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A dissertation submitted to the Graduate School of the University of Cincinnati in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of History of the College of Arts and Sciences by

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~ Abstract ~

This dissertation considers how an anarchic and violent backcountry provided the setting for both Native Americans and backcountry farmers to resist the control of imperial and colonial institutions in eighteenth-century Pennsylvania, which ultimately transformed provincial society. Rural insurrections plagued Pennsylvania, but the causes and outcomes of these events are often only recorded by elite discourse. By contrast, this dissertation seeks to recover the various methods that backcountry yeoman farmers and Native Americans used to attain their goal of land possession and independence from the metropole. It examines the complex tasks of managing vast new spaces and resources, administering an army, and assimilating the Indian population within their broader social and cultural contexts through the analysis of archival sources, petitions, Indian treaties, and newspaper reports. The various perspectives of writers, traders, missionaries, diplomats, and interpreters enable us to recover the voices of the frontier.

Pennsylvania’s provincial officials tried to contain backcountry defiance by suppressing mobilization, guiding population relocation, enforcing justice, and securing boundaries between Euro Americans and Native Americans. The proprietary government also repeatedly sought to incorporate yeoman farmers and Indians into the political, economic and cultural orbit of Philadelphia. The tactics used to control the backcountry, however, further irritated relations between the government and frontier populations. The driving force behind these policies was the fear of insurrections, and violence that could descend upon the capital if not controlled.

This dissertation illuminates both the culture of backcountry insurrections and the British periphery in eighteenth-century North America. Furthermore, it argues that the radical and
anarchic characteristics of backcountry Pennsylvania contributed to the coming of the American Revolution, in contrast to historians’ overemphasis on the role played by the eastern seaboard cities in the break with Britain in 1776.
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2. “A Map of parts of the Provinces of Pennsilvania and Maryland with the Counties of New Castle, Kent, and Sussex on Delaware according to the most exact Surveys yet made drawn in the year 1740,” produced by the Penns for the Crown to prove their case. NV-064, series 7, Penn Family Papers, HSP, http://digitallibrary.hsp.org/index.php/Detail/Object/Show/object_id/8535


6. The “Kittanning Destroyed Medal”
Almost universally, historians agree that the United States has always been an extremely violent nation and that violence usually redounds to the ultimate advantage of those who control the levers of power.\(^1\)

- John Buenker, The Encyclopedia of Violence

What is impressive to one who begins to learn about American violence is its extraordinary frequency, its sheer commonplacesness in our history, its persistence into very recent and contemporary times, and its rather abrupt contrast with our pretensions to singular national virtue.\(^2\)

- Richard Hofstadter, “American Violence”

Increasingly, Americans are a people without history, with only memory, which means a people poorly prepared for what is inevitable about life-tragedy, sadness, moral ambiguity—and therefore a people reluctant to engage difficult ethical issues.\(^3\)

- Elliott Gorn, “Professing History”

In a way, the grievances of backcountry inhabitants in the British North American colonies are well-known. What led the leaders of backcountry settlers like Thomas Cresap, Lazarus Stewart, and others like them to violently resist the Pennsylvania provincial government was a lack of protection from Indian attacks, securing land titles, protesting quit-rents or taxes, and curbing the activities of land speculators. All of which were supported by William Penn and his descendants. Proprietary officials actively ejected squatters, raised rents, protected large, fertile stretches of land in the forms of manors and estates, sold premium


property to connected and influential men, and supported a Quaker-dominated Assembly, which claimed pacifist principles when explaining their indifference to the safety of backcountry inhabitants. Since enforcing the laws of the province along the frontier proved nearly impossible because of distance, settlers often took the law into their own hands performing violent actions such as murder, arson, kidnapping, and resisting government officials such as justices of the peace, sheriffs, and sometimes judges, lawyers, and jailers.

Violence in Pennsylvania’s backcountry centered mostly on the availability of property and the opportunity to possess it. By the middle of the eighteenth century, making an improvement upon the land such as dwellings, outbuildings, or even planting crops characterized the basic fundamental goal of rural families trying to survive off of their possessions, legally or illegally. Most of the immigrants funneling in from Europe imported the “homestead ethic,” but it grew more significantly in the Americas where landholding was far more widespread. Indeed, the famous North Carolina Regulator, Herman Husband, explained it as that “peaceable Possession, especially of back waste vacant Lands, is a Kind of Right” – a right interwoven with “the common Method” of settling the land “time out of Mind,” from “New England to Georgia”: the practice of “the Poor…always countenanced and approved of…to move out, from the interior Parts to the back Lands, with their Families and [to] find a Spot, whereon they might build ‘a Hut’ and make some Improvements.”

Two violence-prone regions are studied here as a comparison: the backcountries of Pennsylvania and Kentucky. In Pennsylvania’s backcountry, violence defined the eighteenth

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century as border clashes with Maryland and Connecticut, and imperial conflict during the Seven
Years’ War dominated Pennsylvania’s political and cultural landscape into the nineteenth
century, whereas, in frontier Kentucky, the period from the Revolutionary War era to the War of
1812 endured episodes of violence with Indians, land speculators, and the Virginia court system.
In each case, similar trends emerge: mass emigration, lack of security, dispersed farm settlement,
great distance to political and cultural institutions, and the use of violence to resolve conflict.
There were many differences, to be sure, but the development of both places had many structural
similarities that are conducive to a good comparison such as issues over power, organization, and
population mobilization, political ideologies, role of institutions, and the overall political
organization, to name a few.6

In exploring the opportunities that violence, anarchy, and resistance provided, the
chapters vary greatly in approaches and subject matter, but all focus on why frontier settlers and
Indians engaged in violent acts and how those acts effected government decisions and political
institutions. To fully capture these actions to their fullest extent, this dissertation is divided into
four chapters. Chapter one begins where the violence began. Focusing on William Penn’s
successful advertising campaign promoting immigration into Pennsylvania, it explores how
Pennsylvania’s rapid growth through the first half of the eighteenth century quickly expanded its
frontier beyond the control of both the proprietary and British governments. This swift increase
in population put pressure on administrators to implement policies and construct institutions that
could oversee organized settlement, military protection against the French and Indians, frontier
justice, and promote better relations with the Six Nations Iroquois to better regulate Indian
diplomacy. The issues of conquest and agrarian colonization – such as managing scattered white

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settlers and Indians, assimilating Native Americans, keeping settlers culturally and politically connected to English institutions, collecting rent, directing orderly settlement, and protecting the edge of empire – all occurred in the backcountry. Therefore, the backcountry was where imperial and colonial officials focused their attention in their attempts to better administer the empire. The institutions they helped create, especially institutions that restricted the possession of land, only irritated backcountry grievances further, but it is through this resistance that we can better understand the significance of how the backcountry influenced colonial and imperial rule from the outer edges of the empire.

It is difficult to assess the impact that immigration had on Pennsylvania’s colonial institutions, however, prior to the Treaty of Utrecht (1713). The Treaty of Utrecht recognized British gains in North America, but because France and Spain retained many of their possessions as well, the treaty “made it clear that America would be the crucial theater in the ongoing contest for Atlantic dominion.”\textsuperscript{7} Britain was determined to defend the backcountry of its American colonies and Pennsylvania quickly became the keystone to British ambitions in North America. Why Pennsylvania? First, soon after the end of Queen Anne’s War, Pennsylvania increased their strategic role within the Empire as the primary negotiators with the Iroquois, Delaware, and Shawnee Indians. Pennsylvania’s proximity to the Iroquois Confederacy to the north and the important trading grounds of the Ohio Valley to the west made Pennsylvania ideally suited to become the center of Indian diplomacy in North America by mid-century. Secondly, massive immigration from the 1720s through the 1750s made Pennsylvania the most ethnically and religiously diverse white population among the North American colonies. This diversity proved significant because there would be no hegemonic consolidation of any one group and although Philadelphia was growing rapidly, the majority of the immigrants moved into Pennsylvania’s

backcountry where they settled in what Marcus Gallo has labeled “the Squatter Republic.” This rapid increase in population came into conflict with the first reason, contributing to the already growing antagonistic and combative rural conflict that existed in Pennsylvania over land ownership since the turn of the century and it intensified and polarized provincial politics.

In 1718, the Board of Trade requested information about “what routes did [the French] use between their colonies of Canada and Louisiana?” and “What measures should be taken to safeguard British trade in the interior?” They then outlined the necessary provisions to “contribute to the improving and enlarging [of his] Majesty’s dominions.” In order to do so, the report identified three important institutions that needed strengthening: the military, Indian Affairs, and provincial government. These institutions were vital “to secure [his] Majesty’s Colonies from the encroachments of their European neighbors in America.” Britain quickly committed to upgrading these imperial institutions when reports of French meddling in British territory were streaming in from the North American colonies. Most importantly, France interfered with British trade in the Ohio Valley. Britain fully intended to extend its sovereignty in America, however, this “was an extension over, not an extension of sovereignty to the territory of these colonies.” Thus Americans would remain colonists and not enjoy first-class status as subjects of the empire. This status increasingly antagonized American colonists as the eighteenth century wore on, particularly with the force and consistent assertion of Parliament’s rights to meddle with the colonies’ institutions in order to secure, expand, and control its empire. Here, Rodney Bruce Hall has suggested “that this treatment undermined the self-identification of the British colonials with the British state, and fostered the creation of a uniquely American collective identity.”

What did strengthening these institutions mean to the people living in Pennsylvania’s

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backcountry? Philadelphia was growing rapidly, but the majority of the immigrants who moved onto Pennsylvania’s frontier often ignored proprietary land claims and treaties and then squatted on Indian territory or unpurchased lands. Squatting settlers, random violence on the frontier, and unpredictable young Indian men encouraged Pennsylvania officials to sign several treaties with the Six Nations’ Iroquois to “police Pennsylvania’s woods in return for Pennsylvania’s recognition to do so.”¹¹ This, in turn, would solidify the Iroquois’ status and prevent outside Indian peoples from surrendering territory without their permission, prevent white settlement, and maintain the defensive buffer. By 1742, both the Iroquois and provincial officials promoted this imperial project by trying to incorporate more western Indians. Indeed, Thomas Penn advised them “that you should bring over as many Nations of Indians as you can into your Interest, and make firm Leagues with them,” which will only “make yourselves greater and Stronger,” and ultimately force the troublesome Delaware to relocate to the Allegheny River.¹²

Britain determined that it would supervise and administer backcountry settlers and hard-to-manage Indian populations as a metropolitan project that fundamentally institutionalized its people and territory beyond the Atlantic littoral. Colonization was no longer just an urban phenomenon of controlling commerce and agrarian settlement on the frontier. Dealing with multiple native peoples, massive waves of ethnically diverse immigrants, and the constant struggle within the colonial governments, Britain’s colonial American project could be viewed as a process open to modification and transformation where white settlers, Native Americans, and even the empire could not be considered in isolation to one another.”¹³

Chapter Two examines three important Pennsylvania backcountry episodes in the

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¹³ White, Backcountry and City, xii, 4-5, 35, 56, 131-32, 204, 210.
Susquehanna River Valley – the Pennsylvania-Maryland border dispute, the Seven Years’ War, and the Wyoming controversy – that resulted in extreme violence and how that violence impacted the structure of government to make it more socially receptive to their perceived injustices. These three episodes also provide a cultural perspective on the successful strategies that people living in the politically underrepresented western regions of Pennsylvania employed to resist, deform, and reshape the imperial and colonial institutions that were created to control them. The great diversity of people who immigrated to colonial Pennsylvania were able to create opportunities for themselves through violence, anarchy, and resistance. Backcountry settlers violently resisted colonial and imperial officials, land speculators, Indians, and other colonists who challenged their rights to possess property; to secure a freehold estate without the threat of violence from others; and to challenge any authority which attempted to place an economic burden, such as a quit-rent, on their livelihoods. Anarchy, defined here as lawlessness, represented the inability of both colonial and imperial administration to extend their power and influence over the frontier, especially in times of conflict. When conflict did occur, the military institutions necessary to raise, train, and supply an army did not exist. Pennsylvania’s eighteenth-century landscape was full of bitter struggles, personal violence, and a general disrespect for authority. This is in stark contrast to the legendary myth of a “Peaceable Kingdom,” which until recently was considered a historical given because of the relatively unwarlike relationship between Indians and whites. Indeed, Pennsylvania was always considered the exception to a starving, violent, and confrontational beginning with Indians and the environment, but as the border conflicts with Maryland and Connecticut, along with the devastation of the Seven Years’ War, proves Penn’s colony was anything but peaceful.
Conflict, however, enabled backcountry inhabitants to negotiate their loyalty to whatever entity – proprietor, colonial government, Native American – offered better arrangements for owning land, a reduction or dismissal of quit-rent payments, or provided better security. Often times, when dealing with colonial governments especially, loyalty was the strategic component that afforded yeoman farmers living on the frontier a political voice not usually afforded to them. This is not to suggest that they purposely sought conflict to better their lives, but if they were able to endure the brutality, lawlessness, and the destruction of property that defined the anarchic frontier, then they could use their loyalty as a bargaining chip to defend their property in the name of the proprietor, who then could claim sovereignty over the region against all other opposing forces. Thus, these three episodes are examined in the different forms of resistance that they took on.

Chapter Three looks at the profound military influences upon Pennsylvania’s political transformation from resisting war to engaging in it. Of all the important recent work on eighteenth-century Pennsylvania, rarely, if ever, is sufficient consideration given to the sizable role that the military had in influencing new theories of colonial structure, agency, or in shaping cultural identity. Yet, the attempts to wage war, fund and supply an army, and suppress mutinies – both white and native – under the pressures of a French and Indian invasion of western Pennsylvania, ultimately reshaped the administration of the colony and deformed the ideology of William Penn’s holy experiment. Indian-white relations, agrarian insurrections, racial construction, diplomacy, squatting, and land speculation highlight the profound military influences upon the crucial political formations that were established to control the backcountry. In other words, my dissertation seeks to clarify how elites in Philadelphia understood the military’s role in suppressing backcountry mobilization, overseeing population location,
enforcing justice, and securing boundaries between white frontiersmen and pan-Indian nativists. At the same time, the response by backcountry settlers and Indians to the colonial political institutions that the military represented, especially how frontiersmen and Indians dealt with displacement and how the collective experiences of agrarian insurrection and fighting natives coalesced to give backcountry farmers of Pennsylvania a new cultural identity that came to reflect how Pennsylvanians generally saw themselves after the conflict, which was rural and racially white is also analyzed.

Once war began in 1754, frontier communities turned to petitioning for troops, money, and the building of fortifications. In order to survive, frontiersmen had to collaborate either through their submission to the government for the use of provincial soldiers, or with financial assistance that could be used to pay for militia organizations. In either case, backcountry settlers had to overcome their reluctance to bind with one another politically (electing leaders), economically (purchasing supplies and weapons), and militarily (defending homes and property) regardless of their ethnic, cultural, religious, or language differences. On the administrative side, much of the correspondence from colonial officials such as Richard Peters, James Logan, and Thomas Penn along with many of their representatives (George Croghan and Conrad Weiser, for example) grappled with what institutions they imagined would be successful in managing distant yeoman farmers and unruly Native Americans. Therefore, questions such as what social role did the military perform among the backcountry defenders? Did it merely plug holes in a porous defense or perform duties that the yeoman farmers could not? Or did they provide a structure for frontiersmen to rally around to successfully defend their own homes, property, and livelihoods? To what extent did military relief mitigate the flight of white settlers from the frontier in the face of unified Indian attacks?
Due to the difficulty of managing scattered native populations, James Logan expressed the need to oversee Indian settlement, maintain native allegiance, and to contain both by encouraging the Delaware, Shawnee, and other Susquehanna Indians to remain on the eastern side of the Allegheny River, closer to white settlements. To enforce this policy, the provincial government desired a military alliance with the Iroquois Confederacy to aid them in their quest to control the various tributary Indians in western Pennsylvania. This, in turn, could prevent illegal white settlement, native relocation, and secure a military buffer zone. Despite this, the Seven Years’ War exacerbated the relationship between the Iroquois and Ohio Valley Indians, ultimately forcing Pennsylvania to create, equip, and train its own military force to protect its territorial boundaries. The question of how scattered Indian populations could be assimilated and mastered by provincial institutions, however, still remained. To what extent can we attribute pan-nativism in the Ohio Valley and collective white resistance to it as a significant source of cultural identity in Pennsylvania’s backcountry? Was the racism, wartime anger, and ethnic conflict (resulting in the Paxton and Black Boys’ uprisings) really strong enough to force political realignment or even a revolutionary consciousness? And how did native resistance transform provincial institutions that had been in existence in Pennsylvania for nearly seven decades?

