participated in trade for external markets,
and those few market-oriented settlers, either traders or trapper, chose to work alone.\textsuperscript{69}
Most local trappers refused to sell their peltry to the company, and those that did offered
to sell their pelts at Philadelphia’s retail prices.\textsuperscript{70} When Campbell sent word of
employment opportunities to Redstone, the response did not meet the company’s
demand, with only twenty-one (eighteen Euroamerican and three African) men
answering. None of the prospective employees had skills as an artisan and only four
hunted, but all demanded the wages of highly skilled men.\textsuperscript{71} Similarly, the high prices
demanded by skilled hunters, river pilots, land guides, and those individuals fluent in

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{67}] Dunn, \textit{Choosing Sides on the Frontier in the American Revolution}, 39-40.
\item[\textsuperscript{68}] John Campbell to George Morgan, April 27, 1769 and June 18, 1769, BWM Correspondence, BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR.
\item[\textsuperscript{69}] John Campbell to George Morgan, March 20, 1768 and April 27, 1769, BWM Correspondence, BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR.
\item[\textsuperscript{70}] John Campbell to George Morgan, March 20, 1768 and John Campbell, June 18, 1769, Correspondence of George Morgan, 1765-1785, BWM Correspondence, BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR.
\item[\textsuperscript{71}] John Campbell to BWM, February 9, 1768, John Campbell to BWM, April 8, 1768, Correspondence of Baynton and Wharton, BWM Papers, reel 3, DLAR; John Campbell to George Morgan, June 18, 1769, BWM Correspondence, BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
Indian languages surprised outsiders. By 1770 royal officials calculated the total revenue from trade transported down the Mississippi and out of the Port of New Orleans at about £23,000, of which British merchants accounted for only two-fifths. The Ohio Valley pelt trade alone was estimated at £11,000. While Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan recognized an opportunity to replace French traders, so too did some of the settlers. Working together, small groups hoped to sell grains, hides, and dried meats in New Orleans, and, like the company, some of these men had invested their stake together and sent “Buffalo Beef & Tallow” by the tons to Louisiana. This was a profitable decision: buffalo meat “Salted in Bulk” sold in New Orleans for “3 dollars Pennsylvania Currency a pound.”

Moreover, the Alleghenies and Appalachian mountain ranges had long stood as geopolitical marker and while the Proclamation Line had attempted to restrict movement and trade within the footprint of the Anglo North Atlantic, once on the mountain’s western side, settlers occupied a westward moving watershed. Men like John Dawson traveled to New Orleans, while others like Simon Byrney made way for St. Louis. Westward flowing waterways began to reshape the imagination and opportunities for some settlers who did not need a company to take advantage of natural resources or the new business opportunities that they began to represent.

73 “The Report of Benjamin Chew, Alexander Stedman, William West, and Edward Shippen,” April 21, 1756, Indian Affairs, vol. 2, 80, HSP; Doddridge, Notes, LCP, 145-6; Crammer, History of the Upper Ohio Valley, OHS, 156.
74 Croghan to Samuel Wharton, April 14, 1768 & Croghan to Dunmore, April 9, Croghan Papers, HSP.
75 Weaver, The Great Land Rush, 154.
76 Joseph Bowmam to Draper, December 13, 1845 & William Darby to Draper, July 2, 1846, Interviews of Adult Children of the Frontier, Pittsburgh and Northwest Virginia Papers, DM, ser. e, vol. 11
Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan refocused their trade efforts to the Illinois. Desperate to meet their labor demands, the company began shipping in labor from the Susquehanna Valley, impressing soldiers into company labor, and making indentured servants of impoverished Philadelphians and a handful of settlers who did not find independence in the Ohio Valley.\(^{77}\) Susquehanna resident Joseph Rigby, “an able hand,” earned wages as a dispatch rider for the company to pay for his family’s eventual passage to Illinois.\(^{78}\) An Ohio Valley man named James Kelly and his wife signed up with the company without giving a reason, while the company rejected an “infamous lady” named Catharine O’Bryan. Indentured servant Margret Farguson, whose master, Alias Watson, worked for the company and chose to move to Illinois, extended her own indenture to transfer her ten-year-old’s indenture from Philadelphia to Illinois.\(^{79}\) George Morgan offered two thousand acres each to two doctors from Lancaster and permitted each to take up to twenty slaves with them.\(^{80}\) Working against high illness and mortality rates in Illinois, the company’s lowest ranking partner George Morgan encouraged his partners to use their military connections to have soldiers stationed there, hopefully increasing their

\(^{77}\) Joseph Dobson to BWM, September 27, 1767, John Campbell to George Morgan January 28, 1769, John Campbell to George Morgan, March 3, 1769, and John Campbell to George Morgan, June 18, 1769, John Baynton to George Morgan, December 12, 1770 & John Baynton to George Morgan, February 18,1771, BWM Correspondence, BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR.

\(^{78}\) John Campbell to Joseph Rigby Jun 11, 1768, Baynton Wharton and Morgan, BWM Correspondence, , BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR.

\(^{79}\) John Campbell to George Morgan, June 1769 , Correspondence of George Morgan, 1765-1785 and Margret Farguson to George Morgan, July 23, 1772 and Margret Farguson to George Morgan, September 4, 1772, BWM Correspondence, BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR.

\(^{80}\) George Morgan to an unnamed Surveyor in the Illinois, June 6, 1774, August 30, 1770 Correspondence of George Morgan, BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR.
supply of forced labor. A year later, a company of the 18th Royal Irish Regiment of foot loaded and navigated company boats to Fort Chartres and by 1771, the men of the 18th Foot accurately accused their commanding officers of “Tyranny & Oppression” for pressing them into labor for private benefit.

Living in a geographically remote region amidst a labor shortage encouraged early Delaware, Mingo, and Euroamerican eastern Ohio Valley settlers to create a culture of cross-community reciprocity. Individuals, families, and settlements depended on collective labor to complete extensive projects, but they also exchanged tools and traded skills to offset knowledge gaps within families. Families and settlements similarly created local trade networks in order to meet regular dietary and material needs. The system of interdependent interethnic neighborhoods that resulted from the collective strategies of participants also generated a yearning for peace greater than the desire for interethnic revenge.

*Compromising, composing, and imposing common law across Cultures*

The survival of early eastern Ohio settlers depended on their ability to sustain regional Euroamerican and Indian interdependence, a demand that required communities to self-policing the actions of their members. Suppressing interethnic violence required new strategies for conflict resolution. Punishing individuals rather than applying

---

81 George Morgan to Baynton Wharton and Morgan, October 30, 1768, BWM Correspondence, BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR.
82 John Campbell to Joseph Rigby Jun 11, 1768, Baynton Wharton and Morgan, BWM Correspondence, BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR.
collective responsibility and identifying murder as incidental to another crime, as opposed to racially driven or an imperial act of war, created a balanced sense of interethnic respect and justice. The success of these strategies minimized violent acts and contained repercussions when bloodshed did occur. As a result, murder and raids drastically dwindled by 1770, and interethnic mob violence and retaliation did not occur in the eastern Ohio Valley before 1774.83 The sharp decrease in Euroamerican-Indian murder and vigilante justice between 1768 and 1774 speaks to the success of eastern Ohio Valley inhabitants in socially and culturally imposing law and order from within and stood in stark contrast to the collective demand for Euroamerican-Indian disunion in the Susquehanna Valley. It also contradicts the commonly quoted misconception of the Lieutenant Governor of Virginia, Francis Fauquier: “[I]t is impossible to bring anybody to justice for the murder of an Indian, who takes shelter among our back inhabitations.”84

83 May 1768- January 1773, Sir William Johnson Papers, 12:487-1010. Scholars generally make blanket claims about rampant violence, murder, “bloodthirsty” settlers and retributive violence after 1767-8, but careful examination of the evidence suggests that it occurred either before 1768 or after 1774. When Richard White argues that whites killed Indians in great numbers, all of his citations are dated 1766-67, with some support in 1768. Similarly, Peter Silver gives no account of violence between 1768 and 1773-4, but suggests a pattern of Euroamerican-Indian violence throughout the time period. To do this, most of Silver’s documents are pre-1768 or even 1766, resuming in 1774 and later. The few accounts that Silver does have between 1768-74 did not take place in the eastern Ohio Valley. Likewise, Patrick Griffin makes a similar argument about murders in West Virginia “one or two years” after Fort Stanwix, yet according to his sources, his support is really taken from events transpiring in the autumn of 1768. Griffin additionally addresses the existence of a threat of violence as stated by frontier officials. I later address these types of statements as unfounded and dishonest representations to the Crown by self-interested officials that the Crown government relied on to report from the frontier. Alden T. Vaughan provides a related argument in “Frontier Banditti and the Indians: The Paxton Boys’ Legacy, 1763-75” in Roots of American Racism: Essays on the Colonial Experience (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 82-102. Aside from incidents that I also address, Vaughan’s data is dated before 1768 or after 1774. The “frontier” events Vaughan focuses on also occurred in the Susquehanna Valley. Additionally most examples of threats come from outside the Ohio Valley. In general, this is simply a topic scholars must examine with more careful attention to strict chronology, cautiously tracking changing movements, behavior, and relations. White, Middle Ground, 344-51; Silver, Our Savage Neighbors, 126-60 & 227-32; Patrick Griffin, American Leviathan, 89-91. For the time of peace see McWhorter, Connelley, and Maclean, The Border Settlers of Northwestern Virginia, 117. It should also be noted the interethnic murders occurred far less often than Euroamerican murders of other Euroamericans, by a ratio of three to one from 1760 to 1774 in the Susquehanna and Ohio Valleys. Preston, Texture of Contact, 232.

84 Veech, The Monongahela of Old, 89-90.
The late 1760s marked a transformative period in which eastern Ohio Valley Euroamerican and Indian settlers responded to murder from the perspective of a common identity as refugees and vulnerable people, reinforced through a shared social law in which each community expelled its criminals. According to Six Nations’ law, the appropriate punishment for murder was death doled out by the relatives of the victim. While murder “disturb[ed] the Peace,” noncompliance with the Six Nations’ demand for justice demonstrated blatant disrespect for Indian sovereignty and threatened all British-Indian relations. Settlers disregarded the western Six Nations’ call for Euroamerican-Indian segregation, but they acknowledged punishment for murder as a necessity. In return, Indian leaders accepted that European cultural justice required trials in sometimes distant locations.

During Indian councils, Euroamerican and Indian leaders began to acknowledge that while their officials used laws to curtail undesirable behavior, their subjects acted as individuals when breaking those laws. Neither did Indians nor Euroamericans of the eastern Ohio Valley desire to hold governments or communities accountable for the actions committed by “foolish” individuals. With the help of transformative language, law-breaking now indicated an act of individual agency, not a crisis by which western Indians would continue to associate crime with crown-sanctioned disorder.

86 White, Middle Ground, 344. According to White, “When, after Pontiac’s Rebellion, law proved an ineffective mechanism for controlling British subjects, Algonquians were surprised and suspicious. Having been told that the law covered all of the king’s children, both red and white, the Six Nations refused to believe that settlers could come onto Indian lands and murder and cheat Indians without the king’s permission.” The language used in Ohio Valley treaties
Eastern Ohio Valley settlers structured punishment around a standardized social legal system suggested by John Penn in the wake of the Stump-Ironcutter Indian massacre of 1768. Penn’s statement “to the Chiefs and Warriors of the Six Nations, Delawares, and Shawnees at Ohio,” encouraged a new perception of interethnic violence and law breaking:

[T]here are bad and foolish Men of all Nations, whom at Times, the Evil Spirit gets the better of, and tempts to Murder their most intimate Friends, and even Relations, in order to disturb the Peace and Tranquility of their Neighbors. These Accidents often happen amongst yourselves as well as among us, but the imprudent Act of a few foolish People should not disturb the peace of the man Wise and Innocent amongst Us.

Penn’s approach to interethnic diplomacy provided a productive language and vernacular legal culture that Indian and Euroamerican settlers used to frame murders. In 1768 this transformation compelled communities to punish individual actors for crimes, a more judicious response than the war posturing that previously engrossed whole communities in general vengeance.

With a willingness to compromise and a working understanding of each other’s legal systems, local Euroamericans and Indians began to delineate between murders by motivation. The first category, and lowest degree, of murder occurred incidental to another crime (generally theft) and without a racial or political agenda. Higher in degree, and councils, however, demonstrates a shifting acceptance that subjects of both groups broke laws without constant of the larger community, and thus the larger community should not be punished for these abuses.

87 John Penn’s message to the chiefs and warriors of the Six Nations, Delawares, and Shawnee, at Ohio, February 22, 1768, EAMID 3:723; George Croghan, Journal, Indian Conference, Pittsburgh, 1770, Croghan to Lord Dunmore, 1774, Croghan Papers, HSP.

88 John Penn’s message to the chiefs and warriors of the Six Nations, Delawares, and Shawnee, at Ohio, February 22, 1768, EAMID, 3:723.

eastern Ohio Valley inhabitants recognized a “rash” murder, or one committed in the heat of argument or fear, as “inconsiderate” of possible community ramifications but without premeditation or insult to European or Indian authority.  As neither incidental nor rash murders threatened the fragile balance between Euroamerican and Indian local sovereignty, interethnic communities could, and did, move past these events undisturbed.

To Indians and Euroamerican settlers, murder provoked by, or symbolic of, hatred for an entire group proved the exception as such hate murders threatened the stability of the region. Hate murders spun neighbors into battle against one another, representing an assault on an entire group’s authority, occupation of land, and participation within the larger neighborhood. Specific acts such as scalping or mutilating bodies served as physical declarations of war. If a group allowed a hate-based murder to go unpunished, it inadvertently approved, if not supported, the act and could move the entire region into violence.

In 1768, as the valley’s distinct multicultural networks began to take their formative shape, incidental murders blurred the line between hate murders and general crime. When incidental murders crossed ethnic lines, bystanders had no choice but to wonder if the aggressor had demonstrated a disregard for the value of life based on ethnicity. In late 1768 John Price, a Euroamerican inhabitant of the Upper Monongahela country, killed and robbed an unnamed Indian of “his rifle, a few silver ornaments, and

---

90 For the use of the words rash and inconsiderate in the context of interethnic violence in the backcountry, see Johnston to Croghan, March 5, 1768; Conference of Six Nations, Shawnee and Delaware Chiefs and a Number of Pittsburgh, March 8-13, 1774, Journal of Alexander McKee, Sir William Johnson Papers, McKee to Johnson, March 3, 1774, May 3, 1774, Journal of Alexander McKee, all found in Sir William Johnson Papers 12:98, 462, 1081-86; OED.
91 Preston, Texture of Contact, 257.
hunting dress.” Fellow inhabitants had the choice of categorizing Price’s crime as either an incidental or hate murder. Price had killed the Indian, despite their preexisting friendship, and then had returned to the Monongahela bragging about the offense. In doing so, his crime transcended theft and an incidental murder and revealed itself as a dispassionate crime that greatly upset locals. When thirty local Indians arrived at his settlement seeking justice for their comrade, Price’s neighbors agreed not to warn him and handed him over to Indians who put him to death.92

The death of a Euroamerican named Burbige tested the solidifying legal culture, but the region did not fall into retaliatory violence. In the subsequent winter of 1769 an unidentified Indian and Burbige went hunting together west of Ligonier, where the Indian stole Burbige’s gun and then shot him; Burbige died within days. A clear example of an incidental murder, the Euroamerican community did not demand recompense for their lost neighbor. Similarly, when Muddy Creek settler Thomas Cargo’s neighbors found a tomahawked dog, Crago’s body with a bullet to the head, and his horses missing, they reconstructed the event as a robbery that had escalated into a struggle and finally a murder.93 In both instances, locals accepted the deaths as events incidental to the real motive, robbery.94 With few violent exchanges that year, local urgency to hold entire groups accountable for the actions of individuals fell to the wayside. When Cornelius

---

Dougherty killed an “Indian in Pittsburgh,” later that same year, both Euroamericans and Indians dismissed the event, and “there was but little said on either Side.”

On the heels of Dougherty’s murder, David Owen turned in Charles Hanigan to authorities for participating in the killing of Delaware Jacob Daniel and his two young sons. Owen had a complicated history of interethnic relations. After deserting the British military during the French and Indian War, Owen had killed his Muskingum wife, children, and in-laws seemingly out of fear and in a desperate plea to make good with the military. Eleven years later, Owen understood how to mediate peace because he had done so for Colonel Henry Bouquet and the Six Nations in 1764. Now a local living on Ten Mile Creek in western Pennsylvania, he too turned in Indian killers.

By 1770 general peacekeeping efforts between Indians and Euroamericans included “frequently” held joint councils for “Mutual peace and welfare.” That summer, such a council proved necessary to prevent a retaliatory war between five refugee settlements in the neighborhood surrounding the Monongahela and Allegheny confluence. Multiethnic Indians composed two of the communities while a mixture of Euroamericans and, to a smaller extent, free and un-free settlers of African descent composed the other three communities. Members of the five communities had gathered to trade, eat, and socialize. As the night went on, participants grew drunk and a number of trades had gone bad. In one instance, a Euroamerican man named Wilson refused to

---

trade skins for blankets and instead offered only rum. When the Indian families who wanted blankets left Wilson’s home, they felt unfairly treated and took his canoe. In another instance that same evening, Indians had not agreed to any final trade with the Euroamericans and yet the Euroamericans had “taken” all their goods. The night spent “in liquor” had unraveled into mayhem. The Euroamericans fired on the Indians and the Indians did likewise. Indians “plundered” the Euroamerican homes by breaking open wooden chests and “carry[ing] away” goods, cutting open beds, with the feathers thrown out and goods tumbled “about the ground.” The Euroamericans fully sacked the Indian camps and took whatever items they wanted. The next morning local Indians and Euroamericans counted their dead and tallied their missing or destroyed property to discover near equal loses.98

At the council for mutual peace that followed, Seneca leader Guyasuta, a man with a reputation for mediating Euroamerican and Indian interests, stated that “it would be impossible to preserve friendship between local Indians and Euroamericans,” “except [if] they would resolve when ever they happened to meet to take each other by the hand, in a friendly manner…” Guyasuta and the Euroamerican representative Joseph Swearengen (Schweringham) accepted equal accountability for the violence during the preceding evening. Both men understood peace came with work and in spite of the desires of outsiders. According to Guyasuta, the French, Spanish, Shawnee, Cherokee, and other western Native leaders continually pressured the Upper Monongahela country

98 George Croghan, Journal, Pittsburgh, 1770, Croghan Papers, HSP.
Indians to dispose of, if not kill, the settlers. Instead of warning the Euroamericans away
guyasuta presented a wampum belt of friendship to Swearengen. Recognizing their
relationship as “neighbors,” the men acknowledged their mutual dependence and the
shared benefits of maintaining their cooperative relationship. Guyasuta closed by saying,
“[W]e are become too near neighbors to quarrel if we could help [it].” Anything short of
working together promised to bring back the violence that they had all fled in the
Susquehanna Valley. 99

Eastern Ohio Valley Indians had preexisting ceremonies and a language for
reconciliation built into their cosmologies. 100 Although Euroamerican settlers did not
actively engage similar rituals of their own, by 1770 both groups relied “frequently” on
Indian-Euroamerican councils as a hybrid method for building “Mutual Peace and
welfare.” Euroamerican participation in Indian councils signified the adoption of Indian
reconciliation customs. Moreover, by describing stolen goods as only “taken,” and the
murders as “accidents,” the leaders removed all guilt. 101 The no-fault language also
indicated that the communities accepted a modicum of murder. John Penn’s hope from
two years earlier had born fruit, as Indians and Euroamericans employed a new common
language for conflict resolution. 102

Neither representative called for retribution or the punishment of anyone. As an

99 George Croghan, Journal, Pittsburgh, 1770, Cadwalder Family Papers, Croghan Papers, HSP.
100 White, Middle Ground, 345. White addresses the Algonquin rituals for forgiveness and the preservation of peace.
101 OED, entry for accidentally.
102 Charles Lukens to Lukens, August 20, 1770, Lukens-Lenox Papers, Land Office Papers, Charles Lukens, 1770-
1771, PSA; George Croghan, Journal, August 1, 1770, Croghan Papers, HSP; New York Colonial Documents, 8: 204-11.
accident, neither leader needed to impose European or Indian legal processes. Instead of an exchange of gifts, which might suggest guilt on the side of the giver, the leaders agreed that all “taken” property should be discreetly returned to a common pile where owners could retrieve their things. With no need for either leader to cover the graves of those “accidentally” killed, the communities moved past the event intact.\(^{103}\) For local Euroamericans and Indians, the willingness to use “councils for mutual peace” to absolve guilt, as opposed to specifying it, demonstrated a shared desire to sustain the interethnic community.

A similar account from 1771 demonstrates Indian and colonial officials grappling with cultural compromise to overlook incidental and rash murders. At a council in Philadelphia, Killbuck, a Delaware captain, offered to turn over an Indian who had killed a Euroamerican during a “quarrel” two years earlier. The assembly, however, stated bluntly that, “[i]t often happens by sudden accidents and Quarrels a Life is lost, and when this is proved on examination, and no premeditated ill-will or design was the cause of the Person’s Death, we should join in burying the deceased decently, and in Peace, and forget it.”\(^{104}\)

\(^{103}\) George Croghan, Journal, August 1, 1770, Croghan Papers, HSP; New York Colonial Documents, 8: 204-11; New York Colonial Documents, 8: 204-11; Taylor, *The Divided Ground*, 28-9 & 31. Describing a crime in terms of an “accident” to diffuse interethnic tension, is found in other official correspondence during this time, including by Thomas Gage who referenced crimes as “little Accidents” but explained they did not disrupt relations between the British and Indians. Gage to Hillsborough, July 7, 1770, CTG, 1:262.

\(^{104}\) Indian Council, May 8, 1771 & May 13, 1771, EAMID, 3:757-63. According to Richard White, Great Britain’s movement of interethnic murder into the British legal system, in part, ended the ability of the colonial leaders and Indians to negotiate and compromise in the middle ground. My research demonstrates more willingness on the part of both groups to compromise their cultural legal expectations and increasingly, in the early 1770s, attempt to bypass retaliation, sometimes even punishment, as a peacekeeping mechanism. White, *Middle Ground*, 343-4. Juliana Barr’s *Peace Came in the Form of a Woman*, Barr also demonstrates the manner in which interethnic crime, attacks, or captivities, created an opportunity for southwestern Indians and Spanish priests and traders to construct more
The desire to maintain local order through legal compromise continued after two independent interethnic assaults occurred in the autumn of 1771. An unknown band of Indians, likely Delaware, killed a “Woman and four small Children” near Greenbrier, and runaway indentured servant Mathew Haley rashly killed two Seneca. Fleeing servitude in the Susquehanna Valley, Haley crossed the Alleghenies and met a small group of Pennsylvania Seneca north of Hanna’s Town, who took him in. Despite their hospitality—giving him a tomahawk, moccasins, and food—Haley feared Indians in general and felt uneasy, possibly unsure if they had actually captured him or if he could leave them freely.\(^{105}\)

In both incidents, the response of local Euroamericans indicated a social distaste for interethnic violence and a move to mark the acts as isolated events, detached from the desires of the greater community. In evaluating the murders as isolated acts, locals tempered interethnic hostilities. Aware of how the community treated other killers, Haley did not expect Ohio Valley inhabitants to greet his murder with sympathy, and indeed he received no advocacy or protection. After the killings Haley went into hiding as a runaway servant with the Miller family near Redstone.\(^{106}\) Later he fled into the woods, expecting that when news of his murders circulated the locals would “hand him” to the Indians so that he might “meet the punishment he deserved.” Instead, after being discovered, the military held Haley at Fort Pitt before transporting him to the goal in productive relationships. Following the interpersonal bloodshed that defined the French and Indian War, Pontiac’s War and localized retaliations that followed into the late 1760s eastern Ohio Valley created a productive shared space from their interdependent neighborhoods. Violence stood to threaten the development of interethnic networks.


Likewise, following the Greenbrier deaths, no mob assembled to hunt down those Indians responsible and no retaliatory assault occurred. When representative of the British military Captain Charles Edmonston offered presents to cover the graves of the dead Indians, Guyasuta described their “Business” as “finished” and his people as “Contented,” only requesting traveling provisions for his entourage’s journey home. Edmonston did not ask Guyasuta to turn the guilty Indians over to any colonial authority. Instead Edmonston asked only “that you will fall on some method of curbing the Impetuosity of your young Men.”

Between 1768 and 1773, early eastern Ohio Valley Indian and Euroamerican settlers ended their participation in retaliatory violence, helping to avoid disunion between interdependent people. By classifying the motives of individual murders into three distinct categories, incidental, rash, and hate, Indians and Euroamericans formulated a shared, standardized response that allowed them to downplay those murders without ethnically charged motives. To maintain peace when murders did not fit neatly into excusable categories, Indians and Euroamerican settlers pretended they had occurred accidentally. In standardizing how both groups understood crimes and in ensuring swift self-policing among their members, Indian and Euroamerican settlers created rituals and a shared language that promoted local peace and diplomacy by 1771.

---

107 Arthur St. Clair to Joseph Shippen, Jr., September 24, 1771, PA, 4:437. Haley was moved to Bedford for his trial because St. Clair understood it would be too difficult to convince a judge to make the journey to Fort Pitt, not because of fear of insurrection or the inability to get a just trial.

108 “Speech of Kyashuta,” September, 10, 1771, EAID, 3:761-2. It should be noted that the Indians who attacked the Greenbrier settlement were not members of Keyashuta’s community. When Edmonston requested Keyashuta take charge of his people Edmonston did not know they were not people under his authority.
Getting away with Murder

Despite being separated from the frontier by over a hundred miles of mostly mountainous terrain, residents of the Susquehanna’s southern valley continued to dwell on memories of past violence that fueled their demand for retribution. Living in established towns with the local support of military enforcements and representatives in the Pennsylvania Assembly segments of the Susquehanna Valley’s population responded to interethnic crimes with additional violence and riotous jailbreaks. By supporting those who murdered Indians, the Susquehanna’s southern settlers sanctioned revenge for the Euroamerican blood shed during the French and Indian War and Pontiac’s War.

Part of the reason for the hatred of Indians was the desire to maintain the Susquehanna Valley as a Euroamerican space, free of Indians. The Susquehanna settlers were engaged in another simultaneous campaign to shape the political and legal landscape of the valley, as its freeholders and veterans launched uprisings designed to weaken the territory’s Pennsylvania Quaker leadership and expose corrupt colonial officials. Although their targets and reasoning differed, the expression of political dissatisfaction and marginalization that occurred in the Susquehanna took place in a period of general sporadic insurrection that included demonstrations against the 1765 Stamp Act and the 1768 Townshend Acts in urban centers like Philadelphia and Boston. Gangs like the Paxton Boys killed peaceful Indians as a symbolic attack on the Quakers who filled the Pennsylvania Assembly and a challenge to their pacifistic Indian
Community leaders organized mobs like the 1765, 1768, and 1769 Black Boys who turned on corrupt colonial agents and captured horse-packs and forts to protest Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan’s illicit gun trafficking. Even had eastern Ohio Valley settlers wanted to similarly engage in violence to overturn policy, their more fragile living situation prevented them from doing so.110

In the Susquehanna’s southern valley, the refusal to punish offenders demonstrated the community’s blatant disregard for Indian laws and policies. When local officials attempted to punish those who murdered Indians, large local mobs freed these Indian killers. In the winter of 1769, a year after vigilantes freed Fredrick Stump and John Ironcutter from prison for the massacre of ten friendly Indians, a similar crowd freed William White and John Ingman. William White, a notoriously violent veteran of the French and Indian war, migrated from the Susquehanna’s South Branch to Cedar Creek in the meadows along the eastern footholds of the Allegheny Mountains. Not long after settling, White and a neighbor’s Irish indentured servant, John Ingman, saw two Indians while hunting in Augusta, Virginia and, without provocation, killed both of them. Shortly thereafter, local authorities arrested the two men for “murder” and jailed them in Winchester, Virginia. Despite their guilt, “a body of seventy armed men,” who had served in the provincial army with White and now lived as his neighbors, “broke open the prison and released the culprits.”111

The town of Winchester rejoiced in the killing of Indians and the release of these Indian hunters: “The women half dressed, were seen

---

109 Kenny, Peaceable Kingdoms, 80-2.
110 Silver, Our Savage Neighbors, 178-90.
111 “Legislative Acts/Legal Proceedings,” December 9, 1769, Providence Gazette, Providence, Rhode Island.
running from house to house and calling out, 'Well done, brave fellows, good luck to you brave boys.'”

Fearing recapture, William White crossed over the Alleghenies where he continued a life of troublemaking and murder until Indians “Tomahawked, scalped, and cut him nearly all to in pieces.”

Ingman returned to his master, William Crawford, and a year later joined Crawford’s slave Samuel Jacobs in committing another “unprovoked…act of villainy” when the men drunkenly killed Indian Stephen, a member of the interethnic community near Stewart’s Crossing. Ingman was captured and returned to prison only to escape again.

Prior to 1774, eastern Ohio Valley settlers identifying one of their own as a troublemaker sought to neutralize the offender, quickly exiling or incarcerating him before he had a chance to disturb the peace. The experience of James Smith further illustrates the difference between the Ohio Valley community’s aggressive self-regulation and the anarchic violence among the southern Susquehanna settlers. Smith, a French and Indian War veteran and an Indian captive from an established middling family near Carlisle, was regarded as a regional hero for leading the Black Boys in 1765 and 1768 and assisting in the rescue of a second generation of Black Boys in 1769. The Black Boys’ attacks on and subsequent self-imposed regulation of pack trains would have

---

113 Lewis Bennett to Draper, June 30, 1847, Interviews of Adult Children of the Frontier, Pittsburgh and Northwest Virginia Papers, DM, ser. e, vol. 11.
115 Doddridge, Notes, LCP, 186-7.
struck a positive chord with eastern Ohio Valley settlers who also wanted to end
Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan’s munitions trafficking to the western Indians.\textsuperscript{116}
However, because the company orchestrated its illicit dealings by hiding the contraband
in shipments of Indian presents, the Black Boys’ attacks threatened to disrupt diplomacy
and placed frontier settlers in danger. The Ohio Valley’s withholding of support to the
Black Boys in 1768 made sense for a region of fledging settlements that required
peacekeeping with the Western Indians; presents transported in the convoys they attacked
had helped offset the Stump-Ironcutter massacre in the Susquehanna Valley just two
months earlier.\textsuperscript{117}

Though Ohio Valley inhabitants did not participate in the Susquehanna’s unrest,
they recognized that they were more threatened by the actions in the Susquehanna than
were the actors themselves. In 1769 when the Black Boys’ leader James Smith attempted
to pass over the Allegheny Mountains to improve land on the Youghiogheny River, locals
apprehended him. The mob charged Smith for the Black Boys’ assaults and
(erroneously) with murder for the death of one of his companions during the civil
arrest.\textsuperscript{118}

\textsuperscript{116} Chester to Col Wilkins, March, 1768, and Croghan to Sir William, Fort Pitt, March, 12 1765, Croghan Papers, HSP; Joseph Dobson to Baynton Wharton and Morgan, May 11, 1768, Joseph Dobson to Baynton Wharton and Morgan June 18, 1768, Joseph Dobson to Baynton Wharton and Morgan, October 7, 1768, all located in Correspondence of Baynton and Wharton, BWM Papers, reel 3, DLAR.
\textsuperscript{117} Croghan to Gage, February 17, 1768 and Chester to Wilkins, March 1768, Croghan Papers, HSP; Vaughan, “Frontier Banditti and the Indians” in \textit{Roots of American Racism}, 92.
As had occurred in earlier instances, over three hundred men, previous Black Boy participants from Carlisle and the Potomac, organized a jailbreak for Smith. One account warned that “all the people of the [Carlisle] will risk their lives” to “rescue” Smith. Others stated that if authorities took Smith to the court in Philadelphia, the “best freeholders” of the Susquehanna “would enter his bail… with their fire arms.” Smith calmed the crowd, and a few months later, the court at Carlisle found him innocent. The most important detail was one of absence: no eastern Ohio valley settlers had any part in protecting or attempting to free Smith. Disorder and unruliness are synonymous, if not expected from places called “frontier” or “backcountry,” leading to the temptation to inaccurately link the disorder in the Susquehanna with the Ohio valley settlers. However, as this account shows, it was those from the supposedly more settled part of the commonwealth, not the eastern Ohio valley settlers, imposing mob justice.

Settlers on the western side of the Alleghenies did not charge east over the mountains to release criminals from jail. Quite the opposite: Ohio settlers pursued and punished offenders to protect their occupation of the eastern valley and maintain peaceful relations with their local Indian supporters. According to the executive council at Virginia, Euroamericans living west of the Alleghenies occupied the land “in opposition” to colonial law but with the approval of the local Indian communities. Indians had “even

---

119 James Smith, An account of the remarkable occurrences in the life and travels of Colonel James Smith (Late a citizen of Bourbon County, Kentucky) : during his captivity with the Indians, in the years 1755,'56, '57, '58, & '59 (Lexington: James Bradford, 1799), 121-7.
121 The story of Indian haters breaking Indian killers out of jail is a trope in many of the local histories written during the nineteenth century. I have found no record of a jailbreak involving any Indian hunter from the Ohio Valley.
showed a willingness to sell part of their property to his majesty’s subjects to accommodate them with lands on moderate terms as the subjects increased in numbers.”

The council also recognized that the settlers’ need to maintain “the friendship and good humor of the Indians” fostered local peacekeeping efforts. When western Indians responded to the Fort Stanwix Treat with “hostility,” rather than asserting a right to the land the majority of inhabitants retreated from the region until tensions diminished. As early as 1769, George Washington rebuked rumors that Ohio Valley settlers planned to form a “Militia” to retaliate against Indian “disturbances” near Fort Pitt. Dubbing it an “Idle story,” Washington stated that overall, “the Redstone People … (and I have seen two or three from that settlement) …. wish for nothing more than Peace & Quietness…”

Eastern Ohio Valley settlers had little choice but to join Indians in building a cooperative and respectful legal culture, as they lacked the military support or manpower to survive the cycle of retaliation that would have occurred if murders went unpunished. In 1767 when notorious Indian killer John Ryan murdered a Delaware chief, Fort Pitt commander William Murray warned inhabitants “they might expect the Indians would take Revenge for the loss of their chief and as their [land] usurpations were Lawless and

122 Croghan to Samuel Wharton, April 14, 1771, Croghan Papers, HSP. The date given on this document is 1768 but the information contained with in it illustrates that it was written three years after the 1768 treaty at Fort Stanwix, meaning 1771.
123 Council, August 8, 1769, EJCCV, 6:327.
124 Council, August 8, 1769, EJCCV, 6:327.
Unjust, they could not expect any Assistance from his Garrison.”

After a band of young Indians harassed “Cattle and Horses” in 1769, the military warned local inhabitants “that no injury or violence be offere’d to the Indians…[I]f [the Euroamericans] wantonly [drew] on a quarrel with the Indians, they [would] not be supported by Government.”

Thomas Gage repeated the same sentiment in response to the British military’s exit from Fort Pitt, saying, “If the Colonists will afterwards force the Savages into Quarrels by using them ill, let them feel the Consequences, we shall be out of the Scrape.”

In the eastern Ohio Valley, the number of documented violent events in which at least one person died consistently decreased: six in 1769, three in 1770, two in 1771, three in 1772, and one in 1773. In this five-year period, only fifteen violent events ended in murder, and only a few settlement raids occurred. Indians and Euroamericans committed homicide nearly equally, as Euroamericans killed Indians seven times compared to eight the other way. Most telling, only two of these events led to retaliatory violence.

To maintain order, settlements did not welcome banditti and warned out individuals deemed “inconsiderate” to the peace and well-being of the larger community before their trouble-making could escalate. In one instance, a group of Monongahela men lynched a man, referred to only as T.H. (likely Thomas Hughes, the brother of Indian killer Jesse Hughes), “who robbed and plundered wherever he went.” The mob

---

127 August 8, 1769, Virginia Executive Council, EJCCV, 6:326-7.
128 Gage to Barrington, March 4, 1772, CTG, 2:600-601.
tied T.H. up to a pole and marched him to Fort Pitt, where he was shot for his crimes. In 1772, a Great Lakes trader named Ramsey killed eight Mississauga near Niagara. Ramsey claimed he had killed mostly women and children in self-defense, but his “bad Character” preceded him. Because settlers had seen to Ramsey’s “banish[ment]” from trading in the Ohio Valley, Colonel Gage determined the murders were acts committed out of “Wantonness and Cruelty.”

In all, 1768 to 1773 marked a period of peace in the eastern Ohio Valley. “Alarms” of disunion between Indians and Euroamericans “blew over” without a disturbance to the greater interethnic community. Of the fifteen violent events that led to at least one death documented during these five years only, one occurred in retaliation for another. Together, local Euroamerican and Indian communities mitigated crime, especially murder, and punishments in manners that did not undermine one another’s sovereignty or threaten each other’s occupation of the valley. Murder alone no longer had the ability to unravel the interethnic community. After “several horrid Murders” of Indians occurred on the Ohio Valley in 1770, likely only two, George Morgan waited cautiously for the Indians to interpret the events before he could predict how they might respond. Local leaders seemingly accepted that the blame for the murders remained with

---

131 Windsor Brown to George Morgan, September 23, December 12, 1770, Correspondence of George Morgan, BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR; Albert, The Frontier Forts of Western Pennsylvania, vol. 2:122.
the dead Indians who had previously “misbehaved.” After a group of Euroamerican migrants scalped several Indians, Shawnee leader Cornstalk questioned Alexander McKee with the same tone, desiring to know the motive before interpreting the acts as war and retaliating.

Indian and Euroamerican settlers preferred to categorize murders in terms of incidental, rash, or accidental in order to cabin violence rather than risk damaging their ability to depend on one another across ethnic lines. In 1771 after inhabitants at Redstone rashly killed a Delaware in 1771, one Delaware leader informed military officials “not to be uneasy about it…that they knew there was Foolish ungovernable People Amongst us as well as them….”

Outside the eastern Ohio Valley, however, leaders representing the western Indians and European colonists recognized no difference between one murder and the next. From east of the Alleghenies in Fredrick, Virginia, George Washington expressed frustration at those who tried to determine the cause of interethnic murders on the South Branch and Potomac Rivers; rather than inquired into the details of each, Washington summed them all up as “Murder (for it deserves no other name)…” While local east Ohio Indians made strides in forgiving interethnic murders, Indian leaders in the western Ohio Country kept the murder of Indians, including those Indians who refused to live

132 George Morgan to an unnamed Surveyor in the Illinois, June 6, 1774, August 30, 1770 Correspondence of George Morgan, BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR; William Johnson to Gage, August 22, 1770, Sir William Johnson Papers, 12:849-50.
133 White, Middle Ground, 359.
134 Robert Callender to Gov. Penn, April 15, 1771, PA, 4:411-2.
under their rule, tallied as a list of growing insults committed against their people. Even
after several years of peaceful interethnic local relations, Killbuck, a captain of the Ohio
Country Delawares, could not foresee Euroamericans and Indians maintaining that state
for long. In a 1771 speech to the governors of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia,
Killbuck claimed that Indians and Euroamericans could not live together, as
Euroamerican settlement had triggered only “Quarrels” and “People have been killed on
both sides.”

Instead of restraint, Ohio Delaware leader Pipe threatened retaliation for
the murder of any Indian, asserting that all acts of interethnic violence made his people
uneasy and ready to strike.

Outsiders to the eastern Ohio Valley represented the greatest danger to its peaceful
relations, as visitors and travelers had not undergone the same ethnogenesis as the
inhabitants and thus could not share in the regional vocabulary of symbols and common
meanings created by residents through everyday interaction. When hunters,
predominantly from Virginia, took advantage of offseason hunting in the valley, they did
so without regard to local sustainability practices and without appreciating local Indian
and Euroamerican reciprocal understandings of communal foodstuff. Moreover,
outsiders did not have the same immediate need to maintain peace as those people who
lived in the eastern Ohio valley and could instead pursue their own short-term agendas.

136 “Speech of Killbuck,” Croghan Papers, HSP.
138 Stephen Aron, “‘Rights in the Woods’ on the Trans-Appalachian Frontier” in Contact Points, Cayton & Teute ed.,
188-9.
As a result, outsiders committed the majority of hate murders; in eleven of the fifteen documented violent events, and in all but one of the settlement raids, either the victim or the perpetrator lived outside the valley or had only recently migrated to the region.

Situated between Virginia and Indian territories, Virginians, Shawnee, Seneca, and Cherokee frequented the valley to hunt, make their way south for trade, travel to Indian councils, or make war. (The Shawnee in particular even crossed the river to unsuccessfully offer the Delaware a war belt and solicit their help in attacking the Euroamerican settlers).\textsuperscript{139} Men from Virginia and Maryland made their way into western Virginia through the Great Valley and other passes to hunt in the Greenbrier, and after 1772 to scout for land throughout Virginia’s southwest frontier. Although the events that transpired when hunters or land scouts encountered Indians were often not recorded, disaster could unfold quickly. A small party of outsiders from Virginia had killed Delaware Jacob Daniel, an integral member of the early Ohio valley neighborhood and family.\textsuperscript{140}

Indian outsiders passing through were particularly prone to create violence. According to Croghan, the Ohio Seneca caused the greatest mischief, “passing and re-passing with intentions…to pick a quarrel” with either Euroamericans or Indian inhabitants of the eastern Ohio Valley.\textsuperscript{141} During the same year of Daniel’s death, bands of Senecas on their way to war with the Cherokee “robbed” houses and “stole” horses

\textsuperscript{139} John Campbell to George Morgan, March 20, 1768, Correspondence of George Morgan, BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR.
\textsuperscript{141} Croghan to Gage, November 1771, Croghan Papers, HSP.
from the most western edges of Euroamerican settlements during a week of raiding.\footnote{142} During a similar event the Seneca attacked a predominantly German settlement on Brush Creek and “killed or captured” at least eighteen settlers.\footnote{143} In another instance, Mitchel, a Seneca, shot at a man name William Elliot “two or three Times.” The indiscriminate assault on settlements, property, and people suggest that the Seneca attacked Euroamericans as an act of hate. The Ohio Seneca “struck such a Terror” that those “Women & Children” living near Fort Pitt turned to it for shelter as the region’s only fortification. Others wished to avoid conflict altogether and fled the region.\footnote{144} In the summer of 1770, two men arrived in the valley to “raise a crop of corn,” but an Indian hunting party robbed at least one and killed the other. In autumn of the same year, “a party of Ohio Cherokee pillaged Virginian hunters of “300 deerskins, some horses a rifle gun, blankets, and kettle” and attacked at least one homestead.\footnote{145} The next spring, Ohio Shawnee fell on hunters and took over a thousand hides from them.\footnote{146} During the subsequent autumn, Mathew Haley, moved by fear and a lack of cultural knowledge, tomahawked two Seneca men who had given him safe shelter. At least at first, the boy’s sense of guilt led him to urge his own hanging.\footnote{147}

\textit{Outsiders participated in nearly every hate murder committed in the eastern Ohio Valley. Prior to 1774, settlers of the eastern Ohio Valley had no love for Indian hunters-}
haters, only fear. An act of Indian hate paralleled Euroamerican hate murders as an “Act of open Hostility.” Both Indians and Euroamericans scalped and mutilated bodies to evoke terror and declare war against an entire people. If not handled adequately, hate murders contained the greatest potential of pulling a region into warfare. Indian haters, like William White and John Ingman, lived roving lives. Unlike other one-time squatters, White and Ingman owed their transience to their status as outlaws. Indian hunters lived wanted by authorities and disliked by neighbors at the fringe of Ohio Valley settlements. Despite their small numbers, Indian haters often killed on multiple occasions and directed the valley’s most brutal assaults. The gruesome crimes committed by relatively few men have created a false perception that a greater portion of the Ohio Valley population supported, if not committed, hate murders, when few actually did. The violent assaults of Indian haters also attracted a great deal of attention because Indian haters often targeted those Indians whose lives were most visibly intermixed with Euroamerican society in the valley, like Jacob Delaware and his family and the elderly Delaware Joseph Wipey.

Exemplifying the Ohio Valley’s small population of Indian haters in the early 1770s, John Ryan, a suspected Black Boy also known as “Crow” Ryan, rose to infamy

---

148 Arthur Campbell to William Preston, Preston Collection, DM, ser. qq, DLAR.
150 Montgomery, The Frontier Forts of western Pennsylvania, 1:230. In “The Name of War,” Jill Lepore argues that the murder of John Sassamon is symbolic of the murder of all Indians who lived successfully as members of both Indian and European communities. The murder of these Indians “signaled the failure of the English and Native peoples to live together peacefully, the gradual loss of Native political autonomy, and the eventual extinction of the Massachusetts Language.” The difference between the Sassamon’s murder, leading up to King’s Phillip’s War, and those which led to violence in the Ohio Valley is that Ohio Valley agitators came from outside the valley’s norms, with outsiders acting as individuals in attempting to destroy the interethnic neighborhood. Lepore, The Name of War, 43.
for murdering Indians throughout the 1760s.¹⁵¹ West of the Alleghenies, it was popularly believed that Ryan had killed at least “Sixteen” Delaware and Mingo Indians on the frontiers of Augusta country.” Ryan evaded justice by absconding further into the backcountry and crossing the Alleghenies from Augusta before heading to Redstone and then Greenbrier before finally removing to a settlement near Hacker’s Creek. Ryan continued to take advantage of his freedom by murdering Indians as he made his way deeper into the Ohio Valley.¹⁵²

In 1765, Ryan shot a Delaware Chief, Captain Peter, during a public dispute over rum.¹⁵³ Ryan’s subsequent Ohio Valley assaults escalated from a general disregard for Indian life to acts that publicly challenged the new multiethnic social order and threatened participants. In 1769 Ryan teamed up with Henry Judah, a man who had similarly murdered multiple Indians, and together the two men set out on a campaign of slaughter in retaliation for the Indian assault on livestock in the Greenbrier and the subsequent drowning of a woman. After Ryan and Judah killed two unnamed Indians who had set out to visit Euroamerican acquaintances on the Cheat and Ohio Rivers, the Indian community required a statement declaring that the murders were an act of Judah and Ryan alone rather than a reflection of general Euroamerican hostility toward Indians.¹⁵⁴

Finally, Ryan and a man named Eli Morgan killed an Indian named Cat Eyes, which escalated into an elaborate production in which he placed the Indian sitting upright in a canoe with a corn cob protruding from his mouth. The men then set the canoe adrift on the populated Monongahela River, creating a public spectacle through which Ryan attempted to provoke violence and fear from Indian and Euroamerican spectators. Ryan had not simply killed Cat Eyes, but by displaying him dishonorably, Ryan sent a message to Europeans and Indians alike that he contested the very fabric of their interethnic neighborhood and meant to destroy it.\textsuperscript{155}

Ryan and his men did not represent the only outsiders attempting to provoke war between the Indian and European settlers through murder. Indian haters repeated the message again in 1773 when William Hacker, Jacob Scott, and Elijah Runner murdered Bald Eagle, an Indian who participated in both Indian and Euroamerican communities alike. Hacker’s group staged Bald Eagle’s lifeless body similarly, lodging a Johnnycake in his mouth and sending him down the busy Cheat River. Hacker’s group, however, advanced the vignette and strengthened the message by scalping Bald Eagle. When settler Sarah Province came upon the mutilated body she buried the Indian in order to hide the mutilations. Local settlers informing the Indians of Bald Eagle’s murder claimed to have buried him out of Christian respect, a falsehood they hoped would prevent the region from falling into retaliatory war.\textsuperscript{156}

\textsuperscript{155} McWhorter, Connelley, and Maclean, \textit{The Border Settlers of Northwestern Virginia}, 125.
\textsuperscript{156} Lewis Bennet to Draper, December 18, 1848, Interviews of Adult Children of the Frontier, Pittsburgh and Northwest Virginia Papers, DM, ser. e, vol. 11; Wallace A. Brice \textit{History of Fort Wayne from the earliest known accounts of this point to the present period embracing an extended view of the Aboriginal Tribes of the northwest}, 284
Ohio Country Indians began killing the Euroamerican traders and settlers among them. In one instance, a group of Ohio Seneca had fallen on a “young man” and “murdered, scalped; literally cut to pieces, and then mangled members of his body.” So the murder would not go missed, the Indians then “stuck the [dismembered limbs] on the bushes.” As Sarah Province and her settlement had done in hiding inflammatory evidence, when Delaware leader White Eyes found the body, he “collected the scattered limbs” and “buried them.” The following day, the Seneca returned and on seeing their warning silenced and their efforts to provoke violence thwarted, they dug up the young man’s limbs and “severed [them] into smaller pieces” and hung the pieces of flesh from trees at a “greater distances from each other.”