The establishment of military institutions, whether with men or money, gave backcountry settlers encouragement to self-organize, through a commonality of purpose, and provides a rich place where we can study the tensions and values of a society to understand the long-term legislative and institutional effects. The shared experience of fighting provided adhesive for the formation of a new cultural identity in Pennsylvania and furnished a means through which the rising tide of racism against Indians could be communicated and expanded among the dispersed
back inhabitants. Backcountry dispersal and dislocation, for the elites in Philadelphia, was something that had to be understood and regulated through institutional forms such as an expanded court system, a revised Land Office, and an Indian department. For white settlers, the wartime frontier led to yeoman petitions that forced the provincial government into action as farmers, mobilized by racial hatred and fear of Indians. This led directly to the disruption of the backcountry, riots, and massacres, which upset colonial stability and threatened security, trade, and diplomacy. Ultimately, the provincial government sought to gain more control but war provided the basis for a unified collective resistance to colonial institutions and the formation of a new cultural identity in the backcountry. After all, as W. Frank Craven once remarked, “every aspect” of society is “pertinent to military history.” And, as Caroline Cox has demonstrated, “every aspect of military society is pertinent to social history.”

Chapter Four unravels the events in the trans-Appalachian West during and after the American Revolution and the native response to it, bridging America’s culture of violence from the founding of Pennsylvania through the War of 1812. There are several advantages of surveying a longer time frame rather than focusing on specific events that punctuated periods of profound tension and violence. First, it shows how problematic the American Revolution can be when attempting to demonstrate the influence of violence, anarchy, and resistance on American society and culture. Indeed, Ed White points out that “the Revolution has long functioned historiographically as a teleological black hole toward which the early eighteenth century was inevitably being pulled, and, on the flip side, as the orginary Big Bang from which all subsequent American history flowed.”14 Similarly, Patrick Griffin notes that “in many ways, the American Revolution may have amounted to a “failed revolution.”15 Much of our awareness of the

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14 White, Backcountry and the City, 3; “Republican Megasynthesis” is the term used by White, see 5-13.
15 Griffin, American Leviathan, 8.
Revolution is rooted in the “Republican Megasynthesis,” whose authors portrayed it as radical and far-reaching, but what changed for backcountry settlers? They still lived on the margins of society, confronted Indians, lived in dispersed settlements, squatted, and struggled for freehold estates. The Revolution did not change that although many historians claim that the Revolution informed the process of negotiation for property, tragedy for Native Americans, and the conception of sovereignty, but all these debates began well before and endured long after the struggle for Independence. From this perspective, the Revolution “codified” and “solidified” these characteristics:

What had been peripheral and murk ways of understanding human difference became unambiguous and central to American concepts of society and inclusion and exclusion. What had been ephemeral ideas about the participation of common people in society became the bedrock of the American nation. And what had been unresolved arrangements about rights to land would find resolution. The Revolution did more than canonize change, nor was it an uneventful piece of a broader pattern of colonial continuities; it made the ephemeral permanent, the marginal fundamental, the ambiguous clear, and the fluid definitive.  

The West, however, continued to be marked by massive settlement, continued administrative failures, and aggressive efforts by the federal government promoting the growth of political and social democracy. Above all, despite all of the disputes, controversies, and violence occurring in the West after the Revolution, control over the possession of western lands was most important.

Second, in the most recent edition of *Major Problems in the Era of the American Revolution, 1760-1791* (2013), none of the twelve chapters focuses on backcountry settlers. Thus it must be true when Ranajit Guha, a subaltern historian, claimed that insurrectionary events are reduced to “the middle term between a beginning that serves as a context and an end which is at the same time a perspective linked to the next sequence.” He concludes, “The rebel

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has no place in this history as the subject of rebellion,” and we might add that “rebellions themselves have no place in the larger history as objects of culture.” As is most often the case, backcountry settlers are given a special place within the revolutionary moment when discussing “bottom up” theories as compared to “top down” explanations. Settlers are glorified when resisting elites, opposing the formation of new class societies, or promoting a radical philosophy when defying conservative criticism. Once the discussions turns towards the evolution of racism, however, backcountry settlers are conveniently forgotten. Racism, obviously, is a counterexample to the enlightened principles that provide the foundation of the nation and it reflects how little backcountry inhabitants could have contributed to the Revolution. By limiting the national narrative, racism and backcountry settlers prohibit either from any significance other than a murderer of Indians. It becomes easier to identify when and how racism developed in the backcountry only if we take a look prior to and after the American Revolution. Only then do we get a sense of how white-Indian interaction played a significant role.

Third, was Pennsylvania exceptional or representative in its colonial foundations? Pennsylvania underwent the colonization process rather late compared to the other thirteen colonies, experienced intense immigration, grew rapidly, and was extremely diverse with a small Indian population. Quakerism, geography, and ultimately a strong attachment to the Six Nation Iroquois made Pennsylvania distinctive. Combined, these particularities contributed to Pennsylvania’s cultural centrality by the middle of the eighteenth century. These particularities, however, neglect large-scale slavery, Indian war, the township settlement patterns of New England, the corporate system of Virginia, and the constant battle between planters and small

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farmers in the South and Caribbean.\textsuperscript{19} By expanding this study into the Ohio Valley post-Revolution, provides a good comparative pallet to study backcountry culture from the beginning to the end of the colonial experience (if we consider the War of 1812 as the “second Revolution”).

\textsuperscript{19} White, \textit{Backcountry and City}, 24-27.
“Many thousands of Foreigners”
The Formation of Pennsylvania’s Backcountry Identity

But what is still worse, the wide extended forests between our settlements and theirs, are inhabited by barbarous tribes of savages that delight in war and take pride in murder, subjects properly neither of the French or English, but strongly attach’d to the former by the art and indefatigable industry of priest, similarity of superstitions, and frequent family alliances.20

–Ben Franklin, The Interest of Great Britain Considered

There have been British Subjects scattered over many Plances, besides those above-mentioned, especially on Ohio, Wawyaghtas, and the Branches of Cherokee River to the West; and the Lake Ontario Northward; but they cannot with any Proprietary be said to be Settlers, because they have not acquired Titles to the Soil under their King, nor cultivated the Land by Husbandry; two Things absolutely necessary to denominate a Settlement.21

–Lewis Evans, An Analysis of A General Map of the Middle British Colonies


21 Lewis Evans, Geographical, Historical, Political, Philosophical, and Mechanical Essays. The First, Containing an Analysis of A General Map of the Middle British Colonies in America (Philadelphia: Franklin and Hall, 1755), 2.
In 1745, John Armstrong left Brookeborough County, northern Ireland, crossed the Atlantic Ocean, landed in Philadelphia, and migrated to York County, Pennsylvania, along with nearly all ten of his siblings. It was here, in the backcountry, that he would spend the rest of his life. He built a house in the town of Carlisle, where he served the government as an assemblyman, diplomat, and soldier. He raised his family, built a community, and defended it when the time came in one of the earliest established settlements in newly formed Cumberland County. Although not a Quaker, Armstrong favorably embedded himself within the proprietary party because of his resourcefulness, self-sufficiency, sound judgment, and honesty. His skills as a surveyor and his keen eye for quality land earned him several donated tracts from the proprietary family. Armstrong quickly gained a reputation among backcountry inhabitants for his fairness as a government official as well as his leadership during war. For example, when infighting over where to locate the new courthouse nearly spoiled an election in his hometown, Secretary Richard Peters noted that “a great deal” of the success in keeping the election orderly was “owing to the Prudence of [John Armstrong]” who was immediately elected on the spot as Deputy Surveyor “without any solicitation on his part and purely on the Integrity of his Character.” Armstrong’s life was one of many that has come to represent what life was like on the frontier of Pennsylvania.  

Armstrong’s migration to Pennsylvania’s backcountry was made possible because of William Penn’s successful recruitment of people from all across Europe encouraging them to participate in his “Holy Experiment,” which promised a place of religious toleration, low taxes,

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and fertile land. Armstrong epitomized the type of migrant that Penn was searching for in his promotional tract *Some Account of the Province of Pennsylvania*. According to Penn, “men of universal spirits,” like John Armstrong, should travel to Pennsylvania, especially those who “have an eye to the good of posterity, and that both understand and delight to promote good discipline and just government” in becoming an instrument of “good counsel and contrivance” who, otherwise, might be “shut out from being much use or service to great nations under settled customs.” Penn was searching for men of character, leadership ability, and people that others could emulate. He targeted the upper echelon of English society for investment as well as a sturdy settler class of successful yeoman farmers and artisans, all of whom could provide solid political leadership. Men who were responsible and “would act out of deference to a larger good rather than his own self-interest” and who “would ‘delight’ in fostering collective discipline” were desired.23

*Some Account* also briefly outlined the type of government Penn planned to implement. Under the heading “The Constitutions,” Penn listed four main points: first, “That the People and Governor have a Legislative Power, so that no Law can be made or Money raised, but by the People’s consent, second, “that the Rights and Freedoms of England (the best and largest in Europe) shall be in force there,” third, “that…we may Enact what Laws we please for the good prosperity and security of the said Province,” and finally, Penn wanted his inhabitants to “settle a free, just and Industrious Colony there.” Under this legal framework, Pennsylvania was to become a colony where J[u]st laws, wisely Sett together for the well ordering of men in Society, to prevent Corruption or justly to Correct it.” Penn believed this legal framework would set Pennsylvania apart from the Old World eliminating notions of compliance through history or

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traditional means, coercion, or backed by divine authority. Instead, Penn believed that good government was built around civic virtue by reducing social corruption and disorder. These qualities, he hoped, would be expressed in Pennsylvania’s frame of government.24

Although John Smolenski demonstrates how difficult it is to categorize Penn’s political philosophy, his writings during and after the English Restoration sheds light on his thoughts for structure and order that he ultimately tried to apply to the development of Pennsylvania’s culture and politics. As his writings make clear, Penn located the foundation of his political thought on the liberty of conscience based upon traditional English practice and precedence of the ancient constitution. To be sure, Penn’s theories on the liberty of conscious were wrapped around ideas of religious freedom, but they also focused on consent, political legitimacy, and rights associated with property. Originating out of his own persecution in 1670, Penn wrote *The People’s Ancient and Just Liberties Asserted* to target what he believed to be the essential rights of liberty and property for all Englishmen based on the Magna Charta. His reflections on the trial with William Mead are illuminating in charting many of the principles that he would incorporate into the *Frame of Government* for Pennsylvania, such as the protection of liberty and prosperity of the citizenry by the government regardless of religious faith.25 In this period, when government relied on coercion through established religion, Penn maintained that good government provided an “Impartial Maintenance of English Rights” with “Superiors Governing themselves upon a Balance” in regards to religion, and “A Sincere Promotion of General and Practical Religion” as “the Only Best Answer” for “allaying the Heat of contrary Interests” that were the result of coercive government. Again, in *England’s Present Interest Considered*, Penn wrote that the

24 Penn, Some Account; Smolenski, Friends and Strangers, 62-70; Nash, Quakers and Politics, 14-17; Penn, “Fundamentall Constitutions of Pennsylvania,” *PWP*, 2:142.
25 Smolenski, Friends and Strangers, 44-53; Penn, “The People’s Ancient and Just Liberties Asserted, In the Trial of William Penn and William Mead, At the Sessions Held at the Old-Baily in London, the First, Third, Fourth, and Fifth of September, 1670, Against the Most Arbitrary Procedur,” Political Writings, 9-14.
“First Principle” of the English government was not to violate the laws and customs agreed upon by the people nor were they “to be Condemned but by the Votes of the Freemen.” Penn’s writings mobilized much of the early Quaker literature on the government’s role of protecting the liberty of conscience by securing the civil rights of the people, not by forcing religious unity through coercion. This apprehension over coercion needed to be avoided not only made the governance over a diverse population possible; it also produced a society that could be integrated into its political philosophy, influencing its peoples to “supply what was defective in their own Government, or add some New Freedom to themselves.” After all, if government was indiscriminate in violating the spirit of the Magna Charta, then Penn asked: “Who can say he hath Right to the Coat upon his Back?” If the liberties of Englishmen could be randomly violated, “Wives [would] be Ravished; our Children Slaved; our Families Ruined, and our Estates led away in Triumph, by every Sturdy Beggar, and Malicious Informer, as their Trophies.”

Penn produced no fewer than seven tracts between 1681 and 1686, in nearly twenty English editions, promoting immigration to Pennsylvania. Every document outlined orderly settlement, bountiful lands, and downplayed native conflict. All settlers could achieve great things if they were industrious and hard working. Since Penn depended heavily upon the potential quit-rent payments he would receive from settlers, it was necessary to populate the colony as quickly as possible. Therefore, four pamphlets were printed in both German and Dutch and multiple others in French to increase the possibility of settlers from all over Europe to travel to his colony. All had multiple editions. To aid the non-English population in understanding Penn’s instructions on proper civic culture, his plans for good government, and

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26 Penn, “England’s Present Interest Considered,” *Political Writings*, 25, 30, 34.
27 Penn, “The People’s Ancient and Just Liberties Asserted,” *Political Writings*, 11-12.
educating them on the highly celebrated English liberties in Pennsylvania, he published *The Excellent Privilege of Liberty and Property*. Penn attempted to create political and cultural unity through the transmission of an orchestrated printing campaign to promote colonial order or what John Smolenski calls “provincial speech economy.” It would be under these pretenses that settlers from all over Europe would enter Pennsylvania.\(^{28}\)

Penn succeeded in populating his colony precipitously. With approximately 11,400 people in 1690, Pennsylvania quickly grew to more than 183,700 by mid-century, rapidly ruralizing the colony as most of the immigrants moved into the backcountry to take possession of their own land.\(^{29}\) Economic success, relative peace with the colony’s natives, and the Quaker’s nonviolent disposition easily made Pennsylvania a prime destination despite the cost and hardship of trans-Atlantic travel. Mostly coming from Germany, Ireland, and Scotland many more traveled domestically, such as New Englanders, Swedes, Finns, Welsh, English, and even French to make Penn’s colony the most ethnically diverse place in the world.\(^{30}\) Estimates vary, but perhaps 80,000 Germans from the Rhine Valley left for the middle colonies over the first four decades of the eighteenth century with migration peaking in the late 1720s and then again in


the interwar years of 1748-1754. Ulster migrants from Northern Ireland, such as John Armstrong, directed their entry into the Americas primarily at either Philadelphia or New Castle (Delaware) and ultimately settled in the southern and western parts of Pennsylvania. The Scots-Irish left their homelands just prior to the 1720s and continued in earnest for more than fifty years with about 40,000 making their way into Pennsylvania during that time. They all left for their own reasons – the prospect of possessing land, religious toleration, flee economic decline in their own countries, or to escape warfare – but they helped to make Philadelphia the largest city in the English colonies and Pennsylvania the most populous by mid-century.31

This diversity was significant because it created a disparate society of multiple cultures and religions, potentially causing conflict as it had so many times before in Europe. Quakers, Pietists, Baptists, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Anglicans, and Roman Catholics intermixed throughout the province unevenly. There were places in Pennsylvania where there was intense mixing of different peoples, lessening distinctions between them, and then, there were other locations where distinct communities maintained their cultural identities while living side-by-side with another dissimilar community. It was complex. Toleration among the various European immigrants in Pennsylvania was often grudgingly accepted due to a variety of reasons. First, the influence and acceptability of Quakerism provided a cultural philosophy that tended to relax rather than antagonize ethnic differences between immigrants. Quaker leadership aimed to create a society that was both orderly and civic minded with the purpose of placing the focus of loyalty to the proprietary government rather than on religion, ethnic background, or on European native cultures.32 Moreover, due to their own experiences of persecution in Britain, Quakers

championed spiritual liberty where no single religion could dominate. Indeed, Penn promised that “every person might freely enjoy his own judgment and the exercise of conscience in matters of worship” for those “who confess and acknowledge the One Almighty and Eternal God to be the Creator, Upholder, and Ruler of the World.”

Second, the continued mass migration into Pennsylvania kept the population diverse and did not, for the most part, allow groups to consolidate like they did, for example, in New York. Once many of the original settlers that Penn recruited made their way to Pennsylvania, those immigrants would, in turn, aid future migrants from their native countries and churches or at least blaze a trail that could be followed by others. This constant migration, along with the friendly requirements that promoted immigration into Pennsylvania, created “several distinct new community forms” that largely characterized the colony as a “mixed multitude.”

Penn, despite the influence of Quakerism, devised a secularized and civic government that could incorporate all of Pennsylvania’s non-English population and one that did not permit a formal religious hierarchy like the Roman Catholic or Anglican churches. This alleviated the traditional dependency of living near a more urban area to practice religion in a church and enabled the colony to develop a society significantly different from New England or the Chesapeake. This, along with their relatively late arrival into the colony, and with the great lure of available land beyond the established European settlements along the eastern seaboard, Germans, Irish, and Scots-Irish most frequently occupied lands on the frontier. Already known for their mobility in Europe, these new migrants continued to frequently move around Pennsylvania’s backcountry. This was important for the relatively peaceful pluralism that existed in the province because this constant movement helped intermingle culture, religion, and

34 Landsman, Crossroads of Empire, 126.
ethnicity. And, where people did decide to live in particular counties where fellow countrymen resided, these counties still bordered one other and they regularly came into contact with each other, far more often than they did in New York or in the South.\textsuperscript{35}

Successive waves of immigration, therefore, resulted in large groupings of diverse ethnic settlement in Pennsylvania’s backcountry. Although ethnicity was initially important in deciding where Germans, Irish, Scots-Irish, and English settled in the backcountry, mostly they all quickly adapted to the New World’s environment and often placed material and economic concerns above all else. The lack of a commercial plantation staple such as tobacco, sugar, or even rice, reduced social and economic stratification leading to a relatively egalitarian rural society. Indeed, the seemingly endless amount of land was conducive to family farmers planting and harvesting wheat or corn. Prosperity both inside and outside of Philadelphia gave the colony the popularly used quote: “The Best Poor Man’s Country!”\textsuperscript{36} Similar to ethnicity, religious affiliation was initially important in deciding where to settle, but the great distance between farms and settlements, along with the inability to congregate, permitted religion to “evaporate in the great distance it has to travel; there [in Europe] it is a grain of powder enclosed; here [the Pennsylvania backcountry] it burns away in the open air and consumes without effect.”\textsuperscript{37} Maps made for Pennsylvania in the eighteenth century, such as the one created by Philip E. Pendleton in \textit{Oley Valley Heritage, The Colonial Years: 1700-1775}, clearly illustrates both a lack of

\textsuperscript{35} Smolenski, \textit{Friends and Strangers}, 76; Landsman, \textit{Crossroads of Empire}, 128-34.
\textsuperscript{36} Stephen J. Hornsby, \textit{British Atlantic, American Frontier: Spaces of Power in Early Modern British America} (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2005), 159-60; You would be hard pressed not to find this quote in ANY literature whatsoever on colonial Pennsylvania, so why not me too?
organized settlement patterns and large pockets of ethnic concentration that permeated the backcountry.  

Penn was wildly successful in his promotional literature, too successful in fact. By 1730, Pennsylvania’s population more than doubled and white settlement expanded well into the Susquehanna River Valley, located more than forty miles from Philadelphia proper. As the population quickly multiplied, more and more people had to search deeper and deeper into the backcountry to claim their own land. From the start, Penn had every intention of overseeing settlement in his colony, both within Philadelphia and in the backcountry. When Penn was granted his charter for Pennsylvania in 1681, he was given full sovereignty over more than 120,000 km² of territory. Among his rights as proprietor, Penn had the power to determine how land was to be sold or rented, for what price, and for how long. He divided his colony into commons, manors, and estates, which were organized to provide structure to the colony. Since Penn wanted to quickly recover some of the vast fortune he initially invested in the colony, he found it easiest to sell 500 to 5,000 acre lots to land speculators. These investors were called “First Purchasers” and they received special privileges such as an additional bonus of ten acres within the city limits of Philadelphia as delineated in Certain Conditions or Concessions.  

Although large tracts of land were reserved for speculators or held as manors for future sale, most property was sold to individual settlers, who were then responsible for paying the quit-rent. To be successful, a settler had to request a warrant to get their land surveyed from the Land Office. Once the survey was completed, the settler could then purchase the land from the proprietors and receive a patent after paying the appropriate fees. At this point, the settler

39 45,000 miles²  
officially owned the property, but was still responsible for arranging the quit-rent payments and filing their registration of the deed to county officials. This proved extraordinarily difficult because the numerous fees made it expensive, transportation to Philadelphia was arduous and dangerous, and the time from start to finish was exhausting. Fortunately, there were no timelines set and the process often encompassed several generations of the same family, allowing many who sought to complete the process to own land free of all burdens.41

Unfortunately for Penn, his “ambiguous and opportunistic land policy” resulted in political and diplomatic turmoil, an inability to keep accurate and updated records of land grants, and confused and angered uncooperative settlers, making his plans impracticable.42 In addition to the confusing overlapping of land claims, Penn severely damaged his relationship with the First Purchasers by discarding the promised lottery system for determining the location of city lots and then, on top of that, requiring them to pay quit-rents that they assumed were voided with their large purchases. Instead, lots were decided by loyalty and by the amount of land purchased. These actions incensed many of the original buyers, motivating them to forward a petition that declared Penn defrauded them in both land and in profits. According to the petition, “Persons considerate in this City,” believed that not enough land was set aside within the confines of Philadelphia to satisfy those who made early purchases and the payment of quit-rent was unfair since they understood it to be included as part of the contract in buying land in Pennsylvania.43 Moreover, the property buyers Penn placed in the premium locations in Philadelphia were mostly members of the newly formed Free Society of Traders. Members consisted of wealthy Quaker merchants and large land owners, family members, and associates of William Penn. Many of the

43 Petition of “Persons considerate in this City” to William Penn, Proud Papers, box 2, HSP.
members bought sizable tracts of land with the intention of selling it without ever traveling to the colony, but those who did make it to the colony attained prominent roles within the proprietary government as governors, council members, judges, justices of the peace, and surveyors. It was these speculators, allied to Penn, who created a nucleus of political and economic power in and around Philadelphia which backcountry settlers ultimately came into conflict with over land possession.\textsuperscript{44} The Free Society of Traders, who heavily invested in Penn’s colony, expected large returns for risking their fortunes in an undeveloped country while immigrant farmers imagined Pennsylvania to be a place of bountiful land with cheap prices, especially since “the Proprietor invited People to come & settle his Countrey, they are come for that end, & must live.”\textsuperscript{45}

Penn also inherited the lower three counties that comprise the modern state of Delaware from James, Duke of York. This was controversial because Maryland also claimed the three counties, but the Calvert family never pressed their claims out of deference to Charles II’s will. This acquisition almost wrecked Penn’s ambitious plans from the beginning. Mostly non-Quaker and non-English, residents of the Lower Counties did not easily submit to Penn’s exclusive power structure constructed around members of the Free Society of Traders and their associates. Moreover, geography, economics, religion, and politics all played an important role in their resistance. Geographically the Lower Counties were hemmed in by Maryland to the west, Pennsylvania to the north, and Chesapeake Bay to the east, limiting their potential to expand their population and their economics. Economically, the port of Philadelphia threatened their commercial dominance on the Delaware River and on Chesapeake Bay. Politically, despite


\textsuperscript{45} James Logan to John Penn, 25 Nov. 1727, \textit{PA Archives}, 2nd series, 7:96-97.
near equal representation in the Assembly during the 1680s, Pennsylvania’s greater potential to grow reduced the influence of the Lower Counties politicians in the combined Assembly once immigration increased Pennsylvania’s population and, therefore, their representation. Finally, religious diversity surrounding the main city of New Castle made many of the Swedes, Finns, and Dutch unsure of a radical Quaker culture that was unfamiliar to them when compared to the Anglicanism practiced by the Duke of York, who previously ruled over them.\footnote{Samuel Hazard, ed., \textit{Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania from the Organization to the Termination of the Proprietary Government}, 10 vols. (Harrisburg, PA, 1838-1952), 1:101 (\textit{CR}); Robert W. Johannsen, “The Conflict between the Lower Three Counties and Pennsylvania, 1682-1704,” \textit{Delaware History} 5 (1952): 96-123.} Maryland’s proprietor, Lord Baltimore, was not conciliatory towards Penn’s acquisition of territory which he believed was his. Baltimore immediately protested the boundary between Pennsylvania and Maryland to the Crown and then claimed he would support a rebellion against the Quaker colony if he did not receive a favorable reply. Indeed, Baltimore sent armed militia to force the inhabitants of the Lower Counties to support his claims and if they refused, “he would Turne them out of their homes and take their land from them.”\footnote{Council Minutes, 23 March 1720, \textit{CR}, 1:113.} Later, Baltimore’s men constructed a fort to further his desire of obtaining the disputed territory and had his agent, William Darvall, threaten the inhabitants not to pay Penn their quit-rents.\footnote{William Clarke to William Penn, 19 April 1684, \textit{PA Archives}, 2nd series, 7:8.}

With the possibility of open rebellion from both Maryland and the Lower Counties, Penn sent his own agents to suppress the uprising and offer better terms to the inhabitants for owning their own property.\footnote{Ibid.} Land possession was at the heart of both the upheaval in his own province and the potential mutiny of the Delaware counties. Penn damaged his integrity by having no clear institutional policies over the purchasing of land and the paying of quit-rents that accompanied property ownership. Positioning loyalists near the most profitable locations in
Philadelphia and breaking agreements upon his arrival, Penn inadvertently initiated the formation of political factions that either promoted his vision or challenged his proprietary powers. Thus, the importance of land and its mismanagement opened an opportunity for an anti-proprietary faction to develop, one that consisted of merchants and landholders who were typically not members of the Free Society of Traders, original officeholders, or First Purchasers. They, along with the dissenters from Delaware and Maryland, rebelled against Penn’s land policies of allotment and revenue. Therefore, prior to the mass immigration from Germany and Ireland that was imminent, provincial institutions and political division already materialized over the possession of property. The atmosphere was charged with potential upheaval and the use of force to attain one’s own goals. The cracks of colonial Pennsylvania’s political infrastructure and the anti-proprietary’s united effort to block Penn’s “Holy Experiment” propelled the colony onto a collision course with Indians, immigrant settlers, and westward expansion.

Many of the representatives in the Assembly believed, however, that the provincial land policies could be reconciled. Upon this belief, “a Considerable Number of the Inhabitants of Philadi” forwarded a petition that the Assembly presented to Penn in 1701 addressing “articles Concerning our Privileges and Property.” In particular, the petition sought to eliminate quit-rents within the city of Philadelphia, the termination of the Board of Propriety, and a reduction of the quit-rent in the Lower Counties. A new charter of property would have alleviated many of the derisive issues over the controversial land ownership policies by permitting resurveys, the purchasing of surplus land, and the issuing of patents, but Penn refused because “he would never suffer an Assembly to intermeddle with his Property.” To compound matters, Penn returned to

50 Nash, *Quakers and Politics*, 78-83.
England abruptly, leaving his new provincial secretary, James Logan, in charge of the Land Office without ever establishing clear and flexible policies for land ownership.

Logan became the most pivotal figure in the creation and development of colonial Pennsylvania’s institutions after Penn departed. His privileged position on the Proprietary Council provided him an avenue to strongly influence the colony’s cultural, political, and social foundations. Penn chose Logan, a Scots-Irish schoolmaster, to be his provincial secretary and brought him to Pennsylvania in 1699. Logan quickly gained several titles within the colony – Clerk of the Council, Commissioner of Property, President of the Council, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Mayor of Philadelphia, Receiver-General of Proprietary Quit-Rents, and Governor – which thrust Logan into new and unfamiliar roles as Penn’s primary agent. He quickly mastered these positions allowing him to creatively and innovatively engage in constructing institutions as Pennsylvania’s utmost colonial administrator.52 Logan, who Nash characterized as the person “who was foremost among those who wished to protect Penn’s interests and who cherished an ordered, stable, community-oriented society,” was the biggest hurdle for anti-proprietary forces and their pro-yeoman stance on land possession.53

Logan’s main responsibility as head of the Land Office was to direct property distribution and settlement. We can get some idea of what Penn expected of Logan by carefully examining Thomas Holme’s *A Map of Ye Improved Part of Pensilvania in America; Divided into Countyes, Townships, and Lotts* (1685), which plainly illustrated Penn’s vision for the orderly surveyed division of land.54 Holme’s map displays well-defined straight lines running perpendicular to the

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54 Thomas Holme, *A Mapp of ye Improved Part of Pensilvania in America: Divided into Countyes, Townships, and Lotts* (London, 1685), 4 pages, LCP.
Delaware River in neat rectangular lots. This systematic layout potentially allowed Penn and his agents to efficiently collect quit-rents and keep accurate rent rolls, but by the time massive immigration began in the early eighteenth century, surveyors quickly became overwhelmed. The failure to survey lots prior to sale led to “irregular” land settlement patterns and the adoption of widely dispersed farms in the backcountry that were “so far apart that many have to walk a quarter or a half-hour just to reach their neighbor” because most farmers had “fifty or one hundred, even, two, three, up to four hundred [acres] of land, laid out in orchards, meadows, fields, and forest.” The proprietors held onto the notion of organized settlement long after it was apparent that the inhabitants of the backcountry had no inclination of following orders. Thomas Penn wrote to Richard Peters in 1750 “that the best way of settling in that [Ohio] Country is in Townships as in New England which method we shal certainly pursue...we shal endeavour to Settle the west and north boundary and Settle all along the lines if the Indians will consent to it to prevent all future disputes of that kind.” In 1751, just a year later, Penn wrote to James Hamilton about his frustration as to why the township grid settlement was not being followed. The settlers chose, instead, the isolated farm layout which met their needs more realistically.