Despite the Ohio Indians’ attempts to instigate a Euroamerican settler war, White Eyes had a greater determination to conceal their message. The Delaware leader recognized the resource pressures that the recent population surge had caused for his people, and thus, like White Eyes understood the population increase as a long-term problem. White Eyes, however, saw further Indian-Euroamerican adaptation and coexistence as the solution, and adopted Christianity as part of an acceptance of a Euroamerican lifestyle. Minister David Jones reported that White

---

157 Alexander Scott Withers and Lyman Copeland Draper, Chronicles of Border Warfare: Or, a History of the Settlement by the Whites, of Northwestern Virginia, and of the Indian Wars and Massacres, in that Section of the State (Cincinnati: Stewart & Kidd Company, 1895), 151.
Eyes “saw that their way of living would not answer much longer-game grew scarce-they could not much longer pretend to live by hunting, but must farm, &c.”

Returning to the area, White Eyes collected the flesh and buried the dismembered body once more, this time in a “more secured place.”

Men like Ryan urged others to commit violence by fueling existing fear and reigniting anger. Indian haters subscribed to a philosophy of interracial distrust, describing Indian members of the local communities as “gnats” who “would make lice” and warning that interethnic relations endangered the Euroamerican settlements. Indian haters played off growing anxieties of a new war supposedly plotted by Ohio Indians, undermining peace by reminding people of the bloodshed rampant during the French and Indian War and Pontiac’s War.

They soon had an opportunity to spread interethnic hate, when later in 1773 Ohio Shawnees raided the Stroud family home on Elk Creek and killed the seven Stroud children and their mother. After finding his slain family, it took Adam Stroud little effort to convince men from nearby Hacker’s Creek to form a posse for retaliation.

The inhabitants at Hacker’s Creek included an atypical band of squatters and Indian haters, including outlaws William White, William Hacker, and Jesse Hughes. The men had founded Hacker’s Creek as a small splinter group that had left the Buckhannon Creek settlement. Earlier in life, Hacker and Hughes had experienced the suffering inflicted by Indian raids. Hacker’s first wife had been killed and his Aunt Mary stabbed.

---

159 Heckewelder, A Narrative of the Mission of the United Brethren Among the Delaware and Mohegan Indians, 132-3.
seven times, scalped, and her body thrown over the family’s fence by Indians. Jesse Hughes lost his parents in the Indian Wars of the 1750s and 60s and as an adult lost a daughter when Indians captured and killed her.¹⁶⁰

Like White, Hacker and Hughes murdered Indians. Both men lived at the margins of Euroamerican settlement, roving hunters disconnected to any permanent group of people and more transient than even common squatters. Instead of taking up land to farm, both men met ends by exchanging wild game for local farmers’ produce. Jesse Hughes stood out even in the rough frontier culture. Locals described Hughes as “profane and desperately wicked,” with a quick, “fierce…uncontrollable…temper,” and a strict adherence to witchcraft. In a culture that took pride in community work, Hughes did not labor. “Hughes had eyes like a rattlesnake” according to reports of settlers who knew him. As they did with other Indian haters or social undesirables like hoarders, settlers described Hughes with animal characteristics, not qualities befitting a man or more importantly a member of their community.¹⁶¹

Echoing the other half-man-half-animal frontier fables, Hughes’s neighbors deliberately presented him, and other Indian haters, as more animal than man. Owing to the mixed composition of the backcountry settlements and the many outsiders moving through, settlers created a system by which they could systematically judge the character of an outsider by his physical appearance.¹⁶² In the instance of Hughes, neighbors

¹⁶⁰ W.G. Hacker to Draper, May 18, 1891, in McWhorter, Connelley, and Maclean, The Border Settlers of Northwestern Virginia, 370-1.
¹⁶¹ McWhorter, Connelley, and Maclean, The Border Settlers of Northwestern Virginia, 34.
¹⁶² Perkins, Border Life, 87-90.
emphasized his difference by stating that he did not dress like them but instead
camouflaged himself into nature like an animal and dyed his clothing “in the bark of the
chestnut oak; he would wear no other color…..” Importantly, settlers did not suggest
Indian haters had culturally “digressed” from European to Indian, although outsiders to
the valley denigrated settlers by calling them “white savages” for their reliance on Indian
dress, tools, or lifestyles.163 Instead, Indian haters had lost their humanity entirely and
transformed into animals.

Through these depictions, early western Pennsylvania and Virginia settlers set a
clear cultural boundary between their behavior, views, and overall lifestyles and those of
Indian haters. This truth confronted even notable war hero Samuel Brady. During the
American Revolution, Samuel Brady’s ability to hunt Indians transitioned into a
necessary military skill. Stories elevated Brady to local folk hero with claims that he
saved the lives of women and children, if not entire settlements, single handedly. While
settlers might have required the brute force Brady could offer and even provided him
shelter when it suited them, his history as an Indian killer overshadowed his status as a
hero. When not directly speaking to Brady and men like him, locals referred to the Indian
haters as “devils” who did little more than “search of opportunities to Knock up Indian
Fights.” When Brady asked for the hand of Lucy Swearengen, her father explained that

163 McConnell, A Country Between, 260; Axtel “White Indians”
he saw Brady as a roving outsider who would never know the niceties of respectable people. Brady “was not fit to raise a family that his business was to fight Indians.”

Unlike settlers in the Susquehanna Valley, in the eastern Ohio Valley settlers ostracized and punished Indian haters, forcing them to hide their misdeeds or face punishment. Hacker and Hughes attempted to keep their murders a secret and killed “Indian[s] on the sly.” In one incident, Hacker confided that he had killed an “old Indian” after which he cut the man’s stomach open and filled the cavity with sand in order to “[sink] him” in a creek. Without a body, no one would realize a crime had taken place, and neither Indians nor Euroamericans would demand justice.

When a gang of eighteen Virginians murdered Joseph Wipey in 1774, “The Body was discovered hid in a small run of Water and covered with Stones.” When the assistant to the Governor of Pennsylvania, Arthur St. Clair, found Wipey’s body, he attempted to bring charges against the offenders, but the body’s disappearance prevented the arrest of the gang’s leaders, James Cooper and John Hinkston.

Like the group’s previous indiscriminate killings, instead of tracking down the Shawnee assailants who had killed the Stroud family the five man Hacker’s Creek gang assaulted the Bulltown Delaware families who had long integrated themselves into the

164 John McDonald to Draper, April 7, 1845, Interviews of Adult Children of the Frontier, Pittsburgh and Northwest Virginia Papers, DM, ser. e, vol. 11.
165 George Washington to John Armstrong, August 18, 1769 and George Washington to John Armstrong, August 24, 1769 both in The Papers of George Washington, colonial series, vol 8:241-3. G. Hacker to Draper, May 18, 1891, in McWhorter, Connelley, and Maclean, The Border Settlers of Northwestern Virginia, 370-1. Arguably one of the most well known instances of a perpetrator’s attempt to hide a murder and body mutilation occurred in the Stump-Ironcutter massacre where the bodies were scalped and the perpetrators attempted to hide the body under ice, McConnell, A Country Between, 244-5. Beyond the eastern Ohio Valley, more examples exist of Euroamericans hiding the bodies of Indians they had killed. Arthur St. Clair to Governor Penn, May 29, 1774, AA 1:286; Griffin, American Leviathan, 100.
regional neighborhood. After gruesomely killing men, women, and children, the Indian haters attempted to hide their crime by dumping the bodies in the Little Kanawha. Proceeding back to Hacker’s Creek, the mob claimed to not have “seen an Indian in their absence” which failed to convince the settlers who questioned them. 167 Unable to contain the actions of outsiders, the settlers expected regional repercussions from the deeds of the small group of outsiders. 1773 marked a transition in which frontier settlers in western Pennsylvania and Virginia waited for a renewal of interethnic war.

Outsiders eventually ripped open the tenuous seams that had bound the eastern Ohio Valley peoples together, pulling them into a war in 1774. The interethnic violence that followed will be discussed more in the next chapter. It is again important to emphasize that hostility, hate, and murder did not exist as inevitable features of the valley in the preceding years between 1768 and 1773, and instead Indian and Euroamerican settlers acted as agents of their own determination in choosing to coexist. Both groups represented segments of preexisting populations who had made moved into the valley. The composite group of mainly Delaware and Mingo Indians represented displaced individuals who had not chosen to join larger Iroquois-allied communities in the Ohio Country. The Euroamerican refugee population, with the labor of enslaved and free blacks, had consciously chosen to begin new lives and establish a new frontier. Both groups had abandoned culturally similar population centers as a means of subverting

political and economic marginalization—in the case of Euroamericans, more direct oversight by a cadre of land speculating colonial officials, and for Indians domination by the Iroquois. The relatively small population of subaltern Euroamericans and Indians found at least temporary sanctuary in interethnic coexistence in a region rich in natural resources. For peoples shaped by the common experience of nearly two decades of localized violence, the early eastern Ohio Valley represented an experiment and the deployment of new survival strategies that were dependent on peace.

In order to protect both stability and their individual geopolitical legitimacy, the valley’s people negotiated a shared working legal and social culture. Respecting each other’s preexisting legal cultures and sovereignty over their own people, the eastern Ohio Valley settlers set forth a three-prong vernacular law which sought to avert retaliatory violence and made good faith attempts to punish those who committed ethnically charged murder or attempted to disrupt amity.

The mutual will and work of Indian and Euroamerican settlers in the eastern Ohio Valley ushered in a cycle of mutual tranquility and peaceful interethnic relations that replaced the norm of violent reprisal in the Susquehanna from which many had fled. For half a decade Indians and Euroamericans participated in a process of ethnogenesis, transformative cultural and legal compromise, and the formation of a frontier exchange.
In 1773 the Pennsylvania Assembly received a petition from settlers in the eastern Ohio Valley. Fearing a “melancholy Scene of Blood and Desolation” with “the approach of an Indian War,” settlers requested the British military station twenty-five to thirty troops at Fort Pitt and construct a new garrison. Indians and Euroamericans alike recognized the construction of a fort as “warlike Preparations,” and thus, citing the “prevailing Harmony” between the Indian nations and Great Britain, Governor Richard Penn refused the request.\textsuperscript{168}

Despite what seemed like a well-established peace, since 1768 officials in the West had consistently relayed unfounded worries of a general Indian war to the Pennsylvania Assembly. As of 1773, no war had occurred, so the governor and Pennsylvania Assembly dismissed the most recent frontier petitions as yet more false alarms. Penn’s inaction resulted from his ignorance of the ways in which Pennsylvania and Virginia officials had worn thin the peace constructed and preserved by the eastern Ohio Valley Indian and Euroamerican settlers. The actions of speculators worried Shawnee, Seneca, Cherokee, and other western and southern Indians, triggering this violence. Between spring and summer of 1774, the number of acts of interethnic violence had led Sir William Johnson to write that confrontations “were indeed so many & increased so fast that they alone would be sufficient to bring on a War….\textsuperscript{169}” Fear of a general Indian war lingered over the Euroamerican and Indian settlers of the Ohio Valley.


\textsuperscript{169} Johnson to Gage, July 4, 1774, Sir William Johnson Papers, 12:1114-6.
Changes in imperial policy made in Britain provoked land speculators into a desperate effort to procure Indian land grants which could then be secured by surveys and colonial land warrants. By the 1760s, caution and the containing of settlement had replaced Great Britain’s expansionist drive. British North American port cities and Caribbean holdings thrived as financially sustainable colonies. With debts incurred by the French and Indian War still unpaid, the risk of spurring a new Indian war outweighed the potential for profits that might come from the seizure of new western land. The vast majority of British statesmen, already in power and able to rest on the laurels of old conquests and fortunes, viewed further imperial expansion as a threat to the economic advancements already enjoyed by the empire. Moreover, the Crown government feared developing a reputation for taking land by conquest and thereby incurring the preemptive strikes of France and/or Spain. In North America, for all intents and purposes, imperial policy had ended.170

The Crown’s effort to safeguard profitable, pre-existing settlements and end expansion in North America butted up against the agendas of land speculators and their allied governments in Pennsylvania and Virginia. This point is often overlooked when discussing frontier events between 1768 and 1774 and instead the aims of speculative frontier officials are ascribed to the British government. Historians must divide the goals of both groups and contextualize these aims to understand the events that followed and their driving forces and motivations. In the face of urban riots, the Crown repealed the

1765 Stamp Act, a decision whose ramifications affected colonial officials, large merchant-land speculation outfits, western Indians, and local eastern Ohio Valley Indian and Euroamerican settlers. The Crown’s inability to increase revenue through the collection of taxes initiated a push to reduce Great Britain’s North American expenditures by maintaining the Proclamation Lane of 1763 and withdrawing with the military in the backcountry.

From across the Atlantic Ocean, officials viewed the Pennsylvania and Virginia backcountry as unsupportive of Great Britain’s mercantile goals. Owing to the distance and expense, shipping raw materials from the interior colonies to transatlantic ports proved more costly than profitable, with finished goods performing little better. According to George Croghan “[m]any” officials in England and Ireland argued that backcountry inhabitants did not purchase European goods in significant enough numbers to justify the Crown continuing to ship them. The Pennsylvania and Virginia frontier represented the exact type of risky lost cause that the home government had begun to avoid. As a result of Britain’s shifting objectives, over the next three years, Great Britain withdrew western troops from Fort Pitt and considered abandoning the Ohio and Illinois country altogether.

For men like George Croghan, who focused their attempts at economic mobility on trade and large land speculation, the change in the Crown’s frontier policy proved disastrous. After the Board of Trade “reform[ed] the Indian Department” by relegating

---

171 Croghan to Samuel Wharton, April 14, 1768, Croghan Papers, HPS.
trade contracts and diplomatic oversight of American Indians to the relevant individual colonies, the Pennsylvania Assembly refused to continue paying the exorbitant costs for Indian gifts to Croghan and his associates at Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan, instead contracting Franks and Company to fulfill their needs.\(^{172}\) Additionally, the reduction of troops at Fort Pitt hindered Croghan’s ability to enforce trade and settlement policies in his interest.\(^{173}\) Croghan’s oversight of and influence with regional Indians as an agent and merchant trader drastically decreased, threatening his ability to secure the twenty million acres granted to him and the Grand Ohio Company by the Six Nations. Although the Ohio Indians occupying these lands contested his claims, Croghan responded by having the Indian land surveyed and sold to speculators, all the while encouraging a new, predominantly Virginian migration to the region.

Croghan’s schemes to control western land threatened the geopolitical sovereignty of Indians living in the Ohio Country and along the western borders of Pennsylvania, Virginia, and the Carolinas. The royal reform of the Indian Department and the Crown’s rejection of much of the Fort Stanwix Treaty ignited a series of reactions among colonial officials, merchants, and speculators as well as western Indians and new migrants, all of whom were interested parties in frontier land. The ripple of consequences battered the peace enjoyed by the preexisting interethnic neighborhoods of the eastern Ohio Valley. Ultimately, the overlapping conflicts transformed the process by which groups claimed control over land. No longer about securing the approval of a

\(^{173}\) Guy Johnson to Gage, June 16, 1768, William Johnson to Gage, July 20, 1768, Sir William Johnson Papers, 12:525-7 & 552-53.
sovereign body, acquisition switched to seizure by conquest. By 1774 ploys for land destabilized the peace constructed by eastern Ohio Valley settlers and engulfed the Ohio Valley backcountry in all-out war.¹⁷⁴

Schemes: Creating the Need for a New Government 1769 to 1773

Immediately preceding adjournment of the conference that signed the 1768 Treaty at Fort Stanwix, the Board of Trade made known its disapproval of the excessive private land grants enjoyed by superintendent of Indian Affairs Sir William Johnson, his agent Croghan, and the merchant-speculators the two men represented. Croghan’s personal land grants, amounting to over a half a million acres, and the Grand Ohio Company’s claim, which had grown from 2,500,000 acres to 7,000,000 acres and eventually 20,000,000 acres, all waited for royal approval. Despite his thriving fur trade business, Croghan found himself cash poor, from debt incurred from land purchases, and wanted by the law for his inability to pay back those debts. Croghan had attempted to rebound by prematurely selling portions of the land grant, “one hundred thousand acres to some Virginian gentlemen at Five pounds sterling per hundred acres,” ten times more than his purchase price.¹⁷⁵ While Croghan’s Grand Ohio Company partners attempted to gain favor among elite politicians in Philadelphia and London, they pressured Croghan to induce the Six Nations to reaffirm the land grant. Writing in secret from London,

¹⁷⁵ John Baynton to George Morgan, December 12, 1770, Correspondence of George Morgan, BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR.
William Trent urged, “I am afraid we shall lose all our time and labour and nothing but your Exerting yourself in this affair can in my opinion save us all from Ruin.” With his land acquisition in jeopardy, Croghan’s future depended entirely on his ability to have the Indian land grants legitimized by the Crown.

After politicking failed the group, Croghan and partner Samuel Wharton hoped war might consume the west so conquest could confirm their titles. Just a year out from the end of two Indian wars, the colluders believed another war would demonstrate the Crown’s immediate need for a new seat of power in the West, and members of the Grand Ohio Company willingly offered their services as proprietors. Wharton and Trent enlisted Croghan to use his official powers as Indian Agent to report that the Six Nations had threatened war if Great Britain did not uphold the details of the Fort Stanwix Treaty, including the personal land sales. When it became privately apparent to the men that “not the least Danger of an Indian War” existed, a new phase of the speculators’ scheming began. Croghan, Samuel Wharton, Trent, and Benjamin Franklin attempted to induce the government to grant the company land by misleading the Pennsylvania Assembly, the Lords of Trade, and the Crown into believing that a war was really impending. The group surmised, “Nothing will so soon make the great L---ds immediately agree to the Policy of settling the Country over the Allegany Mountains, as

---

176 William Trent to Croghan, March 7, 1770 and William Trent to Croghan, June 12, 1770, Croghan Papers, HSP.
177 Wainwright, George Croghan, 265-7 & 271-2.
178 Wharton to Croghan May, 18, 1769, Wharton to Croghan May, 27, 1769, Wharton to Croghan May, 28, 1769, Trent to Croghan July 11, 1769, Croghan Papers, HSP.
the Fear of a general Indian War.”\textsuperscript{179}

Croghan, and to a lesser extent his colleagues in the Indian Department, had a history of relaying false alarms or misinformation about imminent Indian wars up the chain of command to more influential men including Sir William Johnson, commander-in-chief of the British Military in North America Thomas Gage, and Benjamin Franklin. Although Johnson and Franklin knew that Croghan fabricated his information, Gage did not. As early as 1766, Croghan had attempted to attract Gage into investing in the land company but Gage had refused and remained aloof from the colonials’ corruption.\textsuperscript{180} All parties nonetheless passed the information along. Johnson and Franklin, who was in London specifically to promote the company among the House of Lords, used Croghan’s reports to lobby the Pennsylvania proprietors, the Pennsylvania Assembly, and the Crown government for military action against the Indians. They also sought new land purchases, presents to secure them, and Indian-Euroamerican segregation so settlers had to buy land from the company rather than simply move in next to the Indians.\textsuperscript{181}

In one letter, Croghan claimed that if the Crown government did not purchase land in western Pennsylvania from the Ohio Shawnees living there, the Shawnee would strike settlements in western Pennsylvania. Yet Pennsylvania’s acquisition of Shawnee land from the Six Nations had instigated the Shawnee discontent in the first place. Croghan cautioned the Crown to prevent traders’ movement into the Ohio Country for

\textsuperscript{179} John Baynton to George Morgan, December 6, 1770, Correspondence of George Morgan, BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR; Samuel Wharton to Croghan, July 21, 1771 and Croghan to Gage, November, 1771, Croghan Papers, HSP.\textsuperscript{180} Johnson to William Franklin, June 20, 1766, William Vincent Byers Collection, HSP.\textsuperscript{181} Wainwright, \textit{George Croghan}, 245-6.
fear they might cause the Shawnee to “Murder & Plunder … & so enable them to carry on a War against us.” Yet during the same time Croghan, through Baynton, Wharton, & Morgan, engaged in blatant munitions trafficking to the western Indians. If Ohio or other western Indians threatened violence, Croghan and company provided the Indians with the munitions to bring the war to fruition; Croghan did whatever it might take to meet his own ends. 182

A letter-writing campaign warned of a general Indian war. Writing from his headquarters in New York, General Thomas Gage explained to Secretary of State Lord Hillsborough the futile situation on the frontier. Repeating Croghan’s summary of the conditions in the backcountry, Gage in turn counseled, “if the Grievance (settlers) is not soon removed, which at the same time [Croghan] explains the Impossibility of doing[,] that a War must be the Consequence.” 183 According to New Jersey Governor and fellow Grand Ohio investor William Franklin, British inaction would invite a Spanish-Indian War in the backcountry. Franklin lamented that the government neglected the frontiers of the middle colonies; his alternative was to seek the creation of a new colony, a seat of government, manned military forts, and strong trade in “British Manufactures.” 184 Likewise, Sir William Johnson and his nephew Guy sent letters requesting that the Lords terminate plans to “reform” the Indian Department. If not, the Johnsons argued that the

182 Croghan to Benjamin Franklin, October 2, 1767, Croghan Papers, HSP; Croghan to Johnson and Gage to Johnson, November 9, 1767, Sir William Johnson Papers, October 18, 1767, 12:372-5.
183 Gage to Hillsborough, December 4, 1771, The Correspondence of Thomas Gage, CTG, 2:314-5.
184 William Franklin to Johnson, May 23, 1768 and Guy Johnson to Gage, May 20, 1768, Sir William Johnson Papers, 12: 507-10 & 511-2. Guy Johnson proposed that a similar outcome would result from the Crown’s financial disinterest in the west, yet Guy foresaw another French and Indian War. John Baynton to George Morgan, December 6, 1770, Correspondence of George Morgan, BWM, reel, 2, PSA.
backcountry would endure Indian “dissatisfaction” “Manifest by Acts” – a return of interethnic violence and a general Indian war.\textsuperscript{185}

Johnson and Croghan were careful not to mention that the specific reasons for the “uneasiness” among Ohio and southern Indians, the Shawnee and Cherokee particularly, included their own agitation for a new extended boundary line and cession of western Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Kentucky to Great Britain to form a new colony. Seemingly, only John Stuart, the superintendent of the southern district of Indian Affairs, informed Secretary of State Hillsborough that Johnson and Croghan’s land purchases at Fort Stanwix had caused the rising acrimony among the Ohio Shawnee, Ohio Delaware, Ohio Mingo, and southern Cherokee.\textsuperscript{186}

Although Johnson denied the accusations made against him for “Designs…to obtain Lands in an illegal way,” the Ohio Shawnee, Seneca, Delaware, and Ohio Indians attributed their “discontent” to the Iroquois sale of their land and the lack of these groups’ participation in its negotiations or receipt of its payments. The Fort Stanwix Treaty and other private Indian land sales to the colonies stirred infighting among Indian groups, threatening existing alliances and aggravating already poor relations among some Indian polities. Tension escalated between the Six Nations and the Western Confederacy, or the Great Lakes Indians, while land policies also affected individuals dependent on using the eastern Ohio Valley, like the Shawnee and Cherokees.\textsuperscript{187}

\textsuperscript{185} Guy Johnson to Gage, June 16, 1768 and William Johnson to Gage, July 20, 1768, Sir William Johnson Papers, 12:525-7 & 552-53.
\textsuperscript{186} Holton, “The Ohio Indians and the Coming of the American Revolution in Virginia,” 467.
\textsuperscript{187} Gage to Johnson, May 20, 1770, Sir William Johnson Papers, 12: 821-2.
Conversely, by 1770 fear of the lands’ control by British speculators assisted in uniting Indian communities, including the Wabash Indians (Miami, Waweatten, and Kickapoo), with the Ohio Country Indians and southern Cherokees. General Thomas Gage urged all illicit Indian grants be “annulled” and peace maintained. The Shawnees’ anger intensified as they waited, demanding a resolution year after year in what Gage described as a “Storm” whose “burst” the Crown government had only nearly averted. Yet even as the union of Indians hostile to land companies increased into the thousands, Johnson aggravated conditions in the Ohio Valley by initiating unrest among the Ohio Indians, particularly the Shawnee.188

As the Crown withdrew support and interest in the West, Johnson increasingly grew distracted with futile efforts to stockpile new land claims and solidify old Indian grants. Despite the growing diplomatic tensions among western Indians, in particular the Shawnee, Johnson continued to try to legitimize his land holdings by encouraging rapid settlement of the land he claimed. “Without delay,” Johnson purchased those grants Indians “gave to a Number of Officers” who had served under him, in addition to purchasing land from the Oneida. At the same time Johnson eagerly checked on the status of his original Indian grants from the 1750s on the Adagehteinge Creek (Charlotte River) in New York. Despite his uncertainty, Johnson had already sold a thousand acres and was “daily Settling People.”189

Johnson disregarded concerns raised by “Northern Indians” about his land grants

188 Gage to Hillsborough, September 9, 1769 and December 4, 1769, November 12, 1770, CTG, 1:235-7 & 241-2, 281-3; McConnell, A Country Between, 264-6.
189 Johnson to Banyar, November 5, 1770, Sir William Johnson Papers, 12: 874-5.
and sought to put down “Agitation” of Indians “to the South and Westward.” By 1771
Johnson expected that if he continued to take up land, a war with Indians from the
surrounding region would occur, but this foresight did not stop Johnson. Gaining Indian
land grants on preexisting trade routes and on Indian hunting grounds, establishing new
settlements for his tenants in the Susquehanna Valley’s north and on mines around the
Great Lakes, and pursuing the “suffering trader” grant increasingly occupied Johnson’s
attention.190 The intentions of large land speculators presented a greater risk to American
Indians than preexisting settlers who sought authorization to settle Indian land.