The first problem for Logan, then, was the dispersed settlement pattern favored by the incoming Palatinate Germans and Scots-Irish. Dispersal was not a unique problem for only Pennsylvania as it was often mentioned throughout colonial literature. Benjamin Franklin, concerned about security in the backcountry, wrote that “the English inhabitants, though numerous, are extended over a large tract of land…and although some of their trading towns are

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57 Thomas Penn to Andrew Hamilton, 9 March 1751, Penn-Hamilton Correspondence, Penn Papers, HSP.
thickly settled, their settlements in the country towns must be at a distance from each other,” making them difficult to defend from fortifications alone. Moreover, “where lands are cheap, people are fond of acquiring large tracts to themselves; and therefore, in the out settlements, they must be more remote: and as the people that move out are generally poor, they sit down, either

Thomas Holme, *A Mapp of ye Improved Part of Pennsilvania in America, Divided into Counties, Townships, and Lotts* (London 1685), LCP.
where they can easiest procure land, or soonest raise a subsistence.” Evan Lewis noted the
difficulties that squatters often posed when he was describing the geographic boundaries of the
British Empire: “more many miles in breadth, [the modest settlements] are very widely scattered;
ot too much for want of the people to improve and plant, but for schemes in almost every
colony to prevent them.” In regards to those “British subjects scattered” across western
Pennsylvania “cannot with any propriety be said to be settlers, because they have not acquired
titles to the soil under their king, nor cultivated the land by husbandry, two things absolutely
necessary to demonstrate a settlement.” James Adair agreed, but went further to suggest that in
order to preserve the frontier, “a legal constitutional form of government, ought immediately to
be established there, both for the general welfare, and preventing evils that may reasonably be
expected to grow up among a remote and numerous body of people, - hardy and warlike, -
without any public religion or civil law, - in a healthful climate, and very extensive and fertile
country.” And finally, the Club of American Merchants, also concerned about the possible
security inadequacies of the backcountry complained “that in case of a War, if our Settlements
should continue in that weak and helpless Condition they are now, to lie exposed to the Insults
and Attacks of the Enemy, without the Protection of any Kind of Fortifications either before or
behind them…surely we can expect nothing else but such Desolation and Ruin.” Thus we find
numerous examples of dispersed backcountry descriptions that negatively highlight the various concerns of the elite in Philadelphia.58

The letters, diaries, and official correspondence coming out of the city centers were littered with concerns over actual or impending violence and conflict in the backcountry. Writers noted that “since their Titles have been so openly disputed” on the frontier, they “will never be compell’d to it without an armed force.”59 Many in the government feared the sheer number of immigrants entering Pennsylvania as a “very dangerous Consequence, since by the same method any number of foreigners from any nation whatever, as well Enemys as friends, might throw themselves upon us,” so they should be required “to take such Oaths appointed by Law as are necessary to give assurance of their being well affected to his Majesty and his Government.”60 Not only were elites concerned about incoming numbers, illegal squatting, or that recent immigrants were culturally different, but also their way of living in the backcountry. According to Mary M. Schweitzer, “despite the formal plans for township grid settlement, Pennsylvanians soon adopted the isolated farm plan that would epitomize the American countryside for the next three centuries.”61 Dispersal was a fundamental concern central to settling Pennsylvania’s backcountry as it illustrated how isolation and disintegration were important cultural elements that displayed peril, separation, vulnerability, and violence. For Schweitzer, “the household economy of Pennsylvania depended heavily on land distribution, which in turn was determined by government policy” and “when legal mechanisms interfered

59 James Logan to the Proprietaries, 16 Nov. 1729, PA Archives, 2nd series, 7:65.
60 Council Minutes, 9 September 1717, CR, 3:29.
with the household goal of settling all adults on arable land…the community created its own land policy by using…the rule of custom.” The “rule of custom,” in this case, meant the refusal to pay quit-rents or obtain a warrant to buy land and the widespread practice of squatting. Despite this, the settlers saw their problems as one rooted in the colony’s administrative powerlessness to provide security against Indians and oversee land claims, not one of sacrificing their independence for protection. Therefore, the proprietor’s power over the backcountry was one of proximity. So by the time Pennsylvania was inundated with immigration and overwhelmed with multiple legal battles over property titles by the early eighteenth century, the anger and frustration over acquiring land had already been established.62

Much of the literary culture of colonial Pennsylvania was concerned with the threat of insurrections on the frontier. Because of this, their writing offered ideal models of organized settlement and administrative control over the backcountry. A wide range of writers, traders, missionaries, diplomats, and interpreters provided a new genre of numerous and differing accounts of “savage cruelty” committed by both whites and Indians beyond Philadelphia, events that often worried elites in the capital starting in the 1730s and peaking during the Seven Years’ War. Although William Douglass’ *A Discourse Concerning the Currencies of the British Plantations in America* (1740), Nathaniel Evans’ *Ode, on the Late Glorious Successes of the Majesty’s Arms and Present Greatness of the English Nation* (1762), Thomas Pownall’s *Considerations Towards a General Plan of Measures for the English Provinces* (1756), John Dickinson’s *The Late Regulations Respecting the British Colonies* (1765), and James Otis’ *The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved* (1766) varied in topics covering currency, geography, military strategy, Indian alliances, economics, and the responsibilities of the British Crown, they all offered their own solutions of how to accomplish peace and stability in the

62 Schweitzer, *Custom and Contact*, 89; White, *Backcountry and City*, 40-43.
backcountry. The richness of these rumors, gossips, and guesses about the state of mind of those Indians and settlers living in the backcountry, the tensions between yeoman farmers and provincial officials, and the sheer volume of lawlessness and defiance against imperial institutions, demonstrates that conflict and insurrection shaped Pennsylvania’s colonial experience as much as, or maybe more than peace and accommodation.

Widely dispersed farms made it difficult for Logan to apply any type of system that could efficiently collect the annual quit-rents beyond Philadelphia. A letter from Logan to Penn in 1705 stated that “I am sorry the Law of Property is reported blank, for on that only our Resurveys were grounded, & without the Allowance…it will be impossible I fear to recover any Overplus without Suits of Law, nor do I know how we can, that way itself, goe well about it.” Revenue from land transactions was in a state of despair. Despite this Logan believed that many settlers would agree to some form of payment, “but at the same time they must, by as firm a Law, be settled in all things that are their due, both in Privileges and Property.” Land owners needed some degree of security in their investment, but Pennsylvania was in turmoil. The animosity in the Assembly notwithstanding, the border dispute with Maryland spilled over into the rich and profitable lands of the Susquehanna Valley. It was here that Logan experienced such difficulty with frontier yeoman farmers who often refused to pay their quit-rents because of the boundary dispute. Logan, more so than Penn, realized the potential value that western lands


64 James Logan to William Penn, 17 May 1705, Logan Papers, HSP; Penn’s refusal and issues over resurveys, see: *Penn Papers*, Dunn and Dunn, 4:93n.
held when he suggested to the proprietor that “the sale of the Susquehanna lands, or other great tracts beyond the present surveys for public sales as be safe enough” to alleviate Penn’s financial problems. Thus, the stage was set for more confrontation.⁶⁵

In another letter from Logan to the Penn family soon after, the secretary illustrates how backcountry peoples successfully resisted the government’s ability to enforce its power beyond Philadelphia:

Of those who have sate down on Lands divers neither are, nor are like to be, able to purchase them. They must, therefore, either be granted to others who can compound them with the People for their Improvements, or else, to themselves on Rent, but then that will sound so high that it will be of ill consequence. In the lower Counties, where the richest Lands lie, they bellow out against a penny p. acre as the most grievous oppression. Nay, even the arrears of a bushel of wheat p. C. are to them become intolerable…Yet if a settlement is kept in suspense on that account it may be doubted whether your Right & authority can be at all enforced without an army, for these Intruders will be all of one mind. That is, by some means or other to hold possession, and if they should unite, take head, & hold you at Bay, the remedy, where we have no executive Officer above a Sherrif…will be exceeding difficult.⁶⁶

Logan was concerned not only about the payment of rent, but also the potential for the entire backcountry to unite against the proprietary government because of a lack of institutional control. Here, Logan understood how difficult it would be to remove “those who have sate down” with only a “Sherrif,” who was often the only face of provincial authority that frontiersmen ever saw, and “without an army.” United, the settlers could overcome provincial authority and hold the government “at Bay.” For Logan, squatting was the only purposeful thing on their minds and attempting to collect quit-rents or the “arrears of a bushel of wheat” could only be met with violence, especially since “neither are, nor are like to be, able to purchase” the lands they were squatting on.

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⁶⁵ James Logan to William Penn, 18 Sept. 1706, Penn-Logan Correspondence, HSP, 2:170.
⁶⁶ James Logan to John Penn, 25 November 1727, PA Archives, 2nd Series, 7:98.
In a letter addressed to the Penn family in 1727, Logan noted the difficulty that this

diversity presented:

Many thousands of foreigners, mostly Palatines, so called, already in the
Countrey, of whom near 1500 came in this last summer; many of them are a
surely people, divers Papists among them, & the men generally well arm’d. We
have from the North of Ireland, great numbers yearly, 8 or 9 Ships this last ffal
discharged at Newcastle. Both these sorts sitt frequently down on any spott of
vacant Land they can find, without asking questions; the last Palatines say there
will be twice the number next year, & the Irish say the same of their People; last
week one of these latter (the Irish) applied to me, in the name of 400, as he had
said, who depended all on me, for directions where they should settle…both they
and the Palatines pretend they would buy, but not in twenty has anything to pay
with.67

This letter highlighted the challenges of managing and locating newly arrived immigrants for
both colonial and imperial officials, while the immigrants and their large numbers were looking
to possess land without payment. The numbers were revealing because Logan was expressing
how the overwhelming number of immigrants coming into the province potentially indicated
resistance: “surely people;” violence: “men generally well arm’d [and] they sitt frequently down
on any spott of vacant Land…without asking question;” and poverty: “not one in twenty has
anything to pay with.” The Board of Trade recognized these same issues with similar language
just five years prior claiming that the American colonies “abused their authority” in making large
land grants to private individuals, failed to collect quit-rents properly, kept inaccurate records,
and rarely, if ever, paid their dues to the Auditor of Plantations. Moreover, they defrauded the
Crown by preserving land claims without cultivating or improving their property, “which is a
practice detrimental to [his] Majesty’s authority, and tends to ye shaking of that dependency

which they owe to [his] Majesty and to their Mother Kingdom.”68 This was especially true in Pennsylvania where backcountry settlers either squatted or lived on isolated farms making it difficult for the government to collect taxes and keep accurate rent rolls.

Kathleen Wilson notes that the “transoceanic flows of peoples, goods, and ideas were millennia old…but what changes in [the early eighteenth century] are both the scale and nature of the movements…and the mobility between them, and the conflation of geographic distance with temporality in ways that secured ‘the peripheral relation of the colony in metropolitan thinking.’” Initially, Logan possessed significant power over the direction and location of backcountry settlement when the numbers were small, but as the above quote illustrates, massive immigration overwhelmed the survey office and Logan could only complain about the influx. So where the proprietors and imperial officials attempted to manage settlement through a quasi-feudal executive that demanded the payment of quit-rents and the possession of a title through the Land Office, the backcountry settlers were able to avoid punishment because of their considerable numbers and mobility. They had no intention of obtaining appropriate paperwork. This, in turn, disrupted the orderly settlement pattern that Penn had envisioned and reduced the ability to profit from land sales and the collection of rent – the proprietor’s main source of income. The flood of immigrants placed an enormous burden on Logan to purchase more and more Indian land legitimately or illicitly and as the newly arrived Scots-Irish and Germans poured into the backcountry, the Indians expressed “a Dissatisfaction at the large Settlements made by the English on Susquehanna, and that they seemed to claim a Property or Right to those Lands” without any proof of ownership.69 Violence ensued and Logan noted that the Indians “behold all their Lands invaded by swarms of strangers that they have an aversion to, for the

Irish are generally rough to them.” Logan estimated that over 100,000 people had settled in Pennsylvania by 1726 without consulting the Land Office. Thus the greatest threat to the sovereign territory of Pennsylvania was the undermining presence of dispersed white squatters, farmers, and disaffected Indians living in the backcountry.

With the rapid population increase in the backcountry the agricultural economy also expanded. By the middle of the eighteenth century, the demand for internal agricultural products and improvements made in intercolonial trade had a continental impact; the Pennsylvania economy relied less and less on British imperial oversight, further detaching Britain’s control over the colony. The success of Pennsylvania’s family farmers encouraged further immigration of hundreds of thousands of people seeking landed independence. As more and more people journeyed to Pennsylvania’s backcountry and mixed with settlers from completely different European backgrounds, a new cultural identity formed. A blend of traditional European culture fused with American understandings – increased family independence (eliminating the old feudal relationships experienced in Europe) and the novel challenges of frontier life (clearing land and dealing with native peoples) – along with the weakening of religious hierarchies and the conversion to the English language, led to a distancing of the periphery to the center as British influence and capital diminished on the frontier. Britain, heavily reliant on a commercialized empire, simply could not extend its institutions, capital, or administration to the far reaches of the Ohio Valley as the mass movement of the population further into the interior, uncontrolled settlement patterns, the expansion of internal demands for agricultural products, and the continued evolution of a new American identity, made North America unfamiliar compared to

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70 Ibid, 13 August 1719, 83.
71 White, *The Backcountry and the City*, 43.
the more compatible Caribbean island colonies, which were readily suitable to a maritime, commercial empire.\textsuperscript{72}

During the same time frame, larger Atlantic world events influenced how Britain viewed its overseas territorial possessions. The conflict known as the War for Spanish Succession (Queen Anne’s War in the American colonies), mostly fought in Europe, witnessed French and Indian raids along the fringes of New England and Spanish attacks in the Carolinas illustrating the vulnerability of the colonies. The American colonies could fall to the French or Spanish if better concentrated defensive measures, a unified command, and improved political organization was not quickly addressed. To a large degree, the resulting Treaty of Utrecht (1713), which ended the war, greatly shaped imperial politics and power in dealing with colonial possessions. Most importantly, it gave rise to the modern British Empire in terms of how imperial administrators contemplated overseas trade, security, and the strategic use of the military. Soon after the Treaty of Utrecht ended the War of the Spanish Succession in 1713, the Council of Trade and Plantations sent a survey to its North American colonies asking various questions concerning the location of French settlements, loyalty of native peoples, military preparedness, and commerce in relation to their importance to Great Britain. Their intention was to determine the best possible ways of “securing, improving and enlarging” Britain’s colonial possessions in reaction to France’s movements during the previous two wars in North America. By 1721 the department had collected the necessary data, analyzed it, and “humbly proposed such methods, as may best prevent the increase of an evil, which, if not timely prevented, may prove destructive to your Majesty's interest; and have likewise offered such considerations, as, in our opinion, may contribute to the improving and enlarging your Majesty's dominions in America.” The report,


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therefore, reflected the concerns that arose during the war and the solutions that needed to take place in order to protect Britain’s frontier settlements.\textsuperscript{73}

The report described a scene in North America where French and Indian forces proved particularly aggressive and dangerous, requiring the powerful and experienced oversight by British administration officials to prevent the loss of the American colonies. For example, the acquisition of Acadia, Hudson Bay, and Newfoundland, as stipulated in the Treaty of Utrecht, was troubling because more than 2,500 French lived there compared to three British families. French intermarriage and friendship with the local Indians made it possible that, together, they would take “upon any occasion to engage…in a war against your Majesty's subjects.” Indeed, reports came back from these newly obtained possessions about the harassment occurring at the Annapolis garrison and the molestation of British fisherman along the coast of Nova Scotia. Since these French inhabitants were still loyal to France and with the possibility of starting another conflict, the Council of Trade and Plantations favored their removal because “it is not to be expected that they will ever become good subjects to your Majesty, and there is all the reason in the world to apprehend that upon any rupture between the two Crowns, they may openly declare in favour of France.” Moreover, the French were building forts on various points along the St. Lawrence River, down the Mississippi River, and into the Bay of Mexico, “not so much with intention probably to bound their own territories as to secure what they have already got till a more favourable juncture shall give them occasion to make further intrusions upon their neighbours.” In addition to building forts, the French have also “at all times used their utmost endeavours to bring over the Indians to their intrest” due to the success of intercultural relationships and missionary achievements. It was apparent, then, that the French had no

\textsuperscript{73} Headlam, “Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and the West Indies,” 42 vols., British History, vol. 32: September 8, 1721, 656.
intention of fulfilling their obligations to the Treaty of Utrecht, nor was France going to abandon its encroachment upon Britain’s backcountry, especially since their own empire formed “one continued line from north to south on the back of your Majesty's Plantations.” Thus, the minister’s report outlined the dangers – surrounded by French and Indians, loss of trade, lack of defense, and violations of the Treaty of Utrecht – that the British subjects in America’s backcountry faced if steps were not taken to prevent such abuses in the future.74

The ministers identified three institutions that needed strengthening in order to safeguard the well-being of the American colonies. First, appropriate military measures were to be taken. Despite the natural barrier of mountains that separated British colonial possessions from French, the gaps and passes in those mountains needed to be properly defended. The destruction of Deerfield, Haverhill, and Charleston (MA) in the previous war proved that the French and Indians could strike beyond the mountain passes. Moreover, not defending the gaps would “cut off their [British colonists] prospect of further improvements” into the interior as well as diminish trade with native allies. This was best accomplished, according to the report, by fortifying the northern and southern extremities of the empire, where the colonies were the weakest and the French strongest. New York’s relationship with the Five, and later Six, Nations was secure and Pennsylvania took extra steps annually to renew their peace and friendship with the Indians at Conestoga “by their fair and just dealings with them.” Second, Indian policy had to improve. Although the British population far exceeded that of the French, the alliance with native peoples made the French more formidable commercially and militarily. The report assessed 60,000 Indian warriors allied to the French compared with only 1,500 for the British. Indeed, the French, in order “to gain the natives to their intrest…have spared no pains, no cost nor artifice to attain this desirable end” including the attempted coaxing of the Five Nations

74 Headlam, Calendar of State Papers 32, 656.
away from their “ancient league” with New York. The French strategy was so successful that the British ministers recommended that subjects living in all American colonies should practice intermarriage with Indians and the British government should provide regular and routine gift-giving to natives in order to improve British interests, which “must have been lost for want of them.” More realistically, however, the ministers realized that providing desirable European goods at “honest and reasonable prices” was one advantage that the French could not offer. Here, the ministers recommended that the King regulate Indian trade in order to better facilitate further colonial westward expansion, alliances, peace treaties, and increased commerce. Most importantly, however, it would expand British influence in North America as opposed to the French.75

Finally, refining the various models of provincial governments was needed due to the fact that these governments “frequently refused obedience to…your Majesty's Royal Predecessors, have broken thro' the laws of Trade and Navigation, made laws of their own contrary to those of Great Britain, given shelter to pirates and outlaws, and refuse to contribute to the defence of the nei'bouring Colonies under your Majesty's immediate government.” Abuse of power, refusal to cooperate, disobedience, and unrestrained freedom convinced the ministers that all of the colonial governments should “hold immediately of one Lord, and have but one joint intrest to pursue.” This denunciation did not even include the colonial assemblies that Britain felt displayed too much independence from London by conducting illicit trade detrimental to the empire. Because there were charter, proprietary, and royal colonies all operating under different forms of government, the ministers suggested that the only meaningful way to overcome the differences between them and to better control their misbehavior was to place them immediately under the Crown’s supervision. This, in turn, would “secure by all possible means the intire

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75 Headlam, Calendar of State Papers 32, 656.
absolute and immediate dependancy of their Colonies.” Once the colonies were redirected to better fit the empire, their economy could then be transformed to produce tar and pitch, masts for ships, and the supply of foreign parts, “whereby they may greatly advantage themselves and contribute to render their mother Kingdom absolutely independant of all the Northern Powers.” Furthermore, the concentration on naval stores would diminish the competition in the colonies for manufactured items and eliminate dishonest trade with foreign powers, according to the ministers.76

Providing raw materials and aiding Britain’s finances were not the only reasons why the ministers recommended tighter controls over the North American colonies. Quit-rents were also extraordinarily lacking considering the amount of land in America and the number of people living there. In particular, the governors of the colonies, who had the power to grant land, continuously abused their powers by consenting to large grants to private individuals with small quit-rents that were rarely collected or accounted for. The ministers believed that backdoor deals were being made where land grants were being reserved by speculators for more profitable sales later while the land lay uncultivated and untaxed. To alleviate this violation, a recommendation was put forth to eliminate reserved grants without quit-rent, to officially reject any grant of land exceeding one thousand acres, and to require that at least two thirds of any grant must be put into cultivation within a number of fixed years. Furthermore, to prevent future abuses, governors were required to stamp their seal or have the King’s seal on all land transactions. The purchaser had six years to obtain a patent and pay the dues or become default and the patent voided and available for resale. In order to maintain accurate records, the ministers also required that all

76 Headlam, Calendar of State Papers 32, 656.
provinces keep a register of all grants made and quit-rents collected as well as provide an account for the Auditor of Plantations.77

This new focus on the backcountry in North America – Indian relations, security, and reforming provincial government to better administer the periphery of empire – coincided with the nascent beginnings of an ideological shift from mercantilism to imperialism based on a profound economic transformation underway in Britain. Despite a slowdown in British productivity early in the eighteenth century, each succeeding decade saw a surge in agricultural output, population increases, and technological innovation, which combined to accelerate commercial growth. The need for raw materials and the protection of them became increasingly paramount in fueling the economy. After 1713, colonial resources, especially in America, intensified in importance as Britain attempted to become more self-sufficient, amplifying America’s role in the empire.78 Indeed, a pamphleteer in the early 1720s wrote, “We have within ourselves and in our colonies in America an inexhaustible fund to supply ourselves, and perhaps Europe, with what we are now beholden to foreigners for, and that at the expense of our silver and gold; and yet either our negligence or private views make us sit still, and not improve what God and Nature had laid open to us” across the Atlantic Ocean. And to those who feared that colonial trade would enrich the American colonists and promote independence, the pamphleteer responded that such arguments “are only mists raised to hide the true reason, which is party opposition; for if our colonies could arrive to such greatness as to supply us with what is above recited, there would not a man in England wont imploy in our manufactures, for its evident the gains and product of our colonies center here in England,” and “their dependence will be their

77 Headlam, Calendar of State Papers 32, 656.
interest.”79 It was along these lines that the Board of Trade advised investment in the various manufactures involved with shipping and the navy and inspired large-scale settlement in the North American backcountry to husband the necessary resources.

It was also during the period after the War of Spanish Succession that Britain began to consider monopolistic institutions – economic, political, ideological, and military – that would branch out from colonial city centers into the backcountry. These reformed and strengthened institutions were discussed for generations before the Seven Years’ War, but the colonists’ determination to maintain the unregulated commercial habits that fostered their economic growth, the fierce defense of their rights to both initiate and authorize legislation, and the inability of British administrators to enforce and supervise laws and policies that would reorganize colonial management prevented Britain from implementing them. Clearly, the Board of Trade realized that the political autonomy practiced in America and the crippling effect it had on royal governors to represent the monarch had gone too far in their estimation. Colonial administration was too lax, and although both Englishmen and colonists could agree that “our strength is not only divided and weakened, but by reason of their several interests they are become and do in a manner esteem each other as foreigners to one unto the other, so that, whatever mischief does happen in one part, the rest remained unconcerned,” the need for centralized control and attention was desirable. It was not until the 1760s that many of these ideas came to fruition, but by then, the weaknesses in Britain’s governing of the North American colonies were woefully exposed and ultimately the American Revolution revealed the limits of British political and military power. Nonetheless, British officials recognized the importance and value of what America had to offer and quickly moved to protect its resources from other

imperialistic empires. By the end of the War of the Austrian Succession in 1748, Britain was firmly committed to protecting the backcountry of its American colonies as well as the commerce generated by it. For Britain, the most obvious way to accomplish this was to either curb French expansionism or purge them entirely from the western hemisphere. As Gerald Newman put it, “what was really new about the patriotic politics of the fifties was not its condemnations of ‘corruption’ and ‘faction’ nor even its vitriolic denunciation of ministerial dithering in foreign affairs…what was new was its strident insistence that the road to national greatness was the global expansion of British trade and the total destruction of…French economic and military power.”

By the middle of the eighteenth century, therefore, commercial success was threatened by a host of potential obstructions: French expansion into the Ohio Valley, uncoordinated settlement along the frontier, perceived colonial corruption, a lack of military defensive structures, and Indian relations in disarray, forced British representatives to consider tightening control over the colonies even further by imposing new policies and directing backcountry settlement. Despite these hurdles, Britain was, according to Adam Smith, “perhaps the only one which, since the world began could give perfect security to the inhabitants of very distant…province[s].” Increased wealth and population added pressure to British officials’ belief that the empire was woefully “underorganized” and concern that the American colonies, specifically, were never furnished “with a clearly defined legal and civil status” needed to be immediately addressed by the late 1740s. For British officials, colonization no longer meant just the overseeing of

commerce and agrarian settlement on the frontier from the seaside cities or compliance to British
law and its enforcement became important topics in London. Indeed, Britain was clearly moving
towards a more centralized coordination of the tremendously challenging chaos that was
developing in America. The objective was to make all of the North American colonies
dependent on the metropole, where London would have control over the laws, natural resources,

The various transatlantic connections that entailed the ideological construction of the
center and periphery, however, cannot fully explain how the American colonies eventually
diverged from empire. Distinct provincial perspectives are unaccounted for in this conceptual
framework and conclusions are usually simplified to submission or rebellion by the periphery in
response to the center’s initiatives. Indeed, as Peter Onuf notes, “for provincial Britons [in
America], ‘empire’ did not evoke, as it now does, centralized, despotic, and arbitrary rule,” but
was instead a matter of “imagining a transcendent, inclusive, imperial community, a greater
Britain that reached across the Atlantic.” By the mid-eighteenth century, settlers from Ireland,
Scotland, Germany, and England had penetrated deep into the interior of North America. They
took with them various religious beliefs, different understandings of possessing property, their
own distinctive cultural values, and often times, their own grudges against authority. Mostly
seeking free-hold property or economic opportunities, these backcountry settlers mainly came to
identify with the interests of the colonies over time despite their persistent claims to British
rights as imperial citizens. For most Euro-Americans, by mid-century, their loyalties lay with
Britain’s traditional privileges in the form of provincial assemblies, rather than some distant
monarch or Parliament that many had never seen or in some equitable continental union as
advocated at Albany in 1754. Certainly the multitude of agendas existing in the North American colonies forced cultural relationships and discussions that shaped the meaning of imperial rule, commerce, and perspectives on Englishness and liberty. For sure, the countless colonial officials, governors, yeoman farmers, merchants, settlers, and missionaries could attest to their own experiences of administering local government, negotiating with indigenous peoples, settling new lands, protecting the backcountry, or converting souls, which all amounted to extending British rule, territory, and influence on the periphery. Conversely, cultural attitudes and beliefs, often overlooked in center-periphery studies, plays an important role in understanding the people, practices, values, and ideas that comprised colonial society. As scholars have argued with regards to Native Americans, the traditional colonizing discourse of resistance and adaptation to white encroachment cannot completely explain the details or patterns of native-white relationships, which were embedded in cultural understandings of who did and who did not belong.83

In the years immediately following the Treaty of Utrecht, Pennsylvania quickly emerged as the center of Britain’s plans to expand and protect its empire in North America. British administrators identified the Six Nations Iroquois as the single most important native peoples to partner with and Pennsylvania’s geographic proximity to their homelands in the north and the increasing importance of the trading grounds in the Ohio Valley to the west, made Pennsylvania ideally situated to become the crucible of Indian diplomacy in North America by the mid-eighteenth century. Officials in London realized the significance of Indian relations after the two

previous colonial wars with France and, therefore, they advised that all “respective governments should use their utmost endeavours to prevent traders from imposing upon the Indian” and “upon complaint of any injustice done them cause satisfaction to be made, and upon all occasions shew the utmost resentments against the offenders.” This would, in their opinion, “greatly contribute to the increase of [his] Majesty’s power and interest in America” and “the enlargement of [his] frontiers.”84 Fortunately, Pennsylvania had talented negotiators such as Conrad Weiser whose successful negotiations in the winter of 1736 adverted war between the southern Indians and the Six Nations, and thus avoided an intercolonial conflict as well. Julian P. Boyd impressively noted Weiser’s success illustrated how “Pennsylvania’s Indian policy had taken on the aspect of international diplomacy.”85 The success of this leading role in imperial Indian policy heavily depended upon the effectiveness of colonial institutions, orderly control over settlement, and native-white cooperation. For the most part, settlement on the North American periphery is still widely viewed as having an important impact on the development of the British Empire: one that ultimately weakened institutional links between the center and the periphery of empire.

When the French began building a string of fortifications along the Allegheny River in western Pennsylvania, British officials finally committed the empire’s resources to militarily protecting the backcountry. Nothing exemplified this more than the arrival of General Edward Braddock, supreme commander of North America, along with two regiments of Scottish troops, in Virginia on February 20, 1755, to retake the Ohio Country from the French. By this time, however, the institutions put into place to strengthen control over the backcountry had failed: squatters repeatedly settled on native land, the Ohio Indians did not submit to the Six Nations, and the mismanagement of acquiring native territory only infuriated the Delaware and Shawnee

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84 Headlam, Calendar of State Papers 32, 656.
peoples from whom the land was taken from. Braddock’s defeat along the Monongahela River and a French military alliance provided the stimulus and opportunity for the Ohio Indians to brutally strike back at their former neighbors. Their anger was directed towards people they knew and came to understand. This familiarity, or even similarity, caused the conflict to be more intimate and more brutal in nature. Indian and Euro-American anger towards each other was over “issues of loyalty to colonial authority,” “economic competition,” and, most importantly, “control over land and natural resources.”

Perhaps no other colony exemplified the importance of cultural, political, and organizational misunderstandings between the center and periphery than eighteenth-century Pennsylvania. The undertones of violence, anarchy, and resistance found in agrarian settlement, Indian diplomacy, and the continuing attempts by colonial and imperial authorities to organize and administer the backcountry provided an opportunity for emigrant settlers to shape their societies. In some cases, it gave them a rare political voice in determining a better situation for obtaining land, in other cases, it led to incessant conflict and destruction where lives, property, and understandings between diverse peoples was lost. In the most extreme case, it initiated racial categories of white and red that converted cultural definitions of civilized and civilization to racial definitions of the “Other.” Squatters, Indian nations, and provincial officials all actively had a hand in shaping the outcome. Thus, Pennsylvania’s backcountry culture highlighted the relationship between the proprietary government and backcountry inhabitants’ struggle over the possession of property. Whether removing squatters, collecting quit-rents, guarding estates, satisfying or resisting speculators, defending territory, or fighting Indians, property was the primary source of conflict. We can find numerous examples throughout the historical record of

87 Merritt, *At the Crossroads*, 12.
backcountry settlers challenging the authority of the provincial government over land issues. In some way, conflict, violence, and anarchy marked the eighteenth-century Pennsylvania backcountry landscape so frequently that the province quickly gained the reputation for insurrections, rebellions, and Indian pan-nativist movements.

The greatest threat, therefore, to Penn’s Peaceable Kingdom was the overwhelming task of managing a large, diverse population intent on acquiring land in the backcountry at almost any cost. After Penn cleared the way for settlement outside of Philadelphia by purchasing land from the Indians, settlers streamed into the Susquehanna River valley region between Pennsylvania’s and Maryland’s border. This region was already engaged in a boundary dispute between the proprietors and the officials of each colony. The anarchic conditions that existed there led to violence, resistance, and bloodshed, but also provided opportunities for settlers who were willing to risk their lives and property to gain access to cheaper land. Similarly, the controversial Walking Purchase (1737) opened a large swath of territory to the north of Philadelphia known as the Wyoming Valley. This region was also engulfed in a border dispute, but this time with Connecticut speculators and land companies. Again, conflict and violence dominated the region well beyond the American Revolutionary Era, but provided opportunities for settlers willing to risk everything for cheaper land. Pennsylvania complied with settler demands to maintain their loyalty in both disputes and obtain even more land from the local Indians to relieve the conflict in the Susquehanna and Wyoming valleys. Who owned the land was not only a battle between proprietors or between proprietors and settlers, but land also became the most important dynamic in native-white relationships as well as the primary source of conflict between them. As long as dispersed settlements persisted in the backcountry, peace was readily maintained, but the continued dispossession and subordination of Pennsylvania’s Indians along with massive white
migration made their relationship untenable as it became more difficult for native peoples to maintain their autonomy. This forced Indians to build multi-ethnic communities along the Allegheny River from which they could deal with white settlement and better negotiate with either Pennsylvania or British officials. Diplomacy failed with Braddock’s invasion of the Ohio Valley in 1755, setting off numerous violent summers in Pennsylvania’s backcountry.