Reporting falsehoods and half-truths as a self-interested strategy, merchant-
speculators consistently projected their own opinions, desires, and needs onto the
intentions of western Indians in their official capacity and reports. Land-speculating
officers of the Department of Indian Affairs replaced the Indians own representatives to
whom the Crown had previously listened. From across the Atlantic Ocean, Proprietor
Thomas Penn relied on the litany of reports he received from the West and, despite
fearing “the lives of our Inhabitants,” remained beholden to Parliament and the Crown’s
loss of interest in maintaining the frontier.191 When contradictory reports crossed in the
mail on their way to Gage and Johnson reported “that every thing in those Quarters was
quiet,” Croghan’s fabricated alarms fell flat. Gage, his superior, saw through the ruse.
Gage reminded Hillsborough that Fort Pitt and Croghan “ha [d] never been judged
otherwise useful” and suggested discharging Croghan and selling or abandoning the

190 Johnson to Adam Gordon, February 18, 1771 and Johnson to Croghan, June 11, 1772, Sir William Johnson Papers,
191 Thomas Penn, November 2, 1768, Sir William Johnson Papers, 12:630-1.
Croghan, with the help of Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan, continued to haphazardly forward rum, powder, lead, and guns to western Indians, including the Shawnee. The munitions served as gifts, keeping open the chain of friendship between western Indians and the company. Yet Croghan also hoped the continued inflow of munitions and alcohol might unsettle the region with new outbursts of localized interethnic violence. Ohio Shawnee eagerly responded to the offer of gunpowder, trading their prized horses to stockpile munitions with the intention of using them against the Euroamerican settlers. In one letter, an Illinois agent explained that the company would benefit from another war, “To Us as Merchants nothing could be more advantageous for the many Reasons which must occur to you – Besides the French Trade with us would be the same as it now is & probably [larger] even during an Indian War.” Johnson candidly remarked in 1771 that “[w]hat engages all our attention at present is the prospect of a War, which is more Wished for in this Country than any where else (however) it may affect the (Interior parts &) out Posts & Settlements.” In one shipment alone the company, through Croghan, shipped “1500 bar lead and 28 quarter Casks of unglazed gun powder to Ohio Country Indians, most likely the Shawnee and Delaware.” Despite increasing murmurs from the western Indians in the Ohio

---

192 Gage to Hillsborough, November 6, 1771 and March 4, 1772, April 13, 1772, CTG, 1:312-3 & 317 -22.
194 Colonel Cole to Baynton Wharton and Morgan, April 24, 1769 & John Baynton to George Morgan, December 6, 1770, BWM Correspondence, BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR.
196 Thomas Walpole to Croghan, January 25, 1773, a second later addressed and dated the same Thomas Walpole to Croghan, January 25, 1773 and Samuel Wharton to Croghan, May 2, 1774, both in Croghan Papers, HSP.
country in 1773 and 1774, the company continued shipping “dangerous Commodities” across the Ohio River.\(^{197}\)

Croghan did more than use disorder to create a need for government on the frontier of Pennsylvania and Virginia. As a means of securing the company’s Indian land grants, Croghan had to prove to the Crown not only that a substantial Euroamerican population inhabited the land west of the Alleghenies, but that this nonexistent large population also supported the company’s initiative to form a new colony. Having the local inhabitants demand protection and the Grand Ohio Company as proprietor would go a long way for the syndicate. The backcountry settlers, however, were not going to offer their support to the group of gun traffickers some inhabitants called “Mercenary proprietors” and petitioned the King, pleading that their proposed colony of Vandalia—which Benjamin Franklin named for Queen Charlotte, who was descended from the Vandals—not be granted.\(^{198}\)

To offset their protests, Croghan and the company promoted large-scale migration into the Ohio Valley to obtain the requisite people to protect. He even prematurely opened a land office in Pittsburgh, and the individual partners began advertising leases for their lots in the Ohio country.\(^{199}\) In a two-part plan, William Trent and Samuel Wharton also concocted a petition claiming to have “originated” in the backcountry. In this forged petition the invented backcountry population called on the

---

\(^{197}\) Advertisement of John Connolly, 1774, PA, 4:521.

\(^{198}\) Petition for land Granted for the Green Briar, Ohio Company Papers, HSP. No date given but information in letter places it in 1773 or 1774.

\(^{199}\) John Baynton to Croghan, February 4, 1771, Croghan Papers, HSP and The Essex Gazette, Charlestown, South-Carolina, February 22, 1774.
Crown to impose order in the region by granting the company proprietorship of the colony of Vandalia. Croghan contributed to the effort by circulating the fraudulent documents among the military stationed at Fort Pitt. Soldiers and self-interested parties forged the names of locals, signed multiple times, and created fictitious names of inhabitants. Although modern historians have accepted Croghan’s dubious claim that 50,000 squatters inhabited the area, eighteenth-century contemporaries rightly questioned whether a “flood” of western migrants had arrived in the Ohio Valley prior to 1773. Croghan’s supposedly climbing estimates quieted the eastern argument that only a minimal number of uneducated families had moved to the middle frontier. Croghan’s farce worked, and in time officials accepted his claims that a large body had settled the region, that an Indian war was impending, and that the settlers wholly supported the company’s agenda.

Secondly, the group attempted to move settlers to their Indian grants in order to promote the company’s claims of sovereignty. In conjunction with the arrival of new settlers, Croghan and company employed a cyclical and old argument: the Crown government could not prevent Euroamerican migration onto Indian land. If this were the case, the only option for maintaining peace was for the Crown to proactively purchase western land and bring more of the Indian country under direct control of colonial

---

201 Samuel Wharton to Croghan, May 2, 1771 and William Trent and Samuel Wharton to Croghan, July 21, 1771, Croghan Papers, HSP.
202 James Tilghman to Croghan, June 21, 1771, Croghan Papers, HSP.
officials. In 1772 the Grand Ohio Company, now working under the name the Walpole Company -- including London Attorney Thomas Walpole, Benjamin Franklin, Samuel Wharton and sixty-nine others -- successfully petitioned the Lords Commissioners of Trade and Foreign Plantations to purchase the land grant, by paying the cost of the 1768 Fort Stanwix treaty, which totaled £10,460. In addition to the imaginary support of locals, Croghan also needed to demonstrate that the population of the valley had increased dramatically, with “ungoverned” and “unruly” settlers posing a threat to British-Indian diplomacy. Croghan resolved to leverage both the rising population and lack of government and, to that end, consistently informed his superiors, “Authority can not command respect at one hundred and fifty miles near to the Seat of Government.” “An open War” between his majesty’s subjects and the Natives must be the only Consequence,” unless the crown created a new colony.

Using the distance between those at the center of power and the valley to his advantage, by 1773 Croghan offered blatantly falsified numbers and reported a population of some 60,000 inhabitants living in the eastern valley. Meanwhile, those in closer proximity to the valley placed the population around 10,000, but agreed with Croghan that the number of inhabitants rose every year. The conspirators’ plan worked, at least temporarily. The Crown realized that whether 10,000 or 60,000, the

---

203 Johnson to Gage, August 9, 1769, Sir William Johnson Papers, 12:746-7.
204 John Baynton to Croghan, May 5, 1770, Croghan Papers, HSP; August 11, 1772, Board of Trade Report to the Privy Council, William Vincent Byers Collection, HSP.
205 Croghan to Gage, November 7, 1770, Croghan Papers, HSP.
“significant” population of British subjects now living west of the Alleghenies suggested a risk to the empire. Reading much like the rationale for the 1758 Treaty of Easton and the 1768 Treaty of Fort Stanwix, in May 1773 the commissioners accepted the proposal for Vandalia, maintaining that the “lands in question…are in actual state of settling, numbers of families to a very considerable amount removing there continually from your majesty’s other colonies.” The lords further supported the claim to keep the swelling population “more properly and quietly governed.”

In reality, the second wave of settlers only began arriving in the eastern Ohio Valley in large numbers in 1773, as illicit land sales and grants enticed the new wave of Virginian and Maryland migrants. The success early settlers found and the peaceable interethnic relations they made stood as a testament to outsiders of the everyday opportunities possible in the valley. The middling and lower sort in eastern Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Maryland wanted to replicate the experience of early Ohio Valley settlers and, in direct response to that early success, began preparing their own migrations. One agent for Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan described the influx, saying, “The People are flocking down into the New Colony Very Fast & it is expected that in the course of this Summer” the “best Land will be taken up (by Land Jobbers & Others) all the way down to the Great Canaway.”

Commencing as a consequence of Croghan and his associates’ frantic attempts at securing Vandalia, the 1773 wave of eastern Ohio

207 The King’s order, in council, in Establishing a new colony upon the Ohio, August 11, 1772, Ohio Company and To the Kings most excellent Majesty, May 6, 1773, Ohio Company Papers, HSP; William Franklin to Michael Gratz, September 28, 1772, William Vincent Byerly, HSP.
208 Azariah Thomas to George Morgan, June 13, 1773, Correspondence of George Morgan, BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR.
Valley migrants went on to serve as an antecedent for greater migration and the numerous speculators who accompanied them.

_Waking Rivals: The Rise of the Eighteenth-Century Gentry Speculator_

During the winter of 1772-73 the Board of Trade and the Privy Council approved Vandalia as the fourteenth colony and investors began detailing the final plans for the royal colony and forthcoming government. Croghan began prematurely selling “any land that any person will buy of him inside or outside his line.” Croghan also indulged his desire for more land, sending his surveyors out to claim over 30,000 new acres. Within the next year, approximately 5,000 migrants crossed over the Allegheny Mountains. The population surge appeared as though it would continue exponentially and in perpetuity. Envious land speculators presumed the Ohio Company had won the Vandalia grant permanently, but the grant was short lived. In the meantime Vandalia and the increasing population were threatened by both western Indians, particularly the Shawnee, and competing land syndicates, namely the Illinois Company (known as the Wabash-Illinois Company in 1775).

Like the associates of the Grand Ohio Company, members of the Illinois Company included Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania investors who desired

---

211 Eric Hinderaker and Peter C. Mancall, _At the Edge of Empire: The Backcountry in British North America_ (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 155.
extensive western tracts as a means of monopolizing trade. Of the twenty-five investors, twenty served as either members of Virginia’s House of Burgesses or were investors in two Jewish Philadelphia merchant partnerships -- Michael and Barnard Gratz, and David and Moses Franks – who shipped military supplies to the Illinois country. In 1771, newly appointed Virginia Governor John Murray (Lord Dunmore) unsuccessfully petitioned the Crown for land in modern-day Indiana and Illinois, but the Board of Trade prohibited the group’s land purchase plans.\textsuperscript{212} With their plans disallowed by the Crown and competing with Vandalia for overlapping land, the Illinois Company purchased Indian grants and relied on Dunmore’s authority as governor to set in motion a defense against the Grand Ohio’s land schemes.\textsuperscript{213}

Taking office in 1771, Dunmore attempted to capitalize on his office by legitimizing the Illinois Company’s land claims through the migration of individuals who would then support Virginia’s claims to western Pennsylvania, modern day West Virginia, Kentucky, and the Ohio, Indiana, Illinois countries. Dunmore’s self-interested actions stood in direct contrast to the policies established by Great Britain and past Virginia governors. To maintain positive relations with the Indians and particularly the Ohio Shawnee and Southern Cherokee, Lord Dunmore’s predecessor Baron Botetourt had undermined the plans of most major land speculators by enforcing the Proclamation Line of 1763 from 1769 to 1771. Botetourt had attempted to stop all western land

\textsuperscript{212} Banner, \textit{How the Indians Lost Their Land}, 106.
surveys and rejected land applications totaling over ten million acres surveyed between 1768 and 1769 alone.\(^{214}\)

Despite coming from different social backgrounds, George Croghan and Lord Dunmore were equally motivated by the prospect of obtaining land grants. Like Croghan, Dunmore and his royal agent John Connolly desired the profits and prestige that came with being grand landlords and used their official capacities to further this aim.

Upon taking his seat as Virginia governor, Dunmore petitioned the Crown in an attempt to prevent the formation of Vandalia, arguing that it would “drain the old Colonies.”\(^{215}\) While Dunmore seemingly championed the government’s anti-expansionist stance, through Connolly he continued to acquire illicit Indian grants. Both Dunmore and Croghan similarly, sold frontier tracts well beyond their authority.\(^{216}\)

Dunmore purposely issued vast numbers of land patents in an attempt to keep Vandalia’s claim at bay, to shore up Virginia’s position in the border dispute, and to defend his own claims against those land grants distributed by the Pennsylvania speculators.\(^{217}\) Beginning in 1771, Dunmore granted land tracts far exceeding the maximum sale of 1,000 acres per purchase and well beyond the limits imposed by the Proclamation Line of 1763. Dunmore continued despite the Crown’s 1773 instruction to colonial governors to stop issuing “Warrant of Survey, or to pass any Patents for

\(^{214}\) Holton, “The Ohio Indians and the Coming of the American Revolution in Virginia,” 468-9. It should be noted that William Nelson’s support of the Proclamation Line only came from pressure within the British government to keep peace with the Shawnee and Cherokee.
\(^{215}\) Samuel Wharton to Croghan, July 21, 1771, Croghan Papers, HSP.
\(^{217}\) Percy B. Caley “Lord Dunmore and the Pennsylvania-Virginia Boundary Dispute,” 89.
Lands…or to grant any License for the purchase by private Person of any Lands from the Indians….”218 Only sanctions and his near dismissal for abusing his power as governor ended Dunmore’s illegal land dealing.219

A new generation of moneyed and well-connected men who had not directly benefited from earlier land schemes also wanted a hand in speculation. To the growing number of Virginia migrants and speculators, peace with western Indians and a thriving sustainable backcountry renewed the possibility for Great Britain’s imperial expansion in the West. Expansion in the form of speculation created new opportunities for social and economic advancement of the new gentry. To men like speculator John Randolph and his ninety-nine “Associates,” Dunmore granted a hundred thousand acres “on the Eastern Side of the river Ohio between the Mouth on New River (otherwise called the Great Kanawha) and the Mouth of the little Kanawha.” Near the Holstein River, Dunmore granted 20,000 acres each to Adolphus Daniel Massot and nineteen associates, as well as James Minizies and his associates.220 Larger land schemes followed. Before the Crown could prevent him, Lord Dunmore had granted land first by the tens and later by the hundreds of thousands of acres to men who would then out of necessity support Virginia’s claim in the border dispute with Pennsylvania.

The rising gentry included men like George Washington, Patrick Henry, and George Mason, men who bought land as individuals, founded new land companies, or

---

218 Virginia Council, October 11, 1773 EJCCV, 6:541-3.
220 May 8, 1772 Council meeting, EJCCV, 6:461-4.
attempted to renew the now expired charters of land speculation firms formed prior to the French and Indian War. They succeeded in amassing acreage by the hundreds of thousands through overlapping land warrants in western Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Kentucky. Some of Virginia’s largest land conglomerates included the Greenbrier Company (100,000 acres), the Ohio Company (500,000 acres) and the Loyal Company of Virginia (800,000 acres). The land sales Dunmore oversaw were some of the largest that occurred in all of Great Britain’s thirteen North American colonies in the last quarter of the eighteenth century.

While George Washington enjoyed an exceptional future, his experience as a member of the rising gentry speculating in the late-1760s and early-1770s appears typical. Washington had secretly schemed “to secure a good deal of Land” for himself. In 1767, he commissioned former ensign in the provincial army William Crawford, a Virginian and then-squatter living on the Youghiogheny River, to “Look [him] out” rich and flat land along the eastern shore of the Ohio River and Monongahela. Just fifteen years later Delaware and Wyandot tortured and burned Crawford alive for the massacre of nearly one hundred Christian Delaware in Gnadenhutten, Ohio. In the 1760s and 1770s, however, Crawford surveyed land for Washington beginning with Washington’s military grant. Supporting a petition for 200,000 acres of bounty land promised to veterans of the French and Indian War by then-Governor Lord Dinwiddie, Washington tacked on his own claim to 20,000 acres. Ultimately, Washington’s personal claim

221 Griffin, American Leviathan, 86-7 & 101.  
222 Price, Dividing the Land, 155-7.
encompassed ten to thirty percent of the total acreage (200,000 acres). With Dunmore as governor, Washington’s plan successfully subverted the Proclamation Line and the Crown government’s overwhelming anti-expansionist leanings. While Dunmore’s actions did not immediately push individual settlement into unauthorized areas, it did exert private sovereignty, in the form of Virginian land ownership, on Indian land.\textsuperscript{223}

Lord Dunmore attempted to block haphazard new frontier settlements, but often his decisions inadvertently encouraged greater migrations to the area. In an attempt to slow, if not stop migration, Dunmore declared inhabitants lacking Virginia land patents or a connection to Virginia land speculators west of the Alleghenies to be “lawless.” By authority of the Proclamation of 1763, Dunmore voided all other land claims and stated that all western tracts be “thrown open to the occupation of the first Adventure.” Foreshadowing the military action Dunmore would take against Pennsylvania land companies and settlers, in May 1772 Dunmore instructed the preexisting population to “evacuate…their illegal Settlements.” Any who refrained, he threatened, did so “at their Peril” and would face the might of “his Majesty’s Officers, both civil and military, and all other Majesty’s liege Subjects…”\textsuperscript{224}

Lord Dunmore and the companies he both participated in and approved as governor attempted to make use of the preexisting population to their advantage. In the

\textsuperscript{223} James Burd to John Annsley, August 10, 1773, Brady and Wetzel, DM, ser. e, vol. 10; George Washington to William Crawford, September 21, 1767, Account Book 2, Library of Congress, Washington, DC. The Pennsylvania and Virginia boundary dispute had minimal effect on speculators, who were willing to support either colony if it supported them. Washington did not concern himself with the dispute when choosing land. Aware that Pennsylvania restricted land allotments, Washington planned on filing separate warrants for his extensive tracts if need be. In the event that Pennsylvania held sovereignty over the region, Washington felt certain that his friend John Armstrong in the Pennsylvania Land Office would support his claims. Anderson and Cayton, The Dominion of War, 144.

\textsuperscript{224} Proclamation, May 5, 1772 and May 5, 1772 Council meeting, EJCCV, 6:458 & 641.
case of the Loyal Company, investors purposely choose land already settled by “squatters” and sold most of its 200,000 acres to 1,000 preexisting families, roughly 200 acres of land per family. The details of the Ohio Company’s charter required investors to move at least two hundred new families into the region as settlers. Similarly, by allowing veterans to choose their own tracts, Dunmore won favor with families that had settled in the backcountry up to nineteen years earlier in anticipation of promised land grants. The free-range allotment of military tracts also had migrants hurrying over the Alleghenies. Facing an abundance of petitions from men who had fought informally from their homesteads in the northern region of the Susquehanna, those who had served in only militias, and fraudulent applicants of people who had never served, Dunmore restricted military grants to men outfitted in the regular or provincial military and only after proving their services. When confusion resulted from overlapping land grants and preexisting settlements Dunmore and the Virginia council ordered

That those [who] are to be deemed Settlers who resided [on] any Tract of Land before last October and Continue to do so, having cleared some part thereof whereby their Intention to reside is Manifest…shall have fifty Acres at least, and also for every three Acres of Cleared Land fifty Acres more….which is to be taken as part of the Grants to the Said Companies respectively….unless such Settlers shall chuse to hold under the Officers, or Soldiers….

The protocol for establishing legal ownership proved difficult for preexisting settlers in that it required they commit to having their land surveyed. Along with

imposing survey fees, the order mandated preexisting settlers purchase their land and pay

\[225 \text{ “Officers and Soldiers be at Liberty to Locate the Grants wherever they shall desire, so as not to interfere with Legal Sur[veys] or actual Settlements….”.}
\[226 \text{ Council meeting, April 20, 1774, EJCCV, 6:556-7.}
\[227 \text{ Council meetings, December 15, 1773 and December 16, 1773, EJCCV, 6:552-4.}

314
quitrents to companies or individuals. By affirming the rights of non-warrant holding settlers, Dunmore reasserted Virginia’s legal recognition of preemptive land ownership, and, in turn, he encouraged more migration and illicit land speculation.

*Settlers on the heels of Surveyors*

Virginians and Marylanders filled the frontier forests of Pennsylvania, Virginia, Kentucky, and Ohio in 1772-73. Belligerence characterized much of the 1773 influx to the eastern Ohio Valley, as this newer population, predominantly migrants, land scouts, and surveyors, did not have the same experience as the war refugees who began arriving in the Pennsylvania and Virginia backcountry five years earlier.

Euroamericans crossed into the Ohio Valley in dramatic numbers in 1773 and migrants continued arriving through 1775, drawn by the promise of trade routes and sprawling farmland from which they could collect quitrents from tenants. One account described the newcomers as “forming themselves into parties” to “rove through the country in search of land either to settle on, or for speculation.” Convoys composed of families three generations deep, family friends, and neighbors transported entire communities over the Alleghenies, with one group following on the heels of another. One petition representing nearly a hundred recently arrived Scottish immigrants claimed that “the lower Class of people are generally discontented, & the Spirit of Emigration prevails greatly…” and anticipated… Some hundreds of families will soon Follow.”