Backcountry violence, conflict, and resistance exposed the cracks in Penn’s vision of a new colony consisting of cultural cohesion, unity, and civic virtue. At first, it appeared that Penn and his associates were successful in forging a government tolerant of religion, open to non-Quakers, peace with the Indians, and reflective of Quaker society. Their most difficult task was applying Penn’s early writings into actual practice. The First and Second Frames of Government (1682 and 1683 respectively) nearly succeeded in establishing a cultural order that would largely subdue the chaos often associated with colonial society. Penn understood the need for moral, virtuous, and godly leadership from government officials and their role “to be the lights & Salt of the Province; to direct & season thos[e] that are under you, by your good example,” and guiding the backcountry immigrants who were “less under notice & so more left to themselves in the wilderness of America, than in thos[e] more planted & crowded parts of the world,” the people “have more need to watch over themselves & become a law to themselves,” thereby requiring honest and fair officials who could both lead by example and incorporate them into Pennsylvania’s ordered, civic society. In addition to this, Penn attempted to incorporate a wide swath of the population into the political process by granting voting rights to white men who could select representatives into the Assembly, although real political power was exercised by only a few.88

Penn, however, was not able to put his vision into practice. He marketed his colony as a place where everybody could live in harmony, be self-sufficient, and where immigrants be a part of both the cultural and political framework. Massive immigration that comprised nearly half of Pennsylvania’s population in the mid-eighteenth century was evidence of Penn’s successful advertising campaign, but the diversity of the immigrants blurred definitions of what characteristics exactly comprised the qualities of a good politician. In other words, although the Frame of Government could incorporate a wide array of different peoples, Penn never outlined how his form of government could translate this language into cultural and political unity among a diverse population. Moreover, serious other questions were not addressed: how would Penn keep immigrant settlers who moved to the backcountry connected to the political and cultural institutions of Philadelphia? How would the proprietor collect quit-rents in a scattered countryside? How would Quakers respond to resistance to their policies? And, how would they maintain peace between Indians and white settlers far from the center? In such a setting, Penn’s utopian vision could not be maintained through simple language and his sovereignty would be violently challenged.89

89 Smolenski, Friends and Strangers, 90; White, The Backcountry and the City, 35.
“Powers had brake loose from their center” and “Hell itself is transplanted hither”:
Violence, Anarchy, and Resistance in Backcountry Pennsylvania

What is most Fit, Easy and Safe at this Juncture of Affairs to be done, for quieting of Differences, allaying the Heat of contrary Interests, and making them subservient to the Interest of the Government, and consistent with the Prosperity of the Kingdom?90

-William Penn, England’s Present Interest Considered

To multiply Laws, unless the Circumstances of Government require it, we agree, cannot be productive of the most desirable Advantages of it; but the infant State of the Colonies in American often require the aid of the Legislature in making of new or amending of old Laws.91

-A. Hamilton, Speaker

On November 25, 1736, Lancaster sheriff Samuel Smith led nearly forty people to Thomas Cresap’s house, located at Blue Rocks in the lower Susquehanna Valley, to serve a warrant for his arrest. He was accused of murdering Knowles Daunt in cold blood almost two years prior. Cresap, known as the “Maryland Monster” by his Pennsylvania adversaries, refused to surrender and barricaded himself inside his house along with pregnant wife and five of his supporters. Smith called for him to come out and surrender peacefully but Cresap threatened the sheriff and his posse, you “Damn’d Scotch Irish Sons of Bitches, and the Proprietor & people of Pensilvania Damn’d Quakeing Dogs & Rogues,” and that he would kill the entire Pennsylvania contingent before he was taken into custody and backed his threat with two gunshots. Smith and his crew surrounded the house and laid siege to it. As nightfall approached and the possibility that the Maryland militia would come to Cresap’s rescue, Smith

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91 Council Minutes, 13 August 1736, CR, 4:52.
decided to set fire to a shed located next to the house to force Cresap’s hand. The house also caught fire, and Cresap’s wife urged her husband to flee, which he had successfully done so many times before. But, this time, he was shot repeatedly, although none proved to be fatal and Cresap was finally apprehended and taken to prison in Philadelphia to await his trial for murder. Cresap’s capture was the beginning of the end of the nearly fifty year border dispute between Pennsylvania and Maryland known as the Conoscopic War.92

Another display of resistance in Pennsylvania occurred during the spring of 1756, not yet one full year into the Seven Years’ War, when John Churchman was in Philadelphia attending the annual Quaker meeting. While visiting friends he was drawn to the doorstep to witness several backcountry residents from Northampton County pulling the dead and scalped bodies of their relatives in wagons through the streets. Many of their fellow countrymen walked behind “cursing the Indians, also the Quakers because they would not join in war for destruction of the Indians.” Churchman surmised that this was an attempt by the frontiersmen “to animate the people to unite in preparations of war to take vengeance on the Indians, and destroy them.” Churchman was prophetic when he thought to himself that “this land is polluted with blood, and in the day of inquisition for blood, it will not only be required of the frontiers and border, but even in this place where the bodies are now seen.” He could not believe such death and destruction could happen in William Penn’s Peaceable Kingdom, asking himself, “How can this be? Since this has been a land of peace, and as yet not much concerned in war,” and thus exclaiming, “What will become of Pennsylvania?” These episodes of violence, such as the one that occurred at the Moravian outpost of Gnadenhutten, were accompanied by massive flight back across the Susquehanna River valley to the virtual safety of Philadelphia. Those settlers who stayed armed, fortified, and prepared to defend their livelihoods over the next several years.

92 Depositions on Taking of Thomas Cressap, 1736,” PA Archives, 1st series, 1:504-06.
The attacks on Pennsylvania’s backcountry during the Seven Years’ War led to extreme acts of violence that were personal, destructive, and displaced both frontier families and Native American peoples.93

After the Seven Years’ War, resistance in Pennsylvania’s backcountry continued during a standoff on January 20, 1771. Northampton County Sheriff Peter Kachlein and Deputy Sheriff Nathan Ogden led a Pennsylvania posse that surrounded a fort in the Wyoming Valley occupied by Connecticut claimants from the Susquehanna Company known as Yankees. After several days of waiting for the Yankees to surrender, Ogden and a few of followers approached the fort and tried to convince the occupiers to surrender. Lazarus Stewart, the leader of both the fort and the infamous Paxton Boys, who murdered 20 innocent Conestoga Indians and then marched on Philadelphia during Pontiac’s War in 1763, ended the negotiations when he stuck his rifle through a hole in the fort and shot dead Nathan Ogden. Later that year, in August, Stewart led his men on an attack of a Pennsylvania fort also located in the valley, killing one Pennamite, as the Pennsylvanians were known, and wounding several others forcing the surrender of the fort and all of their possessions. The feud between Pennsylvania and Connecticut in the Wyoming Valley began in the 1750s, but not until Stewart switched sides and joined the Yankees, did the violence and destruction escalate. The Wyoming Controversy did not end until 1810, when Connecticut claimants could finally obtain legal Pennsylvania title to their lands.94

Examining three important agrarian insurrections in colonial Pennsylvania’s backcountry during the eighteenth century – the Pennsylvania-Maryland border dispute, the Seven Years’ War, and the Wyoming controversy – can provide a cultural perspective on the successful

94 Charles Stewart to John Penn, 21 January 1771; Deposition of William Sims, 21 January 1771; Deposition of William Nimens, 25 January 1771; Deposition of Peter Kachlein, 31 January 1771, Susquehanna Company Papers (SCP), 4:153-54, 155-57, 163-64.
strategies that people living in the politically underrepresented western regions of Pennsylvania employed to resist, deform, and reshape the imperial and colonial institutions that were created to control them. It engages a different notion of obstruction to Great Britain’s imperial designs, one that disrupted colonial security, orderly westward advancement, and conflict with Native Americans on the periphery of empire as a counterbalance to the importance that historians usually place on the seaboard cities’ resistance to imperial ambitions leading up to the American Revolutionary War. In doing so, we can build on recent scholarship focused on borderland and eighteenth-century British Empire history in North America. The first, mostly written by scholars who situate the ongoing debates over white-Indian interactions, rural insurrections, and Indian pan-nativism within their broader social and cultural contexts, have demonstrated how justice, dispersed settlement, and identity were influenced in a setting of weak institutional control over the backcountry. The second, initiated by historians who emphasize the transition of the British Empire from commercial to imperial, have generally focused on every aspect of governing the empire except for the complex task of keeping frontier settlers connected to the political and cultural institutions of coastal cities, where imperial officials expected colonial administrators to maintain control over the outer edges of the empire. The extended frontier along Susquehanna River Valley, however, proved too distant, complex, and expansive for provincial officials to control from Philadelphia. Thus, settlement in the West was shaped by the difficult task of managing vast new spaces and resources in a setting of institutional weakness.

The border wars with Maryland and Connecticut, which stretched throughout the entire eighteenth and into the nineteenth century, were regions where the possession of property, loyalty, and Indian land were violently contested between colonial governments. The Seven Years’ War was shaped more of an issue of white backcountry settlers seeking greater security
from Indian attacks on property, family members, and livelihood from the particular exigencies of the war. Each of these insurrections provided unparalleled opportunities for frontier settlers to successfully negotiate better terms for settlement if they were willing to risk the violence of Indian, speculator, or provincial attacks on their homes, family, and crops. At the same time, disagreement over proprietary power in the Assembly disabled the government’s ability to enforce laws, remove squatters, or protect their inhabitants. Thus, we find two themes that figured heavily in the dynamics of Pennsylvania’s colonial beginnings: widespread resistance to colonial and imperial land policies in the backcountry aided by the incapacity of the proprietary administration and an anti-proprietary faction in the Assembly that continued to successfully block Penn and his associates from fully establishing their power as proprietors and proprietary agents.

To begin with the border war with Maryland along the banks of the Susquehanna River Valley, Pennsylvania’s most western territory at the start of the eighteenth century, is to begin at the most disruptive and contested region of the province, where contending proprietors – William Penn and Benedict Leonard Calvert, Fourth Baron Baltimore – along with native peoples, and backcountry immigrants from Germany, Ireland, and Britain, competed for power, land rights, and profit. German immigrants moved into the Susquehanna Valley in the early 1720s, prior to the provincial government’s purchase from the local Indians. Often labeled as “Maryland intruders,” they were removed by the Pennsylvania government at the request of Indian leaders. Not until 1729 were licenses sold for legal settlement. John and James Hendricks were two of the first authorized tenants in modern-day York County and they settled near Kruetz Creek. Later, in the mid-1730s, numerous Irish and Scots-Irish families settled a little further south at a place known as the “York Barrens.” At about the same time, several other
Irish and Scots-Irish families emigrated from Chester County to a settlement known as Newberry. With the emigration of Europeans into a region contested by conflicting interests and with few or no law enforcement officers, the Susquehanna River Valley quickly acquired a reputation as a lawless, violent, and risky place to settle, and where representatives of authority were often challenged and beaten. When John Charlton, the locally appointed “captain of the Codorus Creek militia,” was warned to keep the peace by a Pennsylvania magistrate, he replied with a gun to the chest of the law officer shouting, “God damn you, your Peace & your Master too,” then beat him, tied him to his horse, and rode off to Baltimore County. Even the governors of the two provinces exchanged unpleasantries: Samuel Ogle, governor of Maryland, warned Governor Patrick Gordon of Pennsylvania, “that peeples that live upon these disputed lands ought to have common Justice done them by all Magistrates of either Side,” and should “not to be threatened after any manner whatsoever,” but if Gordon used his magistrates to cause “the people of Maryland ill,” then “it must by the Same reason be allowable for [Maryland’s] Magistrates to give the Same treatment to all your people who we are firmly persuaded have encroached upon Maryland.” Not surprisingly, both governors employed rhetoric to justify their actions and support their proprietors in the contested area. Moreover, Ogle also accused Pennsylvanians of “offering the Indians money to drive [Marylanders] off [their] land,” that it was “so unjustifiable, it [was] impossible to Say any thing in defence of it.” Native Americans, too, were drawn into the conflict. Pennsylvania’s local Indian population’s struggle to maintain autonomy against encroaching white settlers and the overarching control of the Six Nations

Iroquois caused further anxiety in the Susquehanna Valley. The mixture of violence, anarchy, and resistance quickly became associated with Pennsylvania’s backcountry in the eighteenth century. In response, the essential goals of the proprietary governments were to expand administrative control over the region by gaining the allegiance of the settlers, signing official Indian treaties, forming counties, and extending justice into the periphery to secure land claims and territorial sovereignty.

Governor Ogle chose Thomas Cresap to accomplish this task on behalf of Maryland and commissioned him as a justice of the peace for Baltimore County in 1732. Cresap, whom Paul Doutrich described as “possess[ing] a restless spirit,” was determined to remove all of the Pennsylvanians, Indians, and anybody else who did not prove loyal to Lord Baltimore. He immediately built a blockhouse, or small fort, and a ferry landing on the Susquehanna River at Blue Rocks, just west of Lancaster in order to solidify Maryland’s claims in the valley.

Cresap’s position as justice of the peace immediately thrust him into a position of power and authority in the backcountry, which he unscrupulously used to violently and deceitfully defend his actions. Threats, kidnappings, and shootouts marked Cresap’s legacy as he violently attacked adversaries and even threatened “the Sherrif of Pensilvania or any Other Officer from thence should come to take any person on the west side of Susquehanah River, He would send him Back a Dead Corps, for he had six or seven Guns in his house which should be loaded, & he would discharge them.” While other Pennsylvania officials called Cresap and his followers “that nest of Vilains at Conejohala,” and “People of loose Morals and turbulent Spirits,” or as “Incendiarys,

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97 Governor Ogle to Governor Gordon, 5 April, 1732, PA Archives, 1st series, 1:320-21; Governor Gordon to Governor Ogle, 18 April 1732, ibid, 322-23.
99 Deposition of John Capper, 29 December 1732, PA Archives, 1st series, 1:360.
Rioters, Authors, & Promoters of…troubles.” Although Cresap saw himself as protecting the interests of Baltimore, with Ogle’s support, the borderlands between Pennsylvania and Maryland increased in violence upon his arrival in 1731, and thus, earning the moniker “Cresap’s War.”