---

229 Harry Munro to Johnson, May 21, 1773, Sir William Johnson Papers, 12:1023-4.
The 1773 migrants and surveyors had not participated in the regional process of creolization or gradual ethnogenesis that had taken place between 1768 and 1773, nor did the new wave depend on local forms of exchange for their survival. Newcomers had not established the network of interethnic neighborhoods in the eastern valley, nor did their family members or trade partners help intimately tie the Indian communities with preexisting Euroamerican settlements. This was ironic because the 1773 wave migrants specifically chose the eastern Ohio Valley because of the region’s peacefulness, but these new migrants had not participated in the development of local peacekeeping strategies that maintained the amity they sought. Thus, the new population thought little of committing acts of interethnic violence or the possible ramifications. Of the new population, Missionary John Heckewelder explained that “to kill an Indian was the same as killing a bear or buffalo… [N]ay, more, would decoy such as lived across the river, to come over, for the purpose of joining them in hilarity; and when these complied they fell on them and murdered them.” Like the Grand Ohio Company, Dunmore and his associates had much to gain from igniting a war in the region and did so by indirectly pitting the Ohio country Indians and migrants against each other.

The population surge stretched the existing limits in western Pennsylvania and western Virginia. Subsequent migrants had little choice but to push farther south and west, into Kentucky and across the Ohio River into Ohio country. Lewis Bennett, a preexisting settler of Redstone, described the influx by saying that “in 1772 Emigrants

---

Began to flow into that Beautiful Country which was then called the Upper Monongahela Country,” which added to the existing communities on West Fork, Cheat River, and Dunkard’s Bottom. New settlements filled out the backcountry neighborhood with cabins constructed on Horse Shoe Bottom, Simpson’s Creek, and the fork of Elk Creek among others.²³¹ Many newcomers chose lots near preexisting settlements. Four miles away from the heavily populated Monongahela, recent arrivals like Thomas Heyo, James Murdock, and Betsy Spicer built cabins on the greater fringe of the frontier.²³²

In search of unoccupied nutrient-rich land, scouts roamed Kentucky looking to relocate families and sometimes small Virginian communities. “Woodsman” James Smith, who had led the Black Boys’ attack on pack trains in the 1760s, led a band of scouts hunting for land along the Kentucky River. According to Smith, the Blue Lick region presented “the finest country they ever beheld,” and the group intended on returning in the spring “with their friends…to settle.”²³³ So too did scouts trying to capitalize on Dunmore’s offer of military tracts. Longtime valley settlers continued to promote their interethnic peacekeeping culture and did not venture into Kentucky, understanding that Euroamerican occupation or use of the Shawnee’s hunting land would swiftly create animosity between themselves and the Shawnee.²³⁴

²³¹ Lewis Bennett to Draper, December 18, 1848, Interviews of Adult Children of the Frontier, Pittsburgh and Virginia Papers, DM, ser. e, vol. 11.
²³³ James Burd to John Anmsley, August 10, 1773, Brady and Wetzel Papers, DM, ser. e, vol. 10.
²³⁴ George Rogers Clark to Samuel Brown, June 17, 1798, George Rogers Clark Papers, 1771-1781, Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library: Virginia series, 8:3-9: Remarks on the Proceedings of Doctor Connolly, June 25, PA 4: 528-9. Following the pattern established in chapter two, the description of the men as being hunters and without
Men new to the eastern Ohio Valley were either oblivious of the methods of peacekeeping or else consciously upset the Ohio Shawnee. Outsiders to the existing community, like twenty-one-year-old George Rogers Clark, recognized their ability to take up substantial tracts in minimally populated Kentucky. Clark left planter parents and his family’s ongoing land disputes in Virginia for the eastern Ohio Valley in 1773, bringing at least one servant with him. Clark struggled to settle on Fish Creek in western Virginia, and after failing, he moved into the home of the nearby Cornwell family. From the Cornwell homestead, Clark scouted land in Kentucky and recruited Virginians from his hometown to follow him, bringing a larger labor force that could clear and improve the region and increase land values.\footnote{Rachel Johnson to Draper, unknown Date, DM, ser. ss vol. 3; Fredrick Palmer, \textit{Clark of the Ohio: A Life of George Rogers Clark} (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, Inc, 1929), 59-60.} The irresponsible actions of Clark and other Kentucky migrants startled preexisting settlers in western Pennsylvania and western Virginia. Anticipating the hostility of Ohio Indians, Pennsylvania and Virginia inhabitants demanded colonial or Crown protection for the actions of outsiders. Ohio Indians recognized the continued attempts at diplomacy made by the preexisting population. When interethnic violence erupted as all-out war in the valley, one dispatch reported, “there has been no mischief done by the Indians in the fork of the river yet, which is the greatest reason to believe that the stroke is aimed at the \textit{Virginians} only.”\footnote{“Extract of a Letter Received at Philadelphia,” June 19, 1774, American Archives, ser. 4, 1:429. The phrase Virginians used in this respect indicates the new population in general.}
Word of Kentucky’s and Ohio’s abundantly rich and vacant land returned east with traveling land scouts, and the expansion-friendly environment created by sparring land speculators encouraged greater investor interest in the region.\textsuperscript{237} Dispersed among migrants, and, more vexing to Ohio Indians, innumerable surveyors hired by speculator syndicates penetrated the Kentucky and Ohio wilderness. Recounting the situation, surveyor William Crawford explained that “there are such numbers of people out now looking for land, and one taking another’s land from him…As soon as a man’s back is turned another is on his land.”\textsuperscript{238} According to George Croghan, “Wealthy gentleman in England had determined” to purchase increasing portions of the Indian country and sent surveyors on their behalf to mark out land claims.\textsuperscript{239} Similarly, men described as “Pennsylvania Officers” and “several gentlemen in Virginia…. also had surveyors of their own appointed” and roving throughout the region.\textsuperscript{240}

Lord Dunmore had hired Thomas Bullitt as head surveyor in the Indian Country from Ohio through Kentucky, land that encompassed Vandalia and territory occupied by the Shawnee and Cherokee. With his surveyor’s chains, tomahawk, and notebook, Bullitt declared Kentucky the territory of Virginia. A race was on between speculators: George Croghan sent his own surveyors Michael Cresap and William Thompson for the same purpose.\textsuperscript{241} The very sight of surveyors or the knowledge of their movements incited

\textsuperscript{239} Croghan to Trent, July 1775, Ohio Company Papers, HSP. The letter is reflectively written and discusses events that occurred in 1772.
\textsuperscript{240} James Burd to John Annsley, August 10, 1773, Brady and Wetzel Papers, DM, ser. e, vol. 10.
\textsuperscript{241} Nester, \textit{The Frontier War for American Independence}, 48-9.
other speculators into action. When word reached George Washington of several
surveyors working in Kentucky he viewed it as a sign that “the Governor will grant
Patents for these Lands, the Officers of Pennsylvania, Maryland, Carolina &ca. &ca., will
flock there in Shoals, and every valuable spot will be taken up….” As surveyors, hired
by speculators, attempted to claim land laden with valuable natural resources, especially
salt springs, Washington did not want to miss his share of opportunity. In response,
Washington too sent out a surveyor, William Crawford, to purchase preemptive rights
from the preexisting settlers, threaten other surveyors with eviction, and to claim more
land.\footnote{George Washington to William Crawford, September 25, 1773 and George Washington to William Crawford,
September 25, 1773 (two letters), col ser., 9:328-32.}

Cunning and in substantial numbers, surveyors lurked in the woods. Comparable
to the surveyors in western Pennsylvania during the 1750s, surveyors, acting as agents for
eastern and Atlantic investors, trekked through the woods hiding their true intentions.
Men like Crawford concealed their business “under the guise of hunting game,” a
plausible and easy disguise, for woodsmen easily turned a profit by performing both tasks
at the same time.\footnote{Washington to Crawford, September 21, 1767, Butterfield., ed. The Washington-
Crawford Letters, 1-10.} In one instances, William Crawford had surveyed land on Pipe
Creek Bottom for George Washington. Shortly thereafter, a man named Doctor Brisco
had “taken possession” of it. Just after Brisco “quit the land,” Michael Cresap surveyed
it. Well aware of each other’s interests, the three men all claimed the land they surveyed,
“till a legal right can be obtained,” as Washington described it.\footnote{Washington to Cresap, September 26, 1773, The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript
320
statement reflected the certainty, shared by speculator and migrant alike, that the Ohio Valley’s inevitable fate was Euroamerican colonization. Shawnee, Cherokee, and other Ohio Indians shared a similar view of the region’s future, fearing that Indian inaction would bring about their loss of homelands.

*The Shawnees’ Slipping Sovereignty*

The transformation of the Ohio Valley landscape by Euroamerican settlers and surveyors prompted the Ohio Shawnee to lead a campaign against Euroamerican advancements into Indian hunting grounds. New inhabitants and red flags left by surveyors to mark out private boundaries drastically altered the appearance of southwestern Virginia and Kentucky by the end of 1773. Through deforestation and settlement building, the Euroamerican incursion created population pressures on natural resources and disrupted the distribution of basic necessities. When a drought set in, a Malthusian crisis affected Indian and European populations alike. The valley no longer had the crops or wild produces to adequately meet the needs of the growing population.245 Settlers who had previously eaten a more balanced diet filled the gap in their food supply with more protein. As new populations stretched foodstuffs thin, settlers and Indians also noticed a scarcity of game. Worse yet, newcomers who Shawnee and Delaware leaders called “Hunters” (but which included settlers, surveyors,

and land scouts), exhausted the woodland game.\textsuperscript{246} As outsiders to the valley, hunters, surveyors and land scouts made enemies of preexisting Euroamerican and Indian settlers by stripping bison and deer of their profitable hides, wasting the meat, and littering the forest with discarded carcasses.\textsuperscript{247}

Shawnee concerns about outsiders initiated the privatization of natural recourses among them. The area in modern Kentucky and Tennessee functioned as a hunting ground, or Indian commons, for the Shawnee and Cherokee as well as other Indians living just outside the region. Indian conservation strategies attempted to limit the use-rights of natural resources as commodities.\textsuperscript{248} As mounting population pressures diminished local game the Shawnee in particular began to view Euroamerican hunting as poaching, which referred to both the trespassing on Indian land as well as the theft of the Indians’ animals. Despite acknowledging that the Delaware and other western Pennsylvania Indians had authorized most of the eastern Ohio Euroamerican settlers, the Shawnee put out the word that Euroamericans would be excluded from the Indian commons. They claimed the exclusive ownership of frontier game, a right they derived from and likened to the Europeans’ private property rights. According to the Shawnee, Virginian hunters, land scouts, and surveyors who took game for profit had misused natural resources owned in common by Ohio Indians. These hunters had not simply

\textsuperscript{246} Conference of Six Nations, Shawnee and Delaware Chiefs and a Number of Pittsburgh, March 8-13, 1774, Journal of Alexander McKee, Sir William Johnson Papers, 12:1083-86.
\textsuperscript{247} Faragher, \textit{Daniel Boone}, 80-1.
followed game onto Indian land during the hunt, as many Ohio Valley Indian polities allowed, but instead had specifically traveled to the region, trespassed into their territory, and then taken Indian resources in the form of hides for profit.249

Ohio Delaware leader Killbuck explained the now exclusive right over game asserted by the Ohio Valley Indians, saying, “When you white men buy a farm, you buy only the land. The Elks are our horses, the Buffaloes are our cows, the deer our sheep, & the whites shan’t have them.”250 The Euroamerican-influenced alteration to Indian perceptions of property rights departed from traditional Shawnee, Delaware, and other Indian legal understandings.251 Prompted in part by conditions experienced by the onslaught of famine, but also by the growing weariness created by newcomers and outsiders to the valley, Killbuck’s speech declared the Ohio Valley as a closed commons and suggested the end of the interethnic sharing. While some western Indians killed hunters on sight, many Ohio country Indians marched captured hunters back to their camps to investigate if the intruders possessed surveyor’s tools, whole deer, or only hides before deciding how to treat them.252

The squandered and limited food supply only added to growing hostilities between the new population of Euroamericans and the already cautious Shawnee. Owing to the famine, western Pennsylvania and Virginia settlers had little choice but to break the

249 McConnell, A Country Between, 239 & 245.
250 October 6, 1772, The Diary of David McClure, 82-85.
251 Aron, “‘Rights in the Woods’ on the Trans-Appalachian Frontier” in Contact Points, Cayton & Teute ed., 189-90.
252 Carlos and Lewis, “Survival through generosity: Property rights and hunting practices of Native Americans in the subarctic region,” 219-20 & 331; Faragher, Daniel Boone, 80-1.
hunting restrictions and began using Kentucky as a commons.°253 Ignorant of cultural mores or relationships and interethnic boundaries, valley newcomers built their homes in close proximity to unwelcoming Indian communities and bickered frequently with their Ohio Indian neighbors.°254 The borderland population of Indians included preexisting communities composed of Mingo who had left the eastern Ohio Valley shortly after the 1768 Euroamerican migration as well as the Iroquois and Shawnee who had urged their Indian brethren to end peaceful interethnic cohabitation throughout the eastern Ohio Valley.°255 The population settling the “lands west of the Kanawha River in Kentucky” particularly troubled the Shawnee. Many Ohio Indians began to describe themselves as living in a state of “Discontent and Confusion,” blaming the newcomer population for “building Houses and marking the Country wherever they go, far beyond the Limits” established by even the 1768 Fort Stanwix Treaty, let alone the Proclamation Line of 1763.”°256 Alexander McKee reported that even those Indians who previously enjoyed good relationships with the Euroamericans living among them disliked the new population, asserting that “none of the Indians, tho’ ever so well disposed to the English can relish the Settlements making down the Ohio…they are extremely irritated at the Number of White People Passing down the River almost every day.” Owing to the speculators’ continued encouragement of illicit settlement, McKee expected the problem

°253 John McDonald to Draper, April 7, 1845, Interviews of Adult Children of the Frontier, Pittsburgh and Northwest Virginia Papers, DM, ser. e, vol. 11.
°255 John Campbell to George Morgan, November 4, 1768, Correspondence of George Morgan, BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR; McConnell, A Country Between, 247-8.
to worsen.”

In fact, following an Indian conference in March 1774, McKee reported that “the Expeditious Settlement of this Country gives all the Indian Nations this way Uneasiness.” The Shawnee living along the Scioto River had warned the Shawnee living in dispersed communities, the Twilightes, the Iroquois, and other Indian nations that “they wou’d soon be Hemmed in on all Sides by the White People, and then be at their mercy.” The Shawnee “advised” that “the white People intended to take all our Country from us, and that very soon, and whenever that wou’d be the case to rise, and defend it to the last Drop of blood.” The Shawnee rightly recognized the imminent threat of “dispossession” in the Euroamericans’ actions.

The fighting generated from frequent interactions between the Indian and post-1772 population of Euroamericans forced preexisting local Indian communities from the region. In 1774, a community of Seneca removed from “Wheeling Creek” sixty miles down the Ohio from Fort Pitt. The Delaware from Beaver Creek also departed, with some traveling to the falls of the Ohio River and others dispersing in different directions. That same year, 170 Shawnee, the male population living in one Scioto River village, left, expecting others to follow once they had established a new town. Speculators had in fact counted on the displacement of Indians as part of their ploy for geopolitical control in the region. The Grand Ohio Company alone sought the eastern half of modern-day

Ohio and the western portion of modern-day Pennsylvania, including the Muskingum and Beaver Rivers, areas populated by the Delaware, Mingo, and Shawnee.\textsuperscript{261} George Croghan summed the situation up bluntly, saying that fellow syndicate members believed that their land acquisitions and Euroamerican settlement would displace Indians “within fifteen years.” Croghan himself predicted it would take less than a decade.\textsuperscript{262}

Coinciding with their fear of dispossession, the Shawnee foresaw Euroamerican occupation of the Ohio Valley as furthering their geopolitical disfranchisement. The belief that “disorder” had spawned the European people was woven into the Shawnee cosmology. As such, the Shawnee perceived their relationship with Euroamericans as one forever shaped by contention and moving inevitably toward a final challenge for geopolitical control and the loss of Shawnee self-determinism.\textsuperscript{263} Surveyors’ flagrant land claims presented an undeniable indication of the approaching loss of the Shawnee and other Ohio Valley Indians’ autonomy.\textsuperscript{264} Throughout 1772 and 1773, Ohio Shawnee seethed with distrust and hostility towards all Euroamericans in the backcountry.\textsuperscript{265} As he removed from the Ohio Country, traveling missionary David McClure detailed the transformation west of the Ohio River, remarking in his diary that “Indian affairs assumed a more hostile appearance and that we could have no access to them, with any

\textsuperscript{261} Samuel Wharton to Croghan, July 21, 1771, Croghan Papers, HSP.
\textsuperscript{262} Croghan to Trent, July 1775, Ohio Company Papers, HSP. The letter is reflectively written and discusses events that occurred in 1772.
\textsuperscript{264} McConnell, \textit{A Country Between}, 270.
\textsuperscript{265} October 19, 1772, The Diary of David McClure, 101.
prospect of success, or even personal safety.”

Although peace prevailed among the eastern Ohio Valley Euroamerican and Indian settlers through 1773, from 1772 to 1774 war belts passed through the western Ohio country exchanging hands from the Wyandot to the Delawares to the Shawnee, on to the Cherokees and the “Lake Indians.” The Shawnee hoped to build a multiethnic “Union” to “prevent the English from encroaching too far upon them or usurping their Country.”

In their self-identification as a chosen people, the Shawnee believed that the Great Spirit had endowed them with the ability to unite desperate Indian communities and a proposal to bring about universal “harmony.” The Shawnee recognized their cosmological place as people destined to stop European domination of eastern North America. As a result of past experience the Shawnee understood the appearance of large numbers of land scouts and surveyors as the opening stages of a Euroamerican invasion and responded in kind.

Between 1773 and 1774 speculators amplified Shawnee concerns about geopolitical sovereignty by promoting settlement beyond the already disputed boundaries

---

266 June, 1773 & July, 1773, The Diary of David McClure, 122 & 129.
267 October 19, 1772, The Diary of David McClure, 101; McKee to Johnson, March 3, 1774, Conference with Kayaghshota, January 5-15, 1774; Sir William Johnson Papers, 12:1081-3 & 1044-61, Sir William Johnson Papers; Croghan to Samuel Wharton, April 26, 1772, Croghan to Connolly and Alexander McKee, May 4, 1774, Croghan to Connolly, June 1774, A speech delivered by several chiefs of the Six Nations and Delaware, May 9, 1774, Croghan Papers, HSP.
and intervening in internal Indian politics. In the case of the Grand Ohio Company,
George Croghan left no doubt that investors also intended to assume authority over the
western Indians with both a “new Colony” and governor to command “both Whites, and
Indians.”

In the process, Croghan removed Ohio Delaware leader Custalogo and
installed a new chief, Captain Pipe, in his place. Croghan continued by trying to divide
the evolving pan-Indian union and re-segregate Euroamerican-Indian neighborhoods,
thus weakening their position against the speculators. Croghan encouraged the Indians
“of the Ohio” not to live “mixed” any longer but to return to their own people and
become “respectable” while also consolidating the “dispersed” Senecas living “above
Fort Pitt” into one town.

The aggressive parsing of land, belligerent settlement,
“design of establishing a new Government on the Ohio,” and restructuring of Indian
communities by the Grand Ohio and the Illinois Company “divided” and “excited a very
alarming jealousy amongst the Western Indians.”

Individuals and groups of Shawnee,
Cherokee, Seneca, Mingo, Delaware, and other local Indian communities west of the
Ohio River debated keeping diplomatic peace with settlers or organizing a defensive
strike against newcomers and valley outsiders as a means of regaining their geopolitical
sovereignty and repelling the advance of private companies and individual migrants.

---

273 “Conference with Kayaghshota,” January 5-15, 1774, Conference of Six Nations, Shawnee and Delaware Chiefs
and a Number of Pittsburgh, March 8-13, 1774, Journal of Alexander McKee, Sir William Johnson Papers, 12:1044-61
& 1083-86; Crane, “Virginia and the West: An Interpretation,” 26-8; Michael Crisplos (sic) to Croghan, 1774, Croghan
Papers, HSP.
Of the western and southern Indians, only a few small splinter groups took to war during the spring of 1773. In May a group of Cherokee attacked hunters and scalped four Virginians who had just arrived in Tennessee and Kentucky. An unknown group of Indians sacked a Virginian migrant convoy and scalped a boy named Sherrard. Retaliating Euroamericans killed at least twenty-two Indians that summer, including the murder of Bald Eagle by the Hacker’s Creek gang. Just when it seemed that the retaliatory murders had initiated a war between the “Shawnee and Virginians,” the Wawiachtano, Kickapoo, and the Delaware “Chief in Gekelmukpechunk” held a successful council for mutual peace between the parties and the “happy news” spread through the eastern Ohio; “everything has been put aside and peace will prevail.”

The Ohio Indian and outsider armistices ended within a year. Surveyors, hunters, and migrants continued to make their way into Kentucky. According to Alexander McKee, the Ohio Indians appeared “determined upon opposing every-measure that may contribute to this near approach of their territory.” Meanwhile, Croghan’s surveyor and agent Michael Cresap “spread with much Industry” rumors that the king of England had taken control of all the land west of the Allegheny Mountains. Finding Captain Bullitt, the Ohio Company’s surveyor, in Indian country incited Ohio Seneca and

---

277 Speech of Kyashuta, September, 10, 1771, EAID 3.761-2.
Shawnee to attack any Euroamerican they might find.\textsuperscript{278} By the summer of 1773, small bands of formerly neutral Ohio Indians began to side with the Shawnee. That summer the Shawnee hosted a meeting between “Indians from Nations westward and [the] Southern Indians” as well as the Six Nations in which they coordinated a plan to “strike the English.”\textsuperscript{279}

As war loomed, local aggression swelled. When Ohio Indians and outsiders met each other in the backwoods during 1773, their encounters often ended with the loss of surveying tools, hunting booty, and increasingly the loss of lives.\textsuperscript{280} As far west as the Wabash, “renegadoes of the Mingo Indians” sacked surveyors at the Great Falls of the Ohio and killed at least one Euroamerican in their party.\textsuperscript{281} Clusters of Ohio Indians scalped traders and surveyors wherever they found them in the Ohio country or hunting grounds. Without gaining Indian permission, new settlers and recently arrived surveyors asserted their hostile ownership over vast quantities of Indian land into modern-day Kentucky and Ohio.\textsuperscript{282} In one incident in September 1773, an unidentified group of Indians stalked and killed six members of a migration, including the son of its leader, Captain William Russell. Composed of French and Indian War and Pontiac’s War veterans and families, the group intended on settling near the Ohio River “in the limits of the expected new government.” In 1773 the Ohio Indians not only meant to distress the

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{278} Croghan to Lord Dunmore, 1774, Croghan Papers, HSP.
\textsuperscript{280} Extract of a letter from Pittsburgh, October 7, 1773, \textit{The Virginia Gazette}, Williamsburg, Virginia.
\textsuperscript{281} Extract of a letter from Pittsburgh, October 7, 1773, \textit{The Virginia Gazette}, Williamsburg, Virginia.
\textsuperscript{282} June 25 entry in “The Diary of the little Indian Congregation in Welhik Thuppek and Gnadenhutten on the Mushkingum from March 24\textsuperscript{th} until the 8\textsuperscript{th} of June 1773,” Wellenreuther and Wessel, ed., \textit{The Moravian Mission Diaries of David Zeisberger, 1772-1781}, 141.
\end{footnotes}
migrants, but to warn away would-be Euroamerican migrants by leaving one body “mangled in an inhuman manner; and there was left in him a dart-arrow.”

Personifying the transition from interethnic peace to war in April 1774, George Rogers Clark and eighty to ninety surveyors, hunters, and male would-be settlers, the majority of whom were military veterans, met with Shawnee musket fire along the Little Kanawha River as they traveled to Kentucky. The group was comprised entirely of Ohio Valley newcomers who had little involvement in the creolization process and had deliberately rejected peaceful interethnic relations in favor of the extermination of Indians. The Shawnee captured and robbed, but later released seven of Clark’s surveyors. Clark’s men, however, killed eleven of the Shawnee. To outsiders, the attack appeared as a declaration of war, but the Shawnee had not scalped any of the men or mutilated the bodies. Instead the Shawnee had used their occasional acts of violence to scare off the Euroamericans and hold Indian ground west of the Ohio River.