Officially, the border conflict between Pennsylvania and Maryland became known as the “Connojocular War,” which grew out of the confusion over the vagueness of where the fortieth degree lay exactly on a map. If Penn’s interpretation of the fortieth degree was correct, he would own most of Maryland, but if Baltimore was correct, then he would possess most of the Susquehanna Valley as well as Philadelphia itself. As a result, it took nearly ninety years before Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon officially marked the boundary between Pennsylvania and Maryland. At first, it did not seem that violence and destruction would define the controversy. Penn offered Baltimore payment for the Susquehanna Valley as early as December 1692, but Baltimore declined, and so began a long legal battle that encompassed much of the eighteenth century. Lord Baltimore immediately pressed his claims to the region, arguing that the “two Degrees” on a map that Penn wanted was not debatable. In a meeting with Penn, Baltimore stated that his patent for Maryland “was not to begin by Degrees,” citing Maryland’s previous experience with Virginia and the land he lost by agreeing to similar terms. Instead, Baltimore

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100 Samuel Blunston to Governor Gordon, Maryland Affairs, 1732, PA Archives, 1st series, 1:318; John Wright to Samuel Blunston, 30 December 1732, CR, 3:473; Samuel Smith to William Hammond, 6 September 1736, CR, 4:68.
“A Map of parts of the Provinces of Pennsilvania and Maryland with the Counties of New Castle, Kent, and Sussex on Delaware according to the most exact Surveys yet made drawn in the year 1740,” produced by the Penns for the Crown to prove their case. NV-064, series 7, Penn Family Papers, HSP, http://digitallibrary.hsp.org/index.php/Detail/Object/Show/object_id/8535.
believed he could acquire the disputed territory based on whether the land was previously “planted” or “unplanted” by Europeans prior to Penn receiving his the charter. Already a questionable approach, Baltimore consistently and constantly used dubious tactics to suspend court decisions, thereby delaying a permanent decision against him. This gave Baltimore time to prepare a new strategy to validate his interpretation of the boundary lines: coaxing the local inhabitants to side with him by offering lower prices than Penn and forcibly removing them if they refused. For instance, Samuel Lands claimed that Colonel George Talbot took “three Musqueters” throughout the borderlands telling inhabitants that “if they would not forthwith yield Obedience to yᵉ Lord Baltemore, & Own him to be their Propor, and pay rent to him, he would Turne them out of their houses and take their Land from them.” William Darvall, another Maryland agent, refused to pay rent to Pennsylvania and “advised Others the same.” In a bid to gain the upper hand, Baltimore built and reinforced a fortification in New Castle County, territory which belonged to Pennsylvania. Secondly, Baltimore prepared to secure his claims through the court system in Britain. In 1683, 1685, and 1708, Baltimore petitioned the Crown to grant him the disputed territory, but to no avail. In response to his setbacks, Maryland agents reigned terror on anybody who settled under Penn’s jurisdiction. Pennsylvanians were jailed, removed from their property, insulted, and had any of their remaining property – houses, crops, and animals – destroyed. Baltimore’s petitions were finally dismissed on June 23, 1709, and the disputed territory, including the Lower Counties, were officially granted to Penn. Although the violence did not subside, Baltimore’s case slowly deteriorated when Maryland’s Assembly

101 The disagreement was over the fortieth parallel, see: Report of Conference with Chas. Calvert, 1683, PA Archives, 1st series, 1:74.
103 Ibid, 188-89; Nash, Quakers and Politics, 75.
recognized Pennsylvania’s claims to the Susquehanna River valley through a series of acts passed between 1704 and 1723. This ultimately forced Baltimore to enter into an agreement with the Penn family to not disturb settlers and their possessions until the final boundary lines could be settled.\footnote{The Breviate in the Boundary Dispute between Pennsylvania and Maryland, John Penn, et al. (Harrisburg, PA: Edwin K. Meyers, State Printer, 1891), 429-30, 440-41.}

The agreement in 1723 only lasted for eighteen months, however, as many small disputes prevented the accurate surveying of a proper boundary. Therefore, it was not until July, 1731, that a new petition by Baltimore was issued to reevaluate the boundary line. Both proprietors agreed to appoint commissioners, plan a survey, and encourage their assemblies to approve the boundary line. Further disputes over geography and the origination point from where the line for surveying was to begin, however, delayed the process further.\footnote{Ibid, 445-47, 483-496.} The Baltimore family petitioned the Crown again in 1734. This time they declared proprietary rights to the Delaware Counties. Three years later, in 1737, they attempted to block Pennsylvania from appointing a governor over the Lower Counties and claimed that the Penns were fraudulent in their alleged rights to “quiet possession” of the disputed territory. Accusations and counter accusations flooded the chancery in London until a final decision by an orders in council was made in May, 1738. The king demanded that all inhabitants living in the contested territory between Pennsylvania and Maryland were not be disturbed and to remain under the jurisdiction of their current proprietor; tenants should not be officially transferred until the boundary was adjusted; all vacant lands in the disputed territory were temporarily ruled to be under the possession of Pennsylvania; and all prisoners were to be released.\footnote{Shepherd, History of Proprietary Government, 135-39.} The Penn family was awarded most of the stipulations they petitioned for almost twelve years later by Lord Chancellor Hardwicke.

\section*{Notes}

\footnote{The Breviate in the Boundary Dispute between Pennsylvania and Maryland, John Penn, et al. (Harrisburg, PA: Edwin K. Meyers, State Printer, 1891), 429-30, 440-41.}
\footnote{Ibid, 445-47, 483-496.}
\footnote{Shepherd, History of Proprietary Government, 135-39.}
Most importantly, the fortieth degree was determined to be south of Philadelphia, thus reinforcing Pennsylvania’s land claims in the Susquehanna River valley. The Mason-Dixon Line was finally completed on October 18, 1767.\footnote{Penn originally agreed to a border that was fifteen miles north of Philadelphia due to his ignorance of American geography, but the central argument was between fifteen and twenty-five miles south of Philadelphia. See: Shepherd, \textit{History of Proprietary Government}, 139-141; and Hardwicke’s decision, 141-46.}

What made the drawing of lines on a map so dangerous for the peoples of the Susquehanna River valley were the methods that the proprietors used to justify their legal rights to the land. Both Penn and Baltimore quickly discerned that settler loyalty and Indian treaties – paired signs of potential resistance and volatility – were essential to winning any court case in the Chancery in London. Although the proprietary officials of Pennsylvania and Maryland pursued loyalty through better land prices, reduced quit-rents, or delayed payment, they condemned each other for carrying out the very same practice. Governor Gordon wrote to Governor Ogle complaining that “the plain consequence…is that every Man who gets such a Warrant, has it in his Power to carry a part of Maryland where he pleases…and then, from only calling himself the Lord Baltimore’s Tenant, may commit the greatest Irregularities on that Spott, without being accountable to any other Authority than that of his Lordship.”\footnote{Governor Gordon to Governor Ogle, 17 February 1732/3, \textit{CR}, 3:484-85.} Other settlers who were not careful about obtaining the proper documents found themselves soliciting the opposite government for redress. John Newton settled in Dorset County, Maryland, and paid levies for one year but later discovered that Maryland did not officially recognize his land purchase. He, therefore, decided to obtain a warrant and have his land surveyed by Pennsylvania officials from Kent County (Delaware). Once the Dorset County sheriff learned of this shift, he immediately “carried him off by Force,” but the Kent County constable and his assistants were able to, “not without some violence,” rescue Newton and return him home. Gordon, however,
demanded to know when and how Newton purchased his land with Maryland and informed his magistrates that they should “particularly to take care not countenance the Levity of such, as living on the disputable Borders, think they may shift their landlords at their own Will and Pleasure.” Gordon condemned Newton’s switching landlords and the constable who “broiled” with Maryland officials, yet, in his very next letter to Baltimore, he justified the hostile actions of Pennsylvanians confronting Maryland supporters on Pennsylvania’s territory since “there are four hundred People living more Southerly than Lowe’s house who pay taxes to [Pennsylvania], & have always acknowledged themselves Inhabitants of Pennsylvania.”

Cresap campaigned vigorously to keep the Germans living on the western side of the Susquehanna River loyal to Maryland despite his repeated abuses towards them, but they complained to Pennsylvania officials that they “received a treatment…very different from that which the tenants of your government have generally met with.” Unlike the Pennsylvania magistrates Cresap and his followers were accused of “oppression and ill usage” towards the German settlers, “or at least from such persons who have been empowered thereby.” On several occasions, Germans were sold property on the west side of the Susquehanna River to only have it resold many times. Frederick Ebert cleared land, planted crops, and planned to build a house near Codorus Creek in 1735, after buying it from Maryland land agents. Cresap and his men confronted Ebert in May 1736, as Maryland surveyors, and removed Ebert by “[throwing] down the fence, Destroy[ing] the Corn, and Depriv[ing] the sd Ebert of his Settlement.” Michael Tanner also purchased land from Maryland, but Tanner and his family ended up “Exposed to the Open air without Shelter or means whereby to Earn them bread” once Cresap re-surveyed his

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land and sold it to somebody else. And finally, in August, 1736, William Downard testified that Cresap persuaded him and his investors “to get as many persons as he could settle the sd Dutch men’s Lands, and added that there were Land enough for a great many familys.” Concerned about clean deeds for the property, Cresap assured them “that the sd Dutch men would not be suffered to live on the sd Lands any longer.”

Local German families could no longer tolerate Cresap and his unscrupulous tactics. On August 13, 1736, they petitioned the Pennsylvania Assembly that because Maryland officials told them they “were worse than Negroes, for that we had no Master, nor were under the protection of any Laws,” they were “Unanimously Resolved, to Return to our Duty,” and wished to be “under the Protection of your Laws and Government.” After careful consideration, the Council welcomed the Germans back as subjects of Pennsylvania and appointed two constables “for the better Preservation of the Peace.”

The German community’s mass shift in loyalty changed the course of the conflict. In a battle over legal claims to disputed territory, the British courts considered settler allegiance and who they paid their quit-rents to as an important part of deciding which proprietary government would be rewarded the Susquehanna River valley. Governor Ogle, who also received the petition, was outraged that the Germans betrayed Maryland and accused Pennsylvania officials of violating “the Good Rules and Orders of Society” and that actions taken by any “who may vainly imagine to shelter themselves under [Pennsylvania’s] protection” be turned over to

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112 Council Minutes, 8 September 1736, CR, 4:63-65; Doutrich, “Cresap’s War,” 94-95.
113 Ibid, 24 August 1736, 56-58.
Maryland’s magistrates. Governor Ogle saw the task before him as one of regaining control of the Susquehanna Valley by sending a three hundred man army under Colonel Nathaniel Rigby that was to make contact with Cresap’s militia and “to awe and terrify [Germans] into an Acknowledgement of the Dominion and Jurisdiction of the Lord Proprietor of Maryland” through military force. Although Rigby and his men were able to force the Germans across the Susquehanna River, they could not get them to switch their loyalty back to Maryland. Indeed, Samuel Blunston, magistrate of Lancaster County, formed his own militia, crossed the river undetected, and routed the Marylanders out of fear, causing them to flee. They later regrouped and made several offers to the Germans to return by forgiving all debts, but the Germans continued to refuse their overtures. Frustrated, the militiamen from Maryland began “plundering the Dutch people’s houses, by taking out at the Windows Cloth & what they Could meet with, under pretence of Publick Dues,” and prepared to burn down the houses afterwards, but stopped short when a messenger appeared and relayed the reasons why they switched sides. Rigby prevented further damage and promised to return “with a Greater number of arm’d men, turn them out of Doors, and Bring up Others with him…[to] put into their possession” if they did not return to Maryland’s protection within two weeks.

The Germans avoided the destruction of their settlement and extended the rights and privileges of frontier settlers who used the overlapping jurisdiction to challenge provincial authority, define Pennsylvania’s territorial limits, and negotiate their own collective local identity. For example, they gained the proprietor’s “Diligence in apprehending and securing all such Persons as have been the Incendiaries in, or the Authors and Abettors of these late

116 A Proclamation on 17 September 1736, Pennsylvania Gazette, 30 September 1736.
118 Samuel Blunston to the President and Council, 6 September 1736, CR, 4:69.
Disturbances” and “that the said Sherifs exert the legal Powers wherewith they are invested for the defence & Protection of the Inhabitants.” Indeed, Charles Desmond Dutrizac asserts that the border conflict created an assiduous tension between Pennsylvania’s authority and the Germans, who were only interested in local issues, and thus, this “dynamic interplay between local and provincial outlooks, between deference and force, between defiance and compliance in the disputed lands…all shaped the evolution of attitudes about authority and the formation of social identity on the frontier.” Violence was frequent in the backcountry and although justice was regularly carried out, it was the overlapping jurisdictional claims rather than an absent court system that caused the opportunity for violence to occur. Pennsylvania officials were never legally challenged by frontier squatters because they held absolute authority, but the possibility that settlers could identify with Maryland in the disputed territory made it that much more important to gain their loyalty in order to solidify a strategic advantage in the courts of London. Therefore, settlers were permitted the unique opportunity to bargain their loyalty for acquiring a better deal, whether it be cheaper prices, the postponement of quit-rent payments, or even the challenging of authority compared to those who settled in more established regions.120

The zeal of Cresap, Ogle, and Baltimore to continue the struggle did not waver after the Germans refused to switch back. They were determined to only permit settlers who pledged allegiance to Maryland and they remained persistent with their threats to remove disloyal Germans from the disputed region. In this pursuit, they found nearly sixty Scots-Irish inhabitants from Chester County to cross the Susquehanna River and settle on the German’s property. Ogle promised them cheap prices, title to 200 acres, and protection under Maryland law and an armed

119 Proclamation Concerning the Invasion of the Province by an Armed Force from Maryland, 10 September 1736, PA Archives, 4th series, 1:569.
militia. Pennsylvania authorities moved quickly to defend their new German allies by arresting one of the Scots-Irish leaders, but most of the new settlers were able to cross the river without interference.121 Alarmed, Blunston warned Penn that:

Higginbotham & his Associates had proceeded to such further Acts of violence as plainly shewed they intended to oust every Person on the west side of Sasquehannah who should refuse to acknowledge the Authority of Maryland; that on the 15th instant they marched to several of the German Inhabitant’s Houses, broke the Doors open with Axes, wounded some, and carried away six Men Prisoners; that a small Number of our Inhabitants went in pursuit of them, but did not overtake them till they were gott to their Guard house or Fortress, & the Centinels there giving Notice of the Approach of our People, Higginbotham’s Party fired upon them, killed one of their Horses, & took two Men Prisoners, one of whom is believed to be dangerously wounded, if not killed; that the Wives and Children of the Germans who were taken, and several other Families, were come over Sasquehannah to seek for Refuge on this side, and that all the Settlements on the west side would speedily be deserted, unless a sufficient Force is sett on foot to protect them, & to apprehend Higginbotham and his Party.122

The violent conduct of Maryland’s representatives was too destructive and abusive for the Germans to ever return to Baltimore’s proprietorship. Pennsylvania officials better addressed their needs and were willing to defend them from Cresap and Maryland’s militia, making them “Mighty Desirous to live under this Government, and Some of them wil rather quit their possessions then return to their former Slavery.”123

Intimidating Germans, transplanting Scots-Irish, forcing loyalty through better land deals, and the use of violence were not the only strategies that Governor Ogle employed. Maryland never had quite the same relationship with the various local Susquehanna Valley Indians that Pennsylvania enjoyed. Therefore, it was never an issue for Ogle to bypass the Delaware and Shawnee representatives when attempting to purchase native land. Instead, Ogle tried to acquire parts of the Susquehanna Valley by negotiating with the Six Nations Iroquois, who claimed

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121 Depositions of John Coates, Jeremiah Starr, and William Miller, 22 November 1736, PA Archives, 1st series, 1:500-02; Eodem Die, P.M., 24 November 1736, CR, 4:105.
122 Council Minutes, 20 January 1736-7, CR, 4:150.
123 Samuel Blunston to the President and Council, 6 September 1736, CR, 4:69.
suzerainty over all Pennsylvania Indians via ancient conquest. This, he believed, would surpass settler loyalty and gain the upper hand in British courts, which had recently recognized Iroquois sovereignty over all mid-Atlantic Indians. This forced Pennsylvania to change tactics as well. William Penn had always recognized Delawares’ land rights and purchased native lands in a slow, methodical process that gave local Indians better control over colonization, but Great Britain did not recognize the Delaware or Shawnee as the supreme Native American power in the North American colonies. Thus, when Thomas Penn held a meeting in Lancaster in 1736 with the Six Nations, he declared the Iroquois masters over all Pennsylvania Indians for compensation. The Iroquois petition mentioned that the proprietary government of Pennsylvania was “never to buy any land from our cousins the Delawares and others whom we treat as cousins,” for they were a “people of no virtue and have nowhere a fire burning and deal very often unjust with our friends and brethren the English.” Furthermore, if the Delaware try “to sell any lands to the Europeans that no Body may buy it of them, for they have no Land remaining to them,” therefore, “if they offer to sell they have no good design.”