Outsider surveyors and settlers did not heed these Indian warnings, failing to understand the language of symbols hostile Indians directed at them. Through fear and ignorance of the shared local interethnic culture, newcomers saw only savage violence. Their warnings lost in translations, the Shawnee transitioned from warning away Euroamericans to engaging them in warfare, affirming during an Indian council that they

---

283 December 23, 1773, Virginia Gazette, Williamsburg, Virginia.
284 George Rogers Clark to Samuel Brown, June 17, 1798, George Rogers Clark Papers, 1771-1781, Virginia series, 8:3-9.
285 Clark to Samuel Brown, June 17, 1798, George Rogers Clark papers, 8:3-9; Sipe, Indian Wars of Pennsylvania, 489-90; Edmunds, The Shawnee Prophet, 9; Information by Express, May 12, 1774, AA, ser. 4, 1:275; White, Middle Ground, 363.
would “kill all the Virginians they could find on the River & rob & whip the
Pennsylvanians.” When a group of surveyors working for George Washington passed
another group they were told to “take care of [their] scalps.” In July 1774, a band of
Cherokees killed at least six surveyors and expelled the rest from the Kentucky woods.
Meanwhile, the Shawnee killed “several” Euroamericans north of the Clinch River. Regardless of whether it was an Indian or Euroamerican committing an act of aggression,
the perpetrator typically lived outside the region. Agent of Indian Affairs Alexander
McKee distinguished between local Indians who had “given great proof of their pacifist
disposition” as inhabitants, along with whites, of a “defenseless country.” McKee blamed
the violence exclusively on “the Virginians” and “a few Mingos and Shawnees, who have
long been refractory.”

In June, around the same time as the bloody assaults on the Little Kanawha River,
Dunmore’s agent, the newly appointed militia captain John Connolly, circulated a
deceptive letter warning that the Shawnee had declared war on all Euroamericans in the
backcountry. Connolly’s letter touched off precipitous retaliation against the
newcomers and all Indians. Members of George Rogers Clark’s group turned their
attention from taking up land in unoccupied Kentucky to seizing Indian land by conquest
with a strike at Horsehead Bottom, a Shawnee town on the Scioto River in Ohio

286 John Floyd to William Preston, April 26, 1774, Preston Collection, DM, ser. 3 QQ, DLAR. Hanson’s Journal, April –August 9, 1774, April 20, 1774, in Dunmore’s War Documents,110-133.
287 Hanson’s Journal, April –August 9, 1774, April 20, 1774, in Dunmore’s War Documents,110-133.
288 Fargher, Daniel Boone, 101-2.
290 Remarks on the Proceedings of Doctor Connolly, June 25, PA 4: 528-9; Sipe, Indian Wars of Pennsylvania, 490; White, Middle Ground, 362.
According to Clark, “action was had and war declared in the most solemn manner; and that evening two scalps were brought into the camp.”

The actions of Grand Ohio and Illinois Company speculators sparked a mass movement of surveyors, hunters, and newcomer settlers to the Ohio Valley in 1772-73. Inadvertently, the outsiders’ arrival set in motion population pressures, interethnic conflict, and the displacement of Ohio Indians, which in turn triggered a shift in the Ohio Shawnee’s perception of land occupation and use rights. As agents for land speculators encouraged new migrations and mislead newcomers into violent altercation, Shawnee warnings to intruders went unheard. To prevent the further loss of Ohio Indian sovereignty, small bands of predominantly Shawnee, Cherokee, and Mingo moved from condemning Euroamerican settlements to a defensive war against them.

*The Transforming hands of Land Ideology*

Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in North America Thomas Gage spent 1773 to 1774 in London, delivering an accurate account of the mounting interethnic violence on the mid-Atlantic frontier. He blamed the aggression squarely on the Grand Ohio Company and Ohio Company of Virginia’s dueling push into the Indian country. Following Gage’s advice to avoid an Indian war, in 1774 the Crown government rejected the Grand Ohio Company’s grant and disappointed Ohio Company investors with the

---

291 Clark to Samuel Brown, June 17, 1798, George Rogers Clark papers, 3-9; Sipe, *Indian Wars of Pennsylvania*, 489-90.
292 Clark to Samuel Brown, June 17, 1798, George Rogers Clark papers, 3-9; Sipe, *Indian Wars of Pennsylvania*, 489-90.
refusal to expand Virginia’s western boundary. By December 1773 legislators in London
began planning spring passage of the Quebec Act, an edict that would in part recommit
the boundaries established by the Royal Proclamation of 1763. Hotly and publicly
debated, the act threatened to create a final blockade against speculators hoping to cash in
on western land. In June the Privy Council informed land speculating-officials, including
Lord Dunmore, that the Proclamation Line of 1763 and the forthcoming Quebec Act
would nullify all land west of the Alleghenies. Rising port city insurrections and the
Quebec Act and produced a new sense of urgency among land speculating officials. In
May of 1774, a month shy of the Quebec Act’s passage, speculators finally succeeded in
triggering a war along the British North American frontier.293

In an effort to skirt the Proclamation of 1763, both the Grand Ohio and Ohio
Companies offered a rapid succession of land policy interpretations, moving onto the
next when each argument failed to gain support. Speculators first proposed the Crown
government as the only authority with the power to sell land. When the Crown refused to
sanction the land grants they requested, speculators turned to a claim centered on Indian
geopolitical control. Finally, when this too failed, the Grand Ohio and Ohio Company of
Virginia restored a classic imperial impulse: colonists could take land in conquest and
through participation in war secure a land warrant. The frontier’s progressively more
hostile environment fostered an impulse to eradicate Ohio Indians for land and
Euroamerican survival.

293 Woody Holton, Forced Founders Indians, Debtors, Slaves & the Making of the American Revolution in Virginia
Notably, the peaceable coexistence known in the eastern Ohio Valley from 1768 to 1773 justified little day-to-day involvement of British military or colonial officials in the region.\textsuperscript{294} Local Indian-Euroamerican peacekeeping strategies allowed the interethnic neighborhood to sustain itself. Yet by the end of 1773 and beginning of 1774, the rising number of violent exchanges between Ohio Indians, outsider surveyors, and newcomers required colonial officials to reassert their authority in the region or else simply abandon it to war and chaos.

From 1768 through 1774 Euroamerican and Indian settlers, land speculators, and Indian and colonial agents relied on an assortment of historic, actual, perceived, blatantly concocted, and false forms of geopolitical sovereignty to support land claims in the Ohio Valley.\textsuperscript{295} Despite the plethora of opinions, no change in land policy had taken place during the same time period. According to the Crown, the Royal Proclamation of 1763 had settled the issue, specifying that “Sovereignty, Protection, and Dominion” of the eastern Ohio Valley remained with the Crown government and for the exclusive “use of the said Indians.” The Proclamation forbade the “Settlement” or “taking Possession of any of the Lands” as well as the “purchasing Lands of the Indians.” Within three months of the decree, the Proclamation became public knowledge, appearing in newspapers


\textsuperscript{295} Griffin, \textit{American Leviathan}, 101-2; McConnell, \textit{A Country Between}, 268. Griffin and McConnell argue that a “vacuum” of power offered a void for speculator, settlers, and government’s to take advantage of.
throughout England and North America, specifying that the Crown retained the first option to purchase all land henceforth sold by any of the American Indians.296

Despite Sir William Johnson’s attempt to extend the Proclamation Line to the Ohio River, the original coordinates and details remained in effect a decade later in 1773. The Royal Proclamation made speculation west of the Alleghenies illegal and nullified all methods of land claims, purchases, or Indian grants claimed by speculators and the new wave of migrants into the eastern valley. Accordingly, the Crown had declared the eastern valley a space for use, not for purchase or land tenure. With the Crown’s rebuke of private Indian-Euroamerican land sales, the Crown government positioned itself directly into the land purchasing process. Indians could sell land to the Crown, and by filing an application for a warrant, one might purchase that land through the British government. The Proclamation did not eliminate or lessen Indian sovereignty; it only attempted to use bureaucratic oversight and standardization to prevent the confusion and abuse that characterized private sales of western lands.297

Speculators had supported the creation of the Proclamation Line, in the words of George Washington, “as a temporary expedient to quiet the Minds of the Indians.” Yet Washington also expected that it would disappear once it succeeding in forging a quick peace with western Indians; the line “must fall of course in a few years especially when


those Indians are consenting to our Occupying the Lands.” Yet six years later, speculators realized the Crown had employed temporary language in the Proclamation to appease land jobbers instead. In this, speculating officials turned into staunch opponents of the line. Now they needed to remove the Crown, as the obstacle between Indian-Euroamerican direct purchases, and settlers and speculators turned to defending Indian sovereignty.

One of the first ploys used by the Grand Ohio and Illinois Company speculators was to retroactively purchase the Indian grants made to Great Britain at the Fort Stanwix and Hard Labor treaties of 1768 and repay the cost of the diplomatic negotiations. Virginia paid the Cherokee £ 2,500, and the Grand Ohio Company paid the King nearly £11,000 for the cost of the Fort Stanwix Treaty. The speculators thereby reaffirmed the autonomy of Indian leaders and thus the Indian right to engage in land transactions, a fact not overlooked by the Ohio Iroquois, Delaware, Shawnee, and Cherokee. Instead of a diplomatic agreement, which would have transferred the land to the Crown, speculators argued that the land had been transferred directly to the payees, themselves.

299 Stuart Banner offers an alternative understanding, arguing that the Royal Proclamation altered settlers’ perceptions of Indian land ownership. Banner states that prior to 1763, European settlers believed Indians owned land like Europeans, but the post-proclamation inability of settlers to purchase land directly from Indians decreased Indian sovereignty in the minds of Europeans. This argument does not match my research. Instead, the Crown’s prevention of Indian-European sales encouraged settlers and speculators to argue that American Indians had as much, if not more, sovereignty than the British government, and the British government could not prevent a sovereign people from exercising their rights as sovereigns. Banner, Power on the Frontier, 108-11.
Second, the claimants dispossessed the local Indians who occupied the land and in doing so discounted local authorization of Euroamerican land claims. In place of local authority, speculators reallocated Indian sovereignty exclusively to the Six Nations. While this position did not address individual settlers’ land claims, it meant that where Euroamericans settled, the Crown’s sovereignty followed. The speculators thereby invented rights for British subjects and reinitiated adventure imperialism that attempted to protect individual land grants despite that the argument ran contrary to the Crown’s Proclamation.\(^{301}\) In an alternate legal opinion titled the “Vindication of Virginia’s Claim Against the Proposed Colony of Vandalia,” a member of the Illinois Company combated the Grand Ohio’s land claim, arguing that the Pennsylvanians had secured their titles from Indians, when only the Crown had the ability to legitimize titles.\(^{302}\)

Although the “Vindication” was not published, the document did circulate and appears as the rationale behind the subsequent strategy employed by Lord Dunmore. Competing with Pennsylvania’s land sales in 1774, Dunmore opened the Virginia Land Office. The Land Office sold land at cut-rate prices compared to Pennsylvania and honored preexisting settlers over absentee landowners. When Lord Dunmore began accepting local land applications, even committed Pennsylvanians such as George Croghan applied. In doing so, Croghan supported Virginia’s jurisdiction over the region. Dunmore founded his right to sell land in the King’s blanket sovereignty over all

\(^{301}\) “Opinions regarding the Grant to William Trent,” 1775, HSP.

purchased land, sovereignty he interpreted as passing to his royal office as governor.\textsuperscript{303}

For Croghan, at least temporarily, supporting Dunmore and Virginia represented a last effort at solidifying his Indian land grants. Croghan explained, “I am ready to comply with the terms of the [Virginia] colony and have my property put on quit rents[,] as the rest of the majesty’s subjects[,] the property I hold here I purchased from the Natives in the year 1749….and on parts of which I made very valuable improvements…..” Croghan added that he had further lands “confirmed” to him by the Six Nations at the 1768 Treaty of Fort Stanwix, but that settlers had made “forcible entries on [his] land” and he had “been deprived the use of [his] property…till Virginia should extend their jurisdiction or his majesty should grant a new colony.” Croghan chose his language to demonstrate how he had met requirements for the multiple layers and understandings of land ideology. First the “Natives” as first people had right of discovery and could rightfully sell or confirm their land to him. Second, he had both occupied and improved the land. Undoubtedly, he had a right to the land and now asked for royal approval through the colony of Virginia to legitimize his claims.\textsuperscript{304}

At other points, both the Grand Ohio Company and the Illinois Company relied on the same resources and common ideological stance to protect their land interests. During one of his early lobbying trips to London for the Grand Ohio Company, Samuel Wharton received a copy of a 1757 legal opinion on colonization written for the East India Company’s royal charter in India. Dubbed the Yorke-Camden Opinion, a

\textsuperscript{303} Barbara Rasmussen, \textit{Absentee Landowning and Exploitation in West Virginia, 1760-1920} (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1994), 23 & 27.
\textsuperscript{304} Croghan to Lord Dunmore, April 9, 1774, Croghan Papers, HSP.
counterfeit copy circulated among land speculators in 1773, reaching George Croghan, William Murray, George Washington, Lord Dunmore, the Gratz brothers, Richard Henderson, and several others. George Washington went so far as fixing a copy of the opinion to the cover of his pocket notebook. Not surprisingly, the language of the modified copy was edited to reflect landed interests in the western frontiers of Virginia and Pennsylvania and pointedly titled “The opinion of my Lord Camden and the late Lord Morden, that His Majesty’s subjects were at liberty to purchase whatever quantity of lands they chose of Indians….” The forger had even transcribed the word “Colony” as “Company.” Like earlier schemes, the counterfeit opinion ignored the geographic constraints established by the Royal Proclamation of 1763 as well as the Crown’s option to be the first to purchase Indian land. This unprecedented legal opinion side-stepped the Crown’s authority to block private-Indian purchases: “In respect to such places as have been or shall be acquired by Treaty or Grant from any of the Indian Princes or Governments; Your Majesty’s Letters Patents are not necessary, the property of the soil vesting in the Grantees by the Indian Grants.”305 Starting a new trend that would reverse past legal opinions, speculators contended that their best chance of securing land claims was by situating sovereignty over the land with the Six Nations. Only by assigning earlier authority to Indians could speculators gain direct access to Indian grants and thus the West.

After the British Government condemned the Yorke-Camden opinion as fraudulent and irrelevant, William Trent, in his capacity of attorney for the Grand Ohio Company, followed a similar logic but also applied precedents created by European colonialism. Trent claimed “Native” communities had held the right of first “discovery.” Sovereignty had exchanged hands between multiple Indian polities to the Six Nations through “first occupancy or conquest.” Indians, as a “free and independent people,” had a right to then “cede, or transfer” land to whom they choose.\(^{306}\) The argument appeared to confirm Indian sovereignty, but only so the speculators might then claim the land; self-interested investors Benjamin Franklin and Patrick Henry sustained the complicated legal opinion. While engaging in rhetoric advancing Indian sovereignty, speculators continued to ignore local Indians who actually inhabited or relied on the land, such as the Delaware or Shawnee, and instead consolidated geopolitical power in the hands of a limited number of Indian leaders (usually the absentee Iroquois). With relative ease, speculators could then transfer control of land from cooperative Indian leadership to themselves.\(^{307}\)

In just one example of land syndicates ascribing authority to Indians for the purpose of claiming land, in 1773 men from the Illinois Company traveled to Kaskaskia in the Illinois country and obtained a land grant for 23,000 square miles of prime land at the Mississippi-Ohio confluence. The deed provided the Illinois Company exclusive control over the “northwestern fur trade” and interior trade routes, with the latter including access to the port of New Orleans. With Dunmore facing the imminent loss of

\(^{306}\) “Opinions regarding the Grant to William Trent,” 1775, HSP.

his governorship, he supported the purchase. Joining with Illinois Company investors, Dunmore formed the Wabash Land Company to purchase additional land along the Wabash River in Indiana.\textsuperscript{308} Dunmore’s rash actions were specifically aimed to spite the March 10, 1774 Proclamation which reiterated its 1763 predecessor, nullifying all Indian purchases recorded after 1763 as “fraudulent.”\textsuperscript{309} Thwarted yet again, western lands speculators made one final ideological attempt at securing their land claims, relying on the theory of land acquisition by physical conquest. In the words of David McClure on the eve of war: “Almost all new settlements are purchased with great toil and sufferings, & many with blood. This little valley in its first settlement was doomed to feel its share.”\textsuperscript{310}

\textit{British Conquistadors: The War we have been Waiting For}

In 1774 Lord Dunmore dismissed the Virginia Assembly and militarized Virginia’s western borderland with organized militias. As far away as Fairfax in the tidewater, nearly three hundred miles from Fort Pitt, men began training to become “masters of the military exercise.” Owing to concocted reports colonists well outside the frontier believed their “civil rights and liberties and all that is dear to British subjects and freeman” needed protection from “the Indian enemy.” Yet even contemporaries recognized speculators’ desire for western lands as driving the colonies into war with the

\textsuperscript{309} July, 1773, The Diary of David McClure, 129.
\textsuperscript{310} July, 1773, The Diary of David McClure, 129.
Ohio Shawnee. One letter published anonymously in the Pennsylvania Gazette called Dunmore the “tool” of “Land Jobbers.”

Intent on gaining control of land in western Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and the Indian Country extending to the Mississippi, Dunmore and other speculating officials organized a war against the Ohio Shawnee and any other Ohio Indian who attempted to prevent their seizure of land. Using ongoing Indian-outsider violence in the Ohio country to stoke local settler anxieties, Colonial Lord Dunmore and George Croghan had found a job for John Connolly and Michael Cresap to bolster claims that the Shawnee, Cherokee, and Ohio Indians had commenced a war with all Euroamericans living in the backcountry. Both men had a great deal to gain from destabilizing the region.

Connolly’s self-interest lay in taking up large land grants as well as his desire “to distress the Indian Trade” and profit when he reestablished Euroamerican-Indian trade networks with himself at the center. From a middling Maryland family whose farm had failed, Cresap, like Clark, found new hope in the Ohio Valley, and in 1773-74 he attempted to construct a new settlement of outsiders south of Wheeling. Connolly exaggerated reports of interethnic attacks as well as blatantly fabricated assaults that had not occurred. No better than Connolly, Cresap manipulated settlers’ fears to create a great “commotion.”

---

311 Letter from Carlisle, July 4, 1774, Pennsylvania Gazette, Philadelphia PA.
312 Anderson and Cayton, The Dominion of War, 150.
313 Arthur St. Clair to Penn, June 22, 1774, AA, ser. 4, 1:473.
314 Sipe, The Indian wars of Pennsylvania, 490; White, Middle Ground, 357.
315 Lord Dunmore’s Proclamation, enclosure, Aeneas Mackay to Penn, May 5, 1774. AA, ser 4, 1:283; Griffin, American Leviathan, 98; Speech of Kyashuta, September, 10, 1771, EAID, 3:761-2.
New settlers in the Ohio Valley had clearly moved from attempting to establish land tenure through discovery, surveying, and colonial application processes to establishing land rights through victory and conquest. Dunmore used the newcomers to support his own interests and the renewed argument that Euroamericans could take land by right of conquest. Like Croghan, Dunmore circulated a petition in which “587 inhabitants” requested the new territories including western Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee remain within Dunmore’s jurisdiction as governor. Virginian newcomers disregarded the Indians’ sovereignty as well as their participation in treaties with Great Britain. As subjects representing the Crown, the Virginians bypassed earlier Indian inhabitants and originated their claim through an imperial right to land as “Adventurers.”

Without enough support to establish their claims through bloodshed, members of the “Virginians” and other newcomers killed Indians indiscriminately. The Ohio River was no longer safe to travel. Virginia gangs “fired” on friendly Indian families on “the Indian Shore,” with Ohio Indians attacking boats and killing settlers in return. Shawnee and Seneca struck at Euroamerican families who lived at the fringe of the frontier, including the Stroud murder that sparked the Hacker Creek gang’s slaughter of Indian families at Bull Town massacre. John Connolly and the “Banditti” Virginians lay in wait on trails frequently taken by Indians and Euroamericans and “killed several

---

“Savages” (in reality peaceable Indians who had long allied with the colonies) and “plundered the Traders.” In one example of Indians attempting to continue peace, when one faction of nonviolent Shawnee sent Euroamerican traders away from their towns, they sent them with a protective Shawnee and Delaware guard who Connolly tried to kill. As preexisting settlers attempted to reestablish their relationship with the Shawnee through reparative gifts, Connolly attempted to “foment the disturbance between the Indians” and themselves. When the Shawnee left with their gifts, Connolly “ordered out forty-one of his Militia to take [the Shawnee] at all events and send them to his Guard House.”

Michael Cresap also led roving gangs and war parties, leaving exposed the mutilated and scalped bodies of Indians to express their intention of eradicating them from the Ohio Valley. Wanting to upset Indian-Euroamerican relations and determined to take land by conquest, in late April 1774 Cresap swore “that he wou’d put every Indian he met with on the River to Death…” Much like the Hacker’s Creek Indian haters, Cresap specifically pursued Indians of the Valley’s interethnic neighborhood and he declared his intention to kill the “Village of Indians living on Yellow Creek,” the Mingo participants in the valley’s exchange of goods within the region from Baker’s Station. Cresap also shot at Euroamericans he found among Indians.

The day after killing the Mingo at Baker’s Bottom Indian haters shot,

319 Gage to Dartmouth, July 27, 1774, Correspondence of Thomas Gage, 1:362-3.
320 June 29, 1774, Pennsylvania Journal, Philadelphia, PA.
321 Petition of Inhabitants of Pittsburgh, June 25, 1774, PA, ser. 1, 4:536-7.
tomahawked, or stabbed between six and twelve defenseless Indians from Yellow Creek, including the brother and sister of their leader, Logan. Although it remains unclear if Cresap and/or Daniel Greathouse, a member of Cresap’s war party, orchestrated the massacre at Yellow Creek, within six days Cresap and Greathouse had killed three more Yellow Creek Indians, with Cresap scalping at least one. The war party indiscriminately, shot and scalped twelve peaceable Shawnees living near Wheeling’s settlements on Captina Creek.  

John Drinning, a member of both the Cresap and Connolly gangs “acknowledged, or rather boasted, of having killed the Indians, [w]ith Mr. Cresap, [he]is one of Mr. Connolly’s Lieutenants and is at the present time [he is] out somewhere with the command of a party to take scalps, from [friendly Indians] I suppose; a murderer… will never meet an enemy on fair terms.” Cresap and his gang of fifteen men also attacked a canoe whose occupants represented the interethnic neighborhood with an English man, Stephans, and two unnamed Indians – a Cherokee and Delaware. Cresap and his men sought to kill all three. Stephans barely escaped the assault, but the Cresap gang shot and killed Stephans’s Cherokee and Delaware associates and then scalped them. Leaving their bloody work the group continued down the river, later firing on four unrelated canoes they found that same day.  

No one was safe from Cresap; who

---

324 Arthur St. Clair to Penn, June 22, 1774, AA, ser. 4, 1:473
325 Dunmore to Dartmouth, Official Report, December 1774, DHDW, 368-95; May 1, 1774 and May 3, 774 entries in Alexander McKee’s Journal, Sir William Johnson Papers, 12:1095-6 &1097-8; Intelligence Received at Pittsburgh, May 23, 1774, AA,1:345.
reportedly killed at least forty-nine Indians in the early spring of 1774 alone.\textsuperscript{326} Fearing the repercussions of their “barbarous Murder[s],” Cresap and members of his gang attempted to flee the area with their families.\textsuperscript{327}

Bloodshed was met with more bloodshed. Logan, the surviving member and relative of the Yellow Creek Indians killed at Baker’s Bottom, set out to kill Euroamerican families in kind. Logan, a local community leader, had lived in the Susquehanna Valley during the French and Indian War and Pontiac’s War, where he had maintained positive relations with local Euroamerican neighbors on the Juanita River settlers, even warning them about impending Indian attacks.\textsuperscript{328} After years of participation in the interethnic community, the slaughter of his family shocked Logan, who turned against the interethnic experiment and wanted an end to peace.\textsuperscript{329} Following Baker’s Bottom, Logan traveled the Ohio country building support among small factions of Mingo, Shawnee, and other Ohio Indians who wanted to push Euroamericans from the region with violence.

Logan allied with a small group of Indians who stood out as particularly hostile to Euroamericans and interethnic peace and who, like their Indian hating equivalents, targeted preexisting members of the interethnic neighborhood. Rogue Indians, just over

\textsuperscript{326} Thomas Wharton to Samuel Wharton, May 17, 1774, Wharton Family Papers, HSP; John Crawford to Draper, 1831, Interviews of adult children of the Frontier, Pittsburgh and Northwest Virginia Papers, DM, ser. nn, vol. 6. Locals believed that both Cresap and Daniel Greathouse participated in the Mingo murders at Baker’s Station. Although the modern interpretation is that Greathouse led the Euroamericans who killed the Mingo families at Yellow Creek, it is important to see these groups as functioning within a broader movement and as part of a larger shared strike against Ohio Valley Indians.
\textsuperscript{327} May 3, 1774 entry in Alexander Mckee’s Journal, Sir William Johnson Papers, 12:1097-8.
\textsuperscript{328} Joseph Dobson, July 9, 1968, Baynton, Wharton and Morgan Correspondence, BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR.
\textsuperscript{329} Wallace, \textit{The Travels of John Heckewelder in Frontier America}, 118.
a dozen in all, on the fringe of Ohio Indian communities and culture, these Indians desired to incite war and annihilate Euroamericans.330 Rather than attack the violent outsiders, Logan and his men killed or captured settlers from established communities, picking off families at Old Redstone, on Ten Mile, Muddy, Dunkard, Simpson, Reedy Creeks in western Pennsylvania and western Virginia.331 At “the house of one William Speir,” Logan’s gang had created a shocking spectacle by leaving Speir, “his wife, and four children murdered and scalped, with a broad-axe sticking in the man’s breast, and his wife lying on her back, entirely naked.”332 At Reedy Creek, Logan slaughtered the Robertson family and left their bodies laid out on their cabin floor with a war club and a note for Cresap. Logan left no question that in killing his Euroamerican neighbors he intended to avenge the murder of his own village and what he saw as a betrayal of the interethnic neighborhood by Cresap’s murders. In a widely circulated speech supposedly sent to Lord Dunmore, but possibly the letter left with the murdered Robinson family, Logan lamented,

I appeal to any white man today, if ever he entered Logan’s cabin hungry, and I gave him no meat; if ever he came cold or naked, and I gave him not clothing. During the course of the last long and bloody war, Logan remained idle in his tent an advocate for peace, nay, such was my love for the whites, that those of my own country pointed at me as they passed by, and said, ‘Logan is the friend of white men.’ I had even thought to live with you, but for injuries of one man. Col. Cressop, the last spring, in cold blood and unprovoked cut off all the relations of

330 White, Middle Ground, 361-2.
331 Sipe, The Indian Wars of Pennsylvania, 495-6.
332 “Extract of a Letter Received at Philadelphia,” June 19, 1774, AA, ser. 4, 1:429 and Intelligence at Williamsburg, Virginia, June 16, 1774, AA, ser. 4, 1:405.
Logan …this called on me for revenge.  

In all, Logan took four captives and collected thirteen scalps, and his men took another thirty scalps, including those of at least six children.  

By July 1774 Commander-in-Chief Thomas Gage summed up the interethnic violence on the frontier, observing “many Hostilities committed on the Ohio, by the Virginians who have gone into that Country upon the Indians, and the Savages retaliated. Many have been killed on both Sides…”

To no avail, the valley’s preexisting Euroamerican and Indian settlers lodged “complaints” with regional military leaders regarding “Malicious” acts performed by Ohio Indians and Virginia intruders. The preexisting population lived in fear now that an Indian war had commenced all around them.  

In May 1774 over fifty Indians were murdered; in June eighteen Euroamericans died. Yet neither Croghan nor Dunmore sought punishment of the offending Indian haters, an act which would have helped in ending the reciprocal violence. Instead, Dunmore used the localized violence as an excuse to begin an imperial war. Throughout the summer, Dunmore appointed militia captains who recruited some 3,000 men, the vast majority from Virginia’s most

335 Gage to Dartmouth, July 27, 1774, CTG, 2:362-3.
336 Lewis Bennett to Draper, December 18, 1848, Interviews of Adult Children of the Frontier, Pittsburgh and Northwest Virginia Papers, DM, ser. c, vol. 11.
southwestern counties bordering the frontier. Rather than instructing his military to keep peace, Dunmore insisted they preemptively attack Indians. The mood traveled through the ranks. Militiamen in James Robertson’s squad “Seem[ed] Resolute for A Scalp or two,” and Robertson promised five pounds “for the first Indians hands” brought to him.

The massacre at Baker’s Station and the resulting interethnic murders brought the business of everyday life in the Ohio Valley to a standstill and made travel west of the Susquehanna Valley unsafe. Despite having lived in peace for five years, the Cresap and Greathouse murder of “a number of peaceable” Indians set Euroamericans fleeing for their lives. Settlers either “moved off, or gathered in large numbers, and [made] places of defense to secure themselves.” One local writer sent word to his brother that “all the poor people who are settled west of the Allegheny Mountain are either moved off or gathered in large numbers making places of defense.” Families gathered in the larger homes of neighbors as though they were blockhouses, pickets went up around houses as improvised stockades, and settlers assembled to build central forts like Hanna’s Town. Upper Monongahela country settler John Crawford described the region’s people as hurrying to erect shelters: “The People instantly set about building Forts in every

---

340 George Morgan to an unnamed surveyor, June 6, 1774, BWM correspondence, BWM Papers, reel 2, DLAR.
341 Anonymous letter from Cave Cumberland, June 21, 1774, AA, 1:435.
direction on both sides of the Monongahela River with the full expectation that there
would be an Indian War.” Later settler reflections remembered the year as “the panic of
1774” as communities scrambled to build a chain of over thirty-seven rudimentary
civilian “forts, blockhouses and stockades” along the southwestern border of
Pennsylvania alone. 343

Instead of joining the Virginia militia forming under John Connolly, many settlers
chose to avoid confrontation all together and fled the region. General Gage described the
violence as “[driving Euroamerican settlers] back again to the East Side of the Alleghany
Mountains.” Indeed according to some accounts, entire settlements emptied. In the
course of one day, over a thousand settlers “deserted” homes and goods to head eastward
over rivers and mountains. 344

Fearing the region’s depopulation, Dunmore, Connolly, and Croghan protected
their land claims by designing plans to confine the vulnerable population of eastern Ohio
Valley settlers between the Ohio River and the Allegheny Mountains. Croghan and
Connolly hired men from Virginia to prevent settlers from “flying” from the region.
Dunmore supported regional fort building, mustered militias, and called on Virginia to
supply civilians with munitions to defend themselves. Dunmore’s agents successfully

343 John Crawford to Draper, 1831, Interviews of adult children of the Frontier, Pittsburgh and Northwest Virginia
Papers, DM, ser. nn, vol. 6; Gage to Dartmouth, August 29, 1774, CTG, 1:386-9; Albert, The Frontier Forts of Western
Pennsylvania vol. 2:226; Charles Lukens to Lukens, November 25, 1773, Lukens-Lenox Papers, Land Office Papers,
PSA; Hidreth and Culter, Biographical and historical memoirs of the early pioneer settlers of Ohio, 469, 471 & 481-2;
Intelligence from William McMahan, Magistrate of Ohio Country, September 21, 1786 and Hutchins to the President
of Congress, October 12, 1786, Hutchins Papers, HSP; Doddridge, Notes, LCP. 310; Crumrine, History of the
Washington County, 74 & 146.
344 June 22, 1774, Rivington’s New-York Gazetteer, Philadelphia, PA: Gage to Dartmouth, July 27, 1774, CTG, 1:362-
3; Sipe, The Indian Wars of Pennsylvania, 497.
prevented depopulation by distributing firearms but in doing so created a “general panic” and increased violence among a trapped, and now armed, people.\textsuperscript{345} When even Croghan attempted to “flee” the region the backcountry inhabitants prevented him from “flying for fear of war.”\textsuperscript{346} The inability to leave, continued retaliatory violence, and terror created support for Dunmore’s militia to defend settlers of the backcountry.\textsuperscript{347} Other locals, both Euroamerican and Indian, attempted to keep peace in the valley. Back at Fort Pitt, Alexander McKee met with Guyasuta and invoked the region’s language of reconciliation, assuring him that the murders at Baker’s Bottom reflected the “Barbarity” of just “a few rash inconsiderate White People” “from Virginia.” Similarly, Guyasuta made known that the “Shawnee’s Conduct” had nothing to do with the feelings of the Six Nations or the local Delaware.\textsuperscript{348}

Ohio Shawnee, Mingo, Wyandot, and Delaware leader Cornstalk and Delaware leader White Eyes confirmed their willingness to abandon bad feelings for a reestablishment of peace.\textsuperscript{349} Cornstalk explained his “good Intentions” and the Shawnee’s “peaceable manner.” The problem was not the preexisting population in Pennsylvania, only the newcomers: “Virginians.”\textsuperscript{350} According to Cornstalk and other

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item\textsuperscript{345} Michael Crispos (sic) to Croghan, (1774), John Connolly to Croghan, (1774), and Croghan to John Connolly, June 3, 1774, Croghan Papers, HSP. Neither Cresap’s nor Connolly’s letters are dated but both cite information placing their authorship in 1774. Griffin, \textit{American Leviathan}, 112.
\item\textsuperscript{346} Arthur St. Clair to Penn, June 22, 1774, AA, ser. 4, 1:473.
\item\textsuperscript{347} Dunmore to Dartmouth, Official Report, December 1774, DHDW, 368-95.
\item\textsuperscript{348} May 3, 1774, May 4, 1774, and May 5, 1774 entries in Alexander Mckee’s Journal, Sir William Johnson Papers, 12:1097-9 & 1100.
\item\textsuperscript{349} Conference of Six Nations, Shawnee and Delaware Chiefs and a Number of Pittsburgh, March 8-13, 1774, Journal of Alexander McKee, Sir William Johnson Papers, 12:1083-86.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Scioto Shawnee Indian leaders, including Hardman and the White Fish, the Mingo were “destructive of our Peace & a Friendship that We are fond to continue with the English.”

Punishment of the perpetrators remained the only missing dynamic from the local ritual for maintaining peace in the interethnic neighborhood. “Several chiefs of the Six Nations and Delaware” called on Croghan to enforce justice with “what may be best to be done with those flagrant offenders of our peace.” Keyashuta traveled between Sir William Johnson and the Six Nations and urged Indians throughout the Ohio Country to maintain peace. Likewise, many of the local Delaware, Munsee, and Moravian Indians living in Christian towns such as Gnadenhutten wanted to avoid regional war and turned toward peacekeeping strategies. But no local peacekeeping strategies could stop the unraveling of the eastern Ohio Valley’s interethnic neighborhood by rogue Ohio Indians, the commercial interests of colonial officials, or private land interests of Ohio Valley newcomers.

By October 1774 retaliatory violence culminated in Lord Dunmore’s War, fought in western Virginia. With around 1,000 Virginia militiamen against just 700 Shawnee under Cornstalk, Dunmore’s War reflected the objectives of only a minority of outsiders to the Eastern Ohio Valley. Dunmore’s army of Virginians emerged victorious and for their loss the Shawnee sacrificed Kentucky and Tennessee. With the Shawnee cession of

---

352 “A speech delivered by several chiefs of the Six Nations and Delaware,” May 9, 1774, Croghan Papers, HSP; McConnell, A Country Between, 278; White, Middle Ground, 361 & 364.
Indian land, the interethnic neighborhood represented the most significant casualty of the day. Following Dunmore’s War, Euroamerican settlers no longer required interethnic cooperation. Centered on cultural superiority and conquest, settlers returned to colonialism and demanded dominion rights over Indian country. No need existed to mediate local altercations to preserve peace across ethnic borders. The Ohio Valley only saw peace again after General Anthony Wayne defeated the last Indian resisters at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794.
Conclusion

A year after Lord Dunmore’s War the eastern Ohio Valley’s interethnic neighborhood continued deteriorating. Newcomers who arrived just before and directly after Dunmore’s War outnumbered the preexisting population; this was particularly true in southwestern Virginia and Kentucky, regions almost exclusively populated by newcomers. Newcomers disrupted preexisting local diplomatic, economic, and social relationships by diluting the preexisting culture that had directed interethnic interaction. The “Virginians” who migrated to the eastern Ohio Valley did not respect or perpetuate the local codes of conduct, laws, or the language of actions and symbols previously used to keep peace. Instead, as these Virginians continued to arrive in the region they moved to clear large segments of Shawnee and Cherokee hunting ground, provoking Shawnee and Cherokee assaults designed to push the newcomers back.

Outsider intervention proved even more important than the Virginians’ efforts to replace the interethnic neighborhood. The Proclamation of 1763 and then the Quebec Act of 1774 continued to prevent the land speculators who had instigated Lord Dunmore’s War (Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, George Washington and Patrick Henry and many others) from securing their western tracts. As patriot leaders these prominent land company investors now positioned the colonies to overthrow Great Britain’s oversight of her North American holdings and in doing so repeal English land policies. Patriot leaders wrote pamphlets, legal opinions, and documents as propaganda.
which also provided the Virginian migrants with the ideological justification for seizing Indian land in Kentucky. To many Indians and Euroamericans in the Ohio Valley the patriot leaders’ support of the Virginian migrants reinforced the model of land acquisition by conquest used during Dunmore’s War. Newcomers believed that patriot leaders would mobilize soldiers from the port cities to assist them in conquering the Indian Country for themselves.

Hostilities in the Ohio Valley worsened in the summer of 1775. The opening stages of the American Revolution advanced from sporadic “insurrections” along the eastern coast to the creation of the Continental Congress and the formation of the Continental Army. Evolving concepts of “American-ness” attached to concepts of “liberty” and identity that incorporated a vast population of white Euroamericans from culturally dissimilar regions into a perceived cohesive category, one that easily excluded Indian-ness, African-ness, and British-ness. Ties between American-ness and rights to land linked directly to the patriots’ desire to repeal the 1774 Quebec Act. The right to western land transformed into one of the “unalienable Rights” of white men included in the 1776 Declaration of Independence. The Declaration charged the Crown with “raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands” with language that removed Indians from British subject-hood and repositioned them as foreign “Savages” and in doing so reduced their geopolitical sovereignty.

White Privilege: Land Rights

In the eastern Ohio Valley possibilities rooted in land and American-ness offered a privileged (white) alternative to Indian-Euroamerican mutual dependence, particularly for the great influx of Virginians that filled southwestern Virginia and Kentucky. The increase in the valley’s population shifted the balance, with newcomers in the south far outweighing the preexisting settlers in the north. In western Pennsylvania and Virginia the population stabilized, with inhabitants living in small communities of only a few hundred people. For example, Pittsburgh’s population had only reached 376 inhabitant some seventeen years later. Responding to illicit settlement plans of middling land speculators like Richard Henderson (of the Transylvania Company), James Harrod, George Rogers Clark, and Daniel Boone, Virginians migrated to Kentucky in large numbers from 1774 and 1776. Transylvania attracted no less than 2,000 men, the majority representing larger families; nearly ninety families lived at Harrodsburg, and over three hundred souls resided in smaller communities that had cropped up such as Boonesborough, Harrodsburg, Boiling Spring and St. Asaph’s.” Less than ten years later the Kentucky-Virginia border population numbered 30,000 souls.

---

356 Thomas Hutchinson, Remarks on Kentucky, undated but likely in the 1790s, HSP. Hutchinson describes the population growth in Kentucky. Most of the information pertains to 1775 to 1782; Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires*, 224.
The large population meant that the inhabitants of Kentucky and southwestern Virginian had no need to maintain the Indian-Euroamerican cultural accommodations that had perpetuated peace. Newcomers had little reason to find cultural junctions between western Indians. The new population discarded the interethnic cooperation that had resulted from small numbers and the limited technology and skills found in the preexisting population. With the end of that peace, only a small population of Indians remained east of the Ohio River. Most departed rather than live alongside the belligerent, post-1773 Kentucky settlers. In 1775 one Ohio Delaware leader, Kishanosity, “Complained of the Encroachments of the Virginians, he said they were not settling in Great numbers in the Midst of their hunting Grounds on the Kentucke River…” Many [Virginians in Kentucky] “crossed the Ohio killed and drove off their Game.”

The manner in which the Virginians who settled Kentucky established new communities demonstrated their ideologically differences and expectations from the 1768 migrants. Unlike their western Pennsylvania and western Virginia counterparts, the newcomers settled in widely dispersed areas in attempting to secure larger tracts of land. Living far apart from their neighbors, these settlers had little interest in collectivity or cooperation with either Euroamerican or Indian neighbors. Akin to earlier Euroamerican and Indian settlers into the eastern Ohio Valley, Kentucky settlers claimed a right to public resources and demanded the Continental Congress return the land of

358 Hinderaker, Elusive Empires, 196-197.
absentee landowners back into the commons. Unlike the 1768 migrants, however, Kentucky settlers limited the right to access common resources to white Americans.\footnote{Aron, \textit{How the West was Lost}, 103-4.}

Western Indians, the Tawas & Huron specifically, interpreted these differences to identify this group of recent migrants as a distinct people, separate from other Euroamericans they had known.\footnote{July 27, 1775 and August 2, 1772, entry in James Wood’s 1775 Journal: October 7, 1775, The Treaty of Pittsburgh, 1775, All found in Revolution on the Upper Ohio, 51-2, 63, 84.} An accurate perception, the post-1773 newcomers to the eastern Ohio Valley sought private land ownership and the extirpation of Indians. In Kentucky migrants framed their settlements as a right deriving from their occupation and improvement of the land. Preemption ran counter to the interests of large land speculators who held only Indian grants. “Pre-emption” provided the settlers an “exclusive [first] option” to purchase land they occupied, “whenever those Lands could be rightfully & legally conveyed & disposed of.”\footnote{“A Memorial of Some Transallegheny Inhabitants, 1780,” DM, ser. ss; Robert J. Miller, “The Doctrine of Discovery in American Indian Law” \textit{Idaho Law Review} (vol. 42, 2005.), 5.} Kentucky settlers vindicated themselves by declaring squatting as “the usual Mode of Colonization & an ancient Equitable & long established Custom & Usage of the Colonies….” Moreover, they defined their right to preemptive occupation through dominion, a right to dispose of “culturally inferior” groups by physical force or by passively disregarding their geopolitical authority.\footnote{“A Memorial of Some Transallegheny Inhabitants, 1780,” DM, ser. ss; Pagden, \textit{Lords of all the World}, 82.}

The Virginian migrants into Kentucky had no plans of leaving the region and belligerently first built forts in anticipation of violence. In Kentucky Virginians accosted a band of Ohio Mingo and informed them “that they had built three strong forts” and that
the American patriots had deployed a “large garrison of men” which would arrive shortly. With the forts’ completion and the arrival of soldiers the Virginians had every intention of crossing the Ohio River and into the Indian Country “…to see the [Indians]… and see how [the Virginians] liked their country.”

While the Continental Army had no intention of marching toward the western frontier at the time, the Virginia assembly did recognize the usefulness of the already antagonistic inhabitants as soldiers for the Revolution. To secure their loyalties with the anticipation of forming militias, Virginia legitimized white settlement in much of western Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Kentucky by establishing six counties. Giving further indication of their support for settlers and white expansion, both Virginia and Pennsylvania included clauses to their new constitutions of 1775 and 1776, which repealed the Royal Proclamation of 1763 as well as the Quebec Act and encouraged white preemptive settlement. Pennsylvania’s Constitution specifically supported land claims as well as Indian removal, declaring “…all men … have certain natural, inherent and inalienable rights, amongst which are, the enjoying and defending life and liberty, acquiring, possessing and protecting property … and safety.” In the pursuit of happiness Pennsylvania further deemed “That all men have a natural inherent right to emigrate … or to form a new state in vacant countries, or in such countries as they can purchase,

---

whenever they think that thereby they may promote their own happiness.”

Together these statements also suggested that the governments of Pennsylvania and Virginia had retracted their 1775 Treaty at Pittsburgh promise to establish a permanent line restricting Euroamerican, now American, geopolitical sovereignty and white settlement to the eastern shore of the Ohio River.

For newcomers the Revolutionary ideals replaced the tolerant or multicultural identity of the eastern Ohio Valley. Unlike the Euroamerican and Indian settlers who formed shared culture and meaning out of their common needs and realities, the new migrants into the Ohio valley were distinctive in their pinning for future possibilities. The prospect of land united Virginians while amplifying the differences that they perceived existed between themselves and Ohio Valley Indians. Not all Virginians assumed the new white American identity or desired independence, but the perspective of the newcomers overwhelmed the voice of preexisting Euroamerican and Indian settlers. Further diminishing the functionality of the valley’s multiculturalism, the newcomers used disunion with Great Britain and the larger political debates regarding rights and independence to engage in their own contest for Kentucky, Tennessee, and by 1782 the Ohio Country.

Along the edges of western Pennsylvania and Ohio hostile interethnic encounters and missed opportunities for peace-building occurred with increased frequency in 1774 and 1775. Throughout 1775 Captain James Wood traveled the Ohio Country as a

commissioner for the Virginian Assembly. The American patriots needed Wood to secure alliances with as many of the Ohio Indian polities as possible. Yet during his journey Wood found Indian-Virginia relations greatly strained and perceived the further collapse of the interethnic neighborhood.

By 1775 Ohio Valley Indians clearly feared Euroamericans. As Indians increasingly met culturally alien Virginians in the woods, the cultural cues they deployed went unidentified by the newcomers. In 1775 when two Euroamerican hunters spotted Seneca leader White Mingo from the shore of the Allegheny River they shot at him. White Mingo explained that he then docked his canoe and “went up to them in a friendly Manner and offered to shake hands with them.” After White Mingo returned to his canoe and paddled to Pine Creek, a tributary of the Allegheny, the two men again appeared and fired on him. Prior to Dunmore’s War White Mingo’s actions would have assisted both parties in mediating the situation; the shot would have been forgiven and the second altercation avoided. Not only had the handshake not prevented further hostilities but White Mingo’s response to the second shooting illuminates the drastic transformation in interethnic relations. Escaping the white hunters, White Mingo interpreted the shooting as an act of general Indian hate and immediately feared “all the Indians near this place were Murdered and kept himself hid that day and Night in the Woods.” When James Wood approached White Mingo’s home to question him about the event, the Seneca leader said the mere sight of the white man struck him with fear: “When I first saw you coming I was Afraid and had thoughts of running away.” Though Wood offered the
typical gifts and language to mend the relationship, and the Indian accepted, the Seneca leader’s newfound fear demonstrated a break in expectations. Indians now expected widespread hate murders designed to “breach between the People of his Colour and his White Brothers.”

The assault on White Mingo was not the only account demonstrating the anticipation of interethnic violence. Molly Hickman, a Delaware Indian and interpreter, informed Wood of a similar incident just outside Fort Pitt. In Hickman’s account a peaceable Mingo and Shawnee had taken a walk near “the Orchard.” The men went about their business talking until they noted the presences of “White Men” walking behind them. The Indians proceeded with their walk, as did the white men, but the Mingo and Shawnee presumed themselves the focus of the conversation behind them. Fearing attack by the Euroamericans the Indians split apart and hid all night. The Mingo returned home and told of the ordeal, but the Shawnee continued to stay hidden the next day for fear of “shar[ing] the same fate with some of the Delaware last year.” An investigation revealed that the incident was a misunderstanding, with the “Indian Camp” reporting to Wood that “the Indians had Misapprehended the White People from their small Acquaintance with the Language.”

Following the orchard misunderstanding, a Shawnee named Chenusaw returned to the Ohio Country from Virginia, where he had been held as a captive from Lord

---

Dunmore’s War. He brought the news “that all the people (Virginians), except [Dunmore], were determined on war with the Indians, that the Governor was for peace, but was obliged to fly on board a ship; that the hostages found that they were to be made slaves, and sent to some other country; that the white people were all preparing for war…” Chenusaw and two other captives, Cuttemwha and Newa, had escaped to warn the Ohio Indians of the coming war. According to Wood the escaped Indians had misunderstood and once Dunmore had fled Virginia, the military provided the remaining Indians with horses and provisions to make their journey home.\textsuperscript{368} Despite these anxieties few murders actually occurred in the eastern Ohio Valley that summer. According to Wood’s report only one murder occurred when, in August, the Shawnee found one of their members dead on the Kentucky River. The victim had no remarkable mutilations, his body did not offer a statement and when no one took credit for the murder the two communities understood the Cherokee to have perpetrated it.\textsuperscript{369} In another unrelated theft Catfish, a leader of the Delaware living on the Miami River, reported to James Wood that he and a group of other Delaware had sacked a Euroamerican settlement on the Great Kanawha.\textsuperscript{370} To avoid any misunderstanding Catfish took responsibility for the crime; his group did not have hostile feelings toward the white people in general, only the desire to take their things.

\textsuperscript{368} August 10, 1775 and James Wood’s Information to the Committee of Pittsburgh: July 10, 1775 entry, \textit{Pennsylvania Evening Post}, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
Misinterpretations, misinformation, and an inability to negotiate between Virginian and Indian cultures generated much of the anxiety regarding the coming of an Indian war. Although Logan had obtained the revenge he sought for the murder of his family, he and a mixed band of Seneca and Mingo, including two Indians named Snake and Big Apple Tree, painted themselves for war but did not intent on actually engaging in one. Logan and his group grieved the loss of their people in Lord Dunmore’s War but to outsiders the sight of drunken war-painted Indians was frightful.\textsuperscript{371}

Despite relative peace throughout the summer of 1775, renewed rumors of an imminent Indian war and a colonial siege against Indians distorted actions and reactions among both Euroamericans and Indians. Trader David Duncan spread “false reports” he collected from Delaware and Mingo Women and trader James Bavard reported that the Shawnees “were Constantly Counseling and that the Women all seemed very uneasy in Expectations that there would be War.”\textsuperscript{372} By August both Indians and Euroamericans had committed hate murders that resulted in revenge murders. According to Spitfire, Snip, a widowed Ohio Indian, killed trader John Edward with a “tomahawk to the scalp then rifled through and stole [his] goods” as revenge for the death of an Indian, likely her husband, earlier that month.\textsuperscript{373}

Retaliatory murders signaled the brink of war between the Ohio Indians and Virginians. Delegates representing both Great Britain and France met with Indian polities

\textsuperscript{371} July 25, entry in James Wood’s 1775 Journal, in Revolution on the Upper Ohio, 48.
\textsuperscript{372} August 2, 1775, entry in James Wood’s 1775 Journal, “Treaties with Western Indians”, in Revolution on the Upper Ohio, 62-3.
\textsuperscript{373} September 3 and 5, 1775 entries in Richard Butler Journal, 1775, HSP.
throughout the Mississippi Valley, Great Lakes, and Ohio Country. John Connolly and Guy Johnson, now loyalists with continued interests in securing their Indian grants, persuaded western Indians that the post-1773 migrants to Kentucky had immediate plans to attack them. Working together in the Great Lakes region British and French representatives gave a wampum belt and string to the Delaware with the message “Be prepared my children and brothers, because in 20 days the Virginians will attack you and kill you all.”

The British delegates message spoke to the Ohio Indian’s legitimate concerns that Kentucky settlers “were determined to drive us off and to take our lands.” Lord Dunmore played the other side, suggesting the ease with which a war between colonists and the “savage enemy” (western Indians) could occur and reminding colonists that they needed the British military to protect them.

On the heels of delegates sent to represent Great Britain’s interest with the Ohio Indians, the Virginian Assembly also sent delegates representing the revolutionaries’ interests and invited Indian leaders to treat in Pittsburgh. Through the 1775 Treaty of Pittsburgh the assembly sought an alliance between the rebels and Ohio Indians, but Virginia also needed to reaffirm the 1774 Treaty of Camp Charlotte, which had ended Lord Dunmore’s War. Had the Crown not reassigned western lands to Quebec with the 1774 Quebec Act, Dunmore’s war might have secured Kentucky for Virginia land speculators.

---

375 July 23, 1775, entry in James Wood’s 1775 Journal, in Revolution on the Upper Ohio, 47-8.
As Delegate leader James Wood met with Indian leaders from the Seneca, Delaware, Wyandot, Tawas, and the Shawnee he tried to persuade the leaders that the Kentucky settlers had no ill intentions for their Ohio Country Neighbors. Wood stated the rumors of war were all a ruse, reassuring them that “I have lately heard that some people who I consider to be enemies (loyalist) as well to you as to us have endeavored to make your Nations believe that the People of Virginia intended to strike you[.] This you may be Assured is the Greatest Falsity, as I can with truth assure you that they desire to live in Strict Friendship with all Indians while they continue peaceable with us.”

Wood’s assurances proved temporary, as members of the Continental Congress encouraged a preemptive strike against western and northern Indians, with unsubstantiated rumors that Great Britain had allied with the Indians and had immediate plans for attacking the colonies.

*Revolutionary Leaders without Revolutionary Ideas*

For land speculators the American Revolution offered an opportunity to restructure their relationship with Ohio Country Indians, terminate the Proclamation of 1763 and the Quebec Act of 1774, and transform last policy to suit their interests. For gentry land speculators, separating from Great Britain and reinstalling American Indian sovereignty offered a means of safeguarding their preexisting Indian land grants as well

---

as the possibility of generating future land grants. According to the same logic Euroamerican squatters had invoked earlier, if American Indians held a preemption or conquest right to land in North America then the earlier Indian land grants made to colonial officials—now American speculators—were legitimate. Indian sovereignty also nullified the British Empire’s right of first refusal over Indian land in North America as well as the Crown Government’s oversight of Indian land sales, meaning the crown had no authority to overturn land sales especially those that might follow American independence.

Despite the seemingly final termination of Baynton, Wharton and Morgan’s Vandalia land grant a year earlier, in November of 1775 the company called the “suffering traders” together to regroup with their attorney William Trent. As a result of Lord Dunmore’s War the “officers, soldiers, and others” had begun surveying land “in every part of this country from [Pittsburgh] downward as low as Scioto indeed as far as Kentucky and the Falls [Louisville],” and company investors feared the final loss of their land grant. As a means of obtaining support from those settlers occupying the land, the company published two advertisements that legitimized their purchase. The first explained that legal propriety came from “a deed poll under the hands and Seals of the Sachems and chiefs of the Six United Indian Nations,” while the second “assured” preexisting settlers the company did not intend to challenge their settlement. The

---

380 Robert Collander and George Morgan to Samuel Wharton, September 22, 1775 and Croghan to Major William Trent, July 13, 1775, Ohio Company Papers, HSP.
company awarded settlers “peaceable possession,” or unchallenged occupation, of their settlements in exchange for quitrents and settler support of the company as proprietors. Samuel Wharton similarly colluded with fellow Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan investor Edward Bancroft and published a pamphlet “View of the Title to Indiana,” which presented a detailed transcript of the 1768 treaty of Fort Stanwix as well as two legal opinions presented by the King’s council, Henry Dagge and John Glynn—both of which placed geopolitical sovereignty of western tracts with the Six Nations. Dagge’s opinion held, “I am of opinion that the Indians of the Six Nations appear to have been entitled to the lands in question from preoccupancy, from conquest…. ” Accordingly the “Title right of transferring; property always resided in the owner,” the Six Nations.

The ideological crafters of the Revolution similarly moved to construct a legal argument that would lessen the King’s authority over North American land and resituate authority with the Six Nations. John Adams and Benjamin Franklin, among many intellectual and legal leaders, reasserted Indian right of discovery and claimed Indians had exchanged rights to North American land with the English by way of land sales. Thus American Indians, as first occupants, had the authority to sell their land to whomever they chose, an argument that legitimized both past and future Indian land sales. The patriot leaders had no intention of supporting the land clams of squatters or

---

381 September 22, 1775, notice to the publick, Advertisement Pittsburgh Sept 22, 1775, Pittsburgh, both found in the Ohio Company Papers, HSP.
their competition. While arguing for Indian authority over North American land these same men also began organizing the forthcoming American government and a federal land policy that mirrored England’s own land laws, including simply replacing the Crown government’s preemption rights with those of an American government. As early as 1775 men including Benjamin Franklin and author of the Articles of Confederation John Dickinson advocated for a strong centralized government with an exclusive right to purchase Indian land.383

**American Indian Agency & Autonomy**

Western Indians also recognized the opportunity, created by the American Revolution, to redefine their relations with Great Britain and now the Americans. Choosing sides or neutrality according to their individual interests provided individual communities with negotiating authority and determination. Although alliances changed throughout the American Revolution, in 1775 the Iroquois and Shawnee claimed a position of neutrality while individual Shawnee, Iroquois, and factions from every Ohio Indian country community supported the British. The Crown’s disinterest in western expansion and upholding of the Proclamation of 1763 and the Quebec Act (both laws that prohibited private Indian-Euroamerican land sales) suggested an alliance with the British

---

represented the best attempt at safeguarding Indian autonomy and preventing fraudulent land purchases.\textsuperscript{384}

The Delaware, however, used the American Revolution as an opportunity to attain geopolitical sovereignty and autonomy from the Iroquois. During diplomatic meetings at Pittsburgh, first with loyalists in July 1775 and two months later with American patriots, Delaware leader White Eyes declared his people’s independence from the Iroquois and requested a land grant from King George or the Virginia Assembly that would legitimize the Delaware as sovereigns over the land they occupied (with a collection of other Indians including allied factions of Mingo).\textsuperscript{385} In essence, the Delaware offered to support the crown or colony in exchange for legitimization. In negotiations at Pittsburgh the summer of 1775 White Eyes adopted, or claimed to adopt, new land ideologies. White Eyes advocated private property and offered a non-military alliance of friendship, first with Great Britain but ultimately with the patriots, in exchange for Delaware autonomy. The Delaware would own the region circled by the mouth of the Beaver Creek in Pennsylvania, the branches of the Cuyahoga Creek, the mouth of the Sandusky Creek, and the Muskingum down to the mouth of the Ohio River. Additionally the Americans promised to maintain the Ohio River as the boundary line between themselves and the Indians’ country.\textsuperscript{386}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[]\textsuperscript{385} Downes, \textit{Council Fires}, 184-5.
\item[]\textsuperscript{386} July 9, 1775 and October 9, 1775, entry in James Wood’s 1775 Journal, Treaty of Pittsburgh, in \textit{Revolution on the Upper Ohio}, 34 – 40 & 85-6; July 11, 1775, Wellenreuther and Wessel, ed., \textit{The}
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
False news of the Continental Army’s plans to support the Virginians in an assault on the Ohio Country traveled from one community to the next crossing over the Ohio River. The still intact network of interethnic relationships transmitted the warnings between Indian and Euroamerican communities, causing “panic” among the preexisting peaceable members. In one incident exemplifying the last function of the eastern Ohio Valley’s interethnic social and information network, Cornstalk visited among whites at the Big Kanawha when a Euroamerican man who had been a Shawnee captive approached him. The concerned man “asked for his Indian mother and if she was well” and then informed the Shawnee leader “that he was in great fear for the Shawnee [and] that he expected very soon a great body of the Big Knife people (Virginians)”… to go to the Shawnee’s territory and slaughter them.

The onslaught of the American Revolution marked the end of the interethnic neighborhood in 1775. Preexisting Euroamerican and Indian valley inhabitants declared their neutrality but often found themselves victims. Communities separated, often along ethnic lines, as the war sent people back into motion searching for short and long-term safe haven. Seeking protection, much of the eastern Ohio Indian population joined established Indian towns west of the Ohio. These Indian communities, predominantly

---

*Moravian Mission Diaries of David Zeisberger, 1772-1781, 279 & footnote 665; Downes, Council Fires, 180-7; Richter, Facing East from Indian Country, 221.*


*388* September 1, 1775, entries in Richard Butler Journal, 1775, HSP.
Delaware, crossed the Ohio River and established new homes with the Mahican Indian community on Cayuga River. The Mahican had lived in New York’s Hudson Valley before joining the Delaware in Pennsylvania prior to the French and Indian War. Displaced during the French and Indian War the Mahican resettled just west of the Ohio River in the Ohio Country. Now rejoined, the two communities were so large that James Wood claimed he had never seen so many Indians together. Other preexisting members of the neighborhood found new homes among the Monrovian mission at Goshen village in Eastern Ohio.

That year the community of Christian Indians at the Goshen mission welcomed an abundance of new Indians. These included “a whole crowd” in the state of starvation: widows, some of whom were Christian; non-Christian individuals; and Jonathan, a lapsed Christian Indian who returned with his African wife. The mission also opened its doors to at least one white family: Richard Conner, his wife Margaret Boyer and their two sons John and William, all of whom had lived in a mixed Delaware and Shawnee community and spoke Indian languages more often than English. The Conner boys spoke fluent “Shawnee, Delaware, and Munsee dialects, but [also] the language of the Chippewa and Wyandot.” Illustrating the heightened tensions and instability of the cultural transformation underway, the Conners and other newcomers to the mission expressed their inability to live with either Indians or “White people.” Although hesitant at first

389 Revolution on the Upper Ohio, 62.
missionary David Zeisberger came to welcome the migrants who arrived at his mission in 1775, stating “[t]here were more strangers here than there had ever been…”

The preexisting Euroamerican population could not rely on westward migration to escape the violent laden valley as they had before when fleeing the Susquehanna: to the West lay a region of well-established Indian communities overseen by the Shawnee, not an open commons. Squatters would not breach the western side of the Ohio River until 1782.

With nowhere to go and Continental troops arriving in 1777, the region’s settlers prepared for the American Revolution by raising picket stockades and converting homes into community forts. Between 1778 and 1782 the Continental Army drafted male settlers by the whole community as well as commandeered homes, all horses, all livestock and all crops for the war effort. When battles between Continental soldiers and the British military and their Indian allies commenced in the Ohio Valley, the Continental Army purposely prevented civilian families from leaving the valley. Continental Officers like Henry Gibson and Edward Hand intentionally used civilian families to hold the line. Western Indians, allied with the British Army, waylaid entire settlements, and ambushed and killed military conscripts. Small splinter groups of families fled the eastern Ohio Valley by the Ohio River and took refuge at predominantly French towns like Post Vincennes and Kaskaskia in the upper Mississippi Valley. The majority of the eastern

---

Ohio population, however, remained in the war zone through 1784. Men, women, and children took up arms against British-allied Indians, many of whom they had once called neighbors. In all, Indian attacks on settlements and frontier battles during the American Revolution decimated much of the eastern Ohio Valley population by 1784.

The extensive interethnic violence during the war markedly altered the remaining eastern Ohio Valley population. Once peaceable, the predominant culture now extolled a Euroamerican male warrior status and hatred of Indians. A general desire to extirpate western Indians from North America intensfied as the number of new American migrants pushing west increased. By 1780 most of the preexisting population had gained warrants for the land they occupied prior to the Revolution. Following independence both preexisting settlers and newcomers to the Ohio Valley propagated a new land ideology in which land ownership equaled an entitlement based on American citizenship – a claim associated with whiteness.

A decade after Great Britain and the United States had made peace, war between frontier settlers and Ohio Indians continued with the Northwestern Indian Wars that took place between 1785 and 1794. The Northwestern Indian Wars began with continued localized interethnic violence along the Ohio River. The American victory in the Revolution had given rise to an “Indian political movement” led by Mohawk leader Joseph Brant. Brant had fought with and for the British during the French and Indian War and as an officer during the American Revolution. Like Hendrick, Brant saw no end to the encroachment of Indian land and raised the Western Confederacy, an alliance of
Six Nations Indians and other western Indians. Brant wanted the Western Confederacy to militarily enforce the Ohio River as the boundary line between Americans and Indian Country, as per the 1768 Treaty of Fort Stanwix. Unable to suppress the local violence or purchase the Ohio Country from local Indians, President George Washington and the United States government decided to obtain control over the Northwest, taking advantage of settler contempt for Indians as part of a program of conquest and Indian removal.

Wanting to avenge the deaths of family and neighbors, the generation that had grown up in the eastern Ohio Valley during Lord Dunmore’s War, the localized violence of the late 1770s, and the American Revolution came of age during the Northwestern Indian Wars. This new American generation eagerly volunteered for the militia and fought under the command of a succession of self-interested land speculators and military officers including Brigadier General Josiah Harmer and General Arthur St. Clair. With little success in the West the United States Congress, under the direction of General Anthony Wayne, created the first United States regular army, the Legion, with the specific intention of training soldiers to finally exterminate the “Indian nuisances” in the Ohio Country. Well trained and backed by the local knowledge of rangers and scouts hailing from the Ohio borderland the Legion of the United States terrorized civilian Indians throughout the southern Ohio country. More so than the few battlefield victories, American conquest occurred through the killing of innocents in the annihilation and the burning of entire Indian communities that both preceded and followed the 1794 Battle of
Fallen Timbers. With the 1795 surrender of much of the Ohio country at the Treaty of Greenville, subsequent migrants only passed through the eastern Ohio Valley on their way farther west. As they ceaselessly pushed on, now toward Indiana, Illinois, and beyond, they spurred new wars of conquest, now accustomed to seize Indian land without Indian authorization.

Bibliography

Abbreviations

Historical Society of Pennsylvania, HSP
Library Company of Philadelphia, LCP
National Archives and Records Administration, NARA
Oxford English Dictionary, OED
Pennsylvania Archive, PA
William L. Clements Library, WCL

Primary Source Collections


*A Declaration and Remonstrance of the Distressed and Bleeding Frontier Inhabitants of the Province of Pennsylvania, Presented by them to the Honorable The Governor and Assembly of the Provinces, Shewing the Causes of their late Discontent and uneasiness and the Grievances under which they have labored, and which they humbly pray to have redres'd* (William Bradford: Philadelphia, 1764), Library Company of Philadelphia [hereafter cited as LCP].

*A Serious Address to the Freeholders and other Inhabitants of the Province of Pennsylvania*, Philadelphia, September 10, 1758, LCP


Baynton, Wharton, and Morgan Fort Pitt Trade Book, 1765-1770, HSP

  Correspondence of John Baynton
  Baynton, Wharton and Morgan Correspondence
  Correspondence of George Morgan
  Correspondence of Baynton and Wharton


Cadwalder Family Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
  George Croghan Papers, HSP

Continental Congress Papers, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington D.C.
  Journals, Committee reports, and records of the Continental Congress
  Letters from General and Other Officers
  Memorials Addressed to Congress 1775-86
  Letters and Reports from Henry Knox

Croghan-Gratz Papers

Etting Collection, HSP
  Ohio Company Papers
  George Croghan Journal
  Croghan-Gratz Papers


Gibson Family Papers, 1777-1820, HSP

Heckewelder, John. *A Narrative of the Mission of the United Brethren Among the Delaware and Mohegan Indians, From its commencement, in the year 1740, to the close of the Year 1808. Comprising all the remarkable incidents which took place at their missionary Stats during that period. Interspersed with Anecdotes, historical facts, speeches of Indians, and other Interesting Matter* Philadelphia: McCarty and Davis, 1820.


Irvine-Newbold Family Papers, HSP

Journal of John Mathews in *Pioneer History: being an account of the first examinations of the Ohio valley, and the early settlement of the Northwest territory: chiefly from*

Records of the Land Office, Pennsylvania State Archives
  East Side Applications
  West Side Applications, Pennsylvania State Archives
  New Purchase Register
  Applications for warrant - Pre-emption

Richard Butler Journal, 1775, HSP

Smith, James. An account of the remarkable occurrences in the life and travels of Colonel James Smith (Late a citizen of Bourbon County, Kentucky) : during his captivity with the Indians, in the years 1755, '56, '57, '58, & '59. Lexington: James Bradford, 1799.

Land Office Papers
  Lukens-Lenox Papers

Lightfoot Family Papers
  Benjamin Lightfoot Survey Notes, 1770 - 1772

  Series E:
    Brady And Wetzel Papers
  Series NN:
    Pittsburgh and Northwest Virginia Papers
    Samuel Brady Papers
    Benjamin Briggs Papers
    Edward Hand Papers
  Series SS:
    David Shepherd Papers
  Series QQ:
    Preston Papers

Logan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Opinions regarding the Grant to William Trent, 1775, HSP.

Orderly Book, 8th Pennsylvania Regt, Fort Pitt, Fort McIntosh, Western Pennsylvania, 1778-1780, HSP

Pennsylvania Papers, 1744-1859, HSP
Northern Interior and Western counties

Penn Family Papers
   Indian Affairs
   Official Correspondence


The Liberty of the Subject by Magna Charta, London, 1764, LCP.


William Gamble, 1769, a list of goods all settlers should have who live away from towns, HSP.

William Trent Journal, 1759-1763, HSP

William Trent Journal, 1763, HSP

William Vincent Byers Collection, HSP

**Published Primary Sources**


**Newspapers**

*Connecticut Journal*, New Haven, Connecticut
*Dunlap’s Pennsylvania Packet*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
*The Essex Gazette*, Charlestown, South Carolina
*New Hampshire Gazette*, Portsmouth, New Hampshire
*Pennsylvania Evening Post*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
*Pennsylvania Gazette*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
*Pennsylvania Mercury*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
*Pennsylvania Packet*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
*Providence Gazette*, Providence, Rhode Island
*Newport Mercury*, Newport, Rhode Island
*New York Mercury*, New York, New York
*The Georgia Gazette*, Savannah, Georgia
*The Massachusetts Gazette*, Boston, Massachusetts,

*Virginia Gazette*, Williamsburg, Virginia.

**Digital**

*Oxford English Dictionary*
Pennsylvanian Constitution, September 28, 1776, Avalon project, Yale Library

**Secondary Sources**


386


Hass, Wills De. *History of the Early Settlement and Indian Wars of Western Virginia, embracing an account of the various expeditions in the West, previous to 1795. Also, biographical sketches of... distinguished actors in our border wars*. Wheeling: H. Hoblitzeli, 1851.


389


West Virginia State Board of Agriculture. *West Virginia Agricultural Resources and Possibilities Comprising the topography, soils and crops, the livestock industry, possibilities for the fruit grower, educational advantages and market facilities*. Charleston: Tribune Printing, 1907.


**Antiquarian Histories**

Brice, Wallace A. *History of Fort Wayne from the earliest known accounts of this point to the present period embracing an extended view of the Aboriginal Tribes of the northwest, including, more especially, the Miamies of this locality their habits, customs, etc. Together with a comprehensive summary of the General relations of the northwest from the later part of the Seventeenth century, to the struggles of 1812-14; With a sketch of the Life of General Anthony Wayne; Including also a lengthy Biography of the Late Hon. Samuel Hanna, Together with Short Sketches of Several of the early pioneer settlers of Fort Wayne, Also an account of the manufacturing, mercantile and railroad interests of Fort Wayne and Vicinity*. Fort Wayne: D.W. Jones & Son, Steam Book and Job Print, 1868.

Butterfield, Consul Wilshire. *An historical account of the expedition against Sandusky under Col. William Crawford in 1782: with biographical sketches, personal reminiscences, and descriptions of interesting localities: including, also, details of the disastrous retreat, the barbarities of the savages, and the awful death of Crawford by torture*. Cincinnati: R. Clarke & Co., 1873.


Crammer, Gibson Lamb. *History of the Upper Ohio with Family History and Biographical Sketches*. vol. 1. Madison: Brant & Fuller, 1891, Ohio State Historical Society, Columbus, Ohio.


Doddridge, Joseph. *Notes on the settlement and Indian wars of the western parts of Virginia and Pennsylvania, from 1763 to 1783, inclusive: together with a view of the state of society, and manners of the first settlers of the western country*. Albany: Joel Munsell, 1876.


Perkins, James Handasyd, John Mason Peck, and Albach, James R. *Annals of the West: embracing a concise account of principal events which have occurred in the western states and territories from the discovery of the Mississippi Valley to the year eighteen hundred and fifty-six.* Pittsburgh: W.S. Haven, Book and Job Printer, 1858.


Sipe, Hale C. *The Indian wars of Pennsylvania : an account of the Indian events, in Pennsylvania, of the French and Indian war, Pontiac's war, Lord Dunmore's war, the revolutionary war, and the Indian uprising from 1789 to 1795 ; tragedies of the


**Articles**


398


**Dissertations**