When the Shawnee challenged Pennsylvania’s purchases in the Susquehanna River valley from the Iroquois, James Logan replied in amazement that their claims were “entirely new and without any manner of foundation, those Indians having never before made the least Pretension of the kind,” thus sealing Iroquois autonomy in the region. Pennsylvania officially changed its Indian policy to better suit its needs locally and in the courts of London.

Securing a land title from the Six Nations and with full German support, Pennsylvania successfully apprehended Thomas Cresap near the end of 1736. That Cresap had a notable lack of short-term success in reshaping local politics or authority structure in the Susquehanna River

124 Conrad Weiser to Thomas Penn, 25 October 1736, Penn Manuscripts, Indian Affairs, 1:39, HSP.
125 Council Minutes, 12 August 1737, CR, 4:233-35.
valley should not obscure the vigor he embodied or the techniques he utilized to bring disorder to a contested region, where he was largely despised by Pennsylvanians but celebrated by Marylanders for his loyalty, leadership, and military exploits during his lifetime.126

Significantly, his presence in incorporating a culture of violence and lawlessness inflamed a border dispute that challenged long-term notions of authority, provided an opportunity for backcountry immigrants to have a significant political voice in manipulating land deals, reformulated westward expansion, and altered Pennsylvania’s Indian policy.

The border conflict between Pennsylvania and Maryland provided both the explanation and an opponent which provided settlers the opportunity to switch sides. Backcountry violence towards authority forced provincial officials to respond and accommodate their loyal subjects out of fear of losing the battle over territory. Neither colony eschewed violence nor could they impose their will upon the settlers. And, as Charles Desmond Dutrizac notes, “the need to negotiate limits to provincial authority proved stronger than the impulse to expand indiscriminately,” but only for a short while as proprietary officials immediately turned their attention to Indian grievances and westward advancement.127 It was not long after that Delaware and Shawnee Indians were lodging complaints to Pennsylvania officials regarding squatter settlements closer and closer to the Ohio Valley in the West and the Wyoming Valley to the North.

The Ohio Country, increasing in value for both land speculation and imperial ambition by the mid-eighteenth century, offered a differently calibrated problem of violence, anarchy, and resistance for British colonial administrators. The establishment of trading posts at Cayuga,
Logstown, and Pickawillany by traders such as George Croghan in the 1740s, gave the region a more distinct British influence, especially since these traders could offer goods to Indians at cheaper prices than their French counterparts. The Indians living along the Allegheny River were familiar with men like Croghan because he and other Pennsylvania traders simply extended their regular routes in the Susquehanna River valley deeper into the interior. With the absence of Pennsylvania’s overbearing authority at a safe distance away and few demands placed upon them by British traders, the Ohio Country quickly became a crossroads of intercultural trade. These villages consisted of a mixture of different Indians from the surrounding region, but mostly the Delaware, Shawnee, and many other smaller groups of native peoples from the Susquehanna River basin, came together as refugees to form new villages once Pennsylvania officials altered their Indian policies to align more closely with the Six Nations, forcing them out of eastern Pennsylvania. Briefly, the Ohio Country provided these Indian groups freedom and opportunity since the British, French, and Iroquois could no longer control their diplomatic affairs. An aggressive new land policy – increasing land prices, collecting rent in arrears, and expelling squatters – set forth by Thomas Penn upon his arrival to Philadelphia in 1732, put a strain on both native and Euro-American peoples living in the backcountry. It forced squatters to move deeper into western Pennsylvania and onto native land. The Indians violently resisted, making the Ohio Country a dangerous place to settle. The French also made overt efforts to solidify their position in western Pennsylvania. Captain Pierre-Joseph de Céloron de Blainville made a military and diplomatic expedition into the Ohio Valley in 1749 to renew French claims, gain intelligence about British intentions, and to demonstrate French military prowess. A place where categories of national belonging remained unsettled, where competing land claims and interests were challenged, and where a diverse population was increasing, the Ohio Country soon became
a region of critical social, political, and military tension. The rapid and uncontrolled advancement of white settlers into western Pennsylvania generated a range of competing interests that colonial or imperial regulation failed to control.128

Pennsylvania’s open door policy of inviting peoples from all over Europe to settle within the bounds of the colony transformed how provincial officials dealt with population growth, Indians, and settlement. The inability of the Land Office to properly settle and direct the mass numbers of immigrants on the westernmost periphery of the colony, however, created an atmosphere of resistance in the backcountry once government officials attempted to enforce the payment of quit-rents and insisted upon obtaining official warrants for their property. Indeed, the demographic crisis of “mutinous spirits” who “cut & mangle the best parts of the Country and make it impossible for the Proprietors to appropriate…good lands for their own use,” as Thomas Penn complained to James Hamilton in 1749 about western Pennsylvania, has been well documented.129 Initially, though, proprietary officials sought good use out of the immigrants pouring into the country, especially in contested areas such as the Susquehanna River valley, where James Logan believed that the Scots-Irish experiences of “bravely defend[ing] Londonderry and Inniskillen” would fit them for settlement in a spot where they could act “as a frontier, in case of any disturbance.”130

The non-native population continued to grow in Pennsylvania during the 1740s as many people moving into the colony were forced to find land further and further to the west. Western Pennsylvania soon became a patchwork of peoples – European and Indian – who did not originate from the area, spoke different languages, worshiped different religions, and practiced different cultures. The Ohio Valley Indian population, the most diverse and perhaps, most dissatisfied with Pennsylvania’s white settlers, was notorious for their anger at the Walking Purchase and Iroquois oversight that forced them out of the Susquehanna River valley. Living together, according to Peter Silver, “made the different sort of people there feel frightened of one another’s intentions” and the fact that many were forced into this situation, “brought many groups to a fresh appreciation for their own distinctive ways.” James Merrell noted that “both sides thought these territories a scary place, a domain of transformative power whether it turned medieval knights into wild men or Indian hunters into cannibals.”¹³¹ In other words, the anger over displacement, the migration of white squatters, and the diversity of the peoples living in western Pennsylvania hindered the development of the kind of colonial institutions and culture needed to form a common ideology, interest, and experience, thus sealing the Ohio Country’s reputation as a place of social disorder and anarchy. The fear generated between whites and Indians did not mean that living together would result in a failed multiethnic community, but the success of the Iroquois-Proprietary alliance and the unconcentrated settlement lifestyles of white squatters ensured that Indians and their Euro-American neighbors worked against each other rather than with each other.¹³² White migration across the Blue (Kittochtinny) Mountains

¹³¹ Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors*, xix; Merrell, *Into the American Woods*, 26; Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 22-24; During the peace conference at Easton, PA, in October 1756, Teedyuscung, leader of the remaining Eastern Delaware Indians was asked to state the cause for going to war. He replied that the Delaware had been defrauded from their land in the “Walking Purchase,” and that was the reason for their fierce raids in Pennsylvania, Richard Peters Letter Book, 1755-1757, 112-13, HSP.
¹³² Preston, *The Texture of Contact*, 151.
continued, however, evidenced by the removal of well over fifty squatters in just the area contained by the Juniata watershed in 1750.\textsuperscript{133} This expansion westward by Euro-Americans added another problem for the proprietary government: many settlers decided to negotiate their land rights with the Indians instead of with the province. Conrad Weiser, the leading frontier diplomat for Pennsylvania, expressed his concern that “a worse Effect, that is that [squatters] will become tributary to the Indians & pay them yearly sums for their Lycense to be there.” And later, Weiser made a stronger assertion that he knew “positively” that squatters “are got into this way [negotiating with Indians] on the East side of Sasquehanna’ beyond the Hills & receive acknowledgements & are easy about those Lands.” If the proprietors did not act soon, then “not only have all the abanon’d People of the Province to deal with but the Indians too & that they will mutually support each other & do a vast deal of Mischief” with their staunch insistence on the rights of their property and on independence against the proprietors, thus denying the Penn family their primary source of income.\textsuperscript{134}

Despite the increasing encroachment on native lands in the Ohio Country, Indians remained the dominant presence and uneasily maintained their authority through the threat of violence. Although both Indians and Euro-American settlers sometimes attempted accommodation or understanding between themselves, cross-cultural cooperation was rare and, in fact, violence between them rapidly escalated in the 1740s, when settlers first began to cross over into the Ohio Valley.\textsuperscript{135} The animosity between them was unleashed in a wave of violence and destruction with the outbreak of war in 1754. On October 16, 1755, just a couple of months

\textsuperscript{133} The number of squatters removed comes primarily from the records of Provincial Secretary Richard Peters who helped lead the expedition into the Blue Mountains in 1750. See: Richard Peters to the Proprietors, 12 July 1750, Penn Manuscripts, Official Correspondence, 5:29; Thomas Penn to Richard Peters, 27 August 1750, Thomas Penn Letterbooks, 3:20, Thomas Penn Papers, HSP; Preston, \textit{The Texture of Contact}, 140.

\textsuperscript{134} Richard Peters to the Proprietors, 16 May, 5 July 1749, Richard Peters Letterbooks, 1737-1750, 357, 363.

\textsuperscript{135} Merrell, \textit{Into the American Woods}, 229; Barr, “Did PA have a Middle Ground?” 342-43.
after Braddock’s defeat along the Monongahela River, families living along Penn’s Creek were attacked by eight Delaware Indians familiar to the settlers. One of the English-speaking Delaware approached the Leininger house and announced to the family, “We are Alleghany Indians, your enemies. You must all die.” They proceeded to shoot the father, Sebastian, immediately tomahawked his son, John Conrad, and the daughters Barbara and Regina were taken captive in just a few minutes. At nearly the same moment, the Le Roy family was also under attack by Delaware Indians. They quickly entered the house and split open Jean Jacques’ skull with two tomahawks, his son Jacob struggled unsuccessfully against another warrior who took him, his sister, and a little girl who was visiting as prisoners. After the struggle, the captives watched helplessly as the Indians burned down their house, threw Jean Jacques lower body into the fire, and watched a neighbor get shot off his horse and scalped. The killing continued. By that evening the Delaware warriors returned to camp “with six fresh and bloody scalps, which they threw at the feet of the poor captives, saying they had a good hunt that day.” The next day, the warriors amassed nine scalps and five more prisoners.136 These episodes of terror were accompanied by massive flight back across the Susquehanna River to virtual safety within the vicinity of Philadelphia. Those settlers who stayed armed, fortified, and prepared to defend their livelihoods.

About two weeks later on November 1, 1755, settlers living in or near the Great Cove also experienced Indian attacks by nearly one hundred warriors who, as witnesses claimed, split into two groups; one group attacked the Great Cove while the other attacked the Conolloways near the border with Maryland. Sheriff Potter of Cumberland County reported that twenty-seven plantations were burned to the ground, a great quantity of cattle were killed, and when the

rescuers arrived, they found a ninety-three year old woman “lying killed, with her breast torn off and a stake run through her body,” along with approximately forty-seven of the ninety-three families living in the coves or the Conolloways either killed or captured while the rest deserted. Potter believed that two-thirds of the people living in the valley abandoned it and the rest would leave if immediate assistance was not provided by the government. The situation was dire, Potter claimed that the Assembly could “form no just idea of the distress and distracted condition of our inhabitants unless you saw and heard their cries.” Adam Hoops accompanied Potter and noted the survivors’ conditions: “For the cries of widowers, widows, fatherless and motherless children, with many others, for their relations, are enough to pierce the hardest of hearts.” And, for those who did escape the onslaught had “not a mouthful to eat, a bed to lie on, or clothes to cover their nakedness or keep them warm” since all they possessed was “consumed in the ashes” burned to the ground. Hearing the firing of guns in the distance, they ran towards the sound and found more Indians “sitting on Children scalping, 3 of the Children are dead and 2 are alive; the Scalps are taken off.”

John Elder complained to Richard Peters, the provincial secretary, that “upwards of 40 of his Majesty’s Subjects massacred on the Frontiers of this and Cumberland C’, besides a great number carried into Captivity” without anything being done by the Assembly. Until something was agreed upon, “we in these back Settlements will unavoidably fall a sacrifice & this part of the Province be lost, which may, ’tis true, be recovered out of the hands of the enemy, but at the expense of much blood & treasure.” Spycker agreed, unless help arrived, the

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whole Tulpehoccon will be ruined by the Indians in a short time, and all Buildings will be burned down & the people scalped, therefore you will do all haste to get people together to assist us,” otherwise “we are in great Danger for to Lose our Lives or Estates.” And finally, Edward
Biddle writing to his father at Reading that he was “in so much horror and Confusion” over the Indian attacks at Tulpehoccon, he feared for his life: “Oh my Country! My bleeding Country! I recommend myself to the divine God of Armies.” This outbreak of violence on Pennsylvania’s frontier between Indians and whites raises several important questions about how “Penn’s Holy Experiment,” a “Peaceable Kingdom,” a “worldly success,” an “ideal colony,” and “a hopeful torch in a world of semidarkness,” became so tumultuous.138

Not surprisingly, as the Ohio Valley rose to imperial preeminence as the focal point of conflict, and its settlers proclaimed their helplessness and fear of Indian attack, the petitions, letters, and reports coming out of the backcountry began a strategy of rhetorical pathos, or what Peter Silver has called the “anti-Indian sublime,” in an attempt to demonstrate their experience with Indian warfare as violent and murderous in their writing.139 Surviving under “the most imminent Danger” of “a powerful Army of cruel, merciless, and inhumane Enemies,” who were intent on disrupting the “Lives, Liberties, Estates, and all that tends to promote our Welfare,” were undeniably “in the utmost Danger of dreadful Destruction,” a violation of all morality and civility claimed the inhabitants of Cumberland County in 1754. Since the governor, they believed, had their “Welfare at Heart,” he would “defer nothing that may tend to hasten [their] Relief.” 140 A letter received by Edward Shippen from Mr. Harris of Paxton expressed the widespread fear of frontier families “abandoning their Plantations” because of “the approach of such a number of Cruel Savages, and no sign of Assistance” as Indians continued to “march against us…[and] Scalping our Families on our Frontiers daily.” Harris learned from others “that there were forty Indians about many days, and intended to burn [his] House & destroy

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138 This line of questioning is directly from G.S. Rowe and Jack D. Marietta, “Personal Violence in a ‘Peaceable Kingdom’: Pennsylvania, 1682-1801,” in Christine Daniels and Michael V. Kennedy, eds., Over the Threshold: Intimate Violence in Early America (New York: Routledge, 1999), 22.
139 Silver, Our Savage Neighbors, 83-86.
140 Petition of the Inhabitants of Cumberland County to the Governor, 15 July 1754, CR, 6:130-31.
[him] & [his] Family,” so he prepared his house, “determined to hold out to the last extremity if...some men stand by me” despite their own “fear of their Families being cut off every hour (such is our situation).”\textsuperscript{141} Moreover, once backcountry inhabitants realized that words were not enough, they tried to spread images of the violence, destruction, and most especially the murder that was happening on the frontier. To make sure that Governor Morris understood the barbarity that was occurring in the Susquehanna Valley, they sent one of the two tomahawks that was lodged in Jacob King’s forehead “marked newly with W.D.” to his office. Just prior to an important peace conference in Lancaster with the Eastern Delawares, several people from Swatara township in northeastern Lancaster County strategically carried “four of the Dead Bodies to plead their Cause” just before the Indians were to reply to the governor’s speech. Their “Clamours...were very loud...against all that were for making Peace with the Indians were very Insolent and extravagant in their Expressions and conduct and scarcely refrain’d from open Violence.” Getting people to witness the suffering of the survivors and disfigurement of the murdered was effective: these visual re-enactments of the atrocities committed in the backcountry completely transformed the trespassing squatter into a victim of native savagery.\textsuperscript{142}

Indian-hating matured during the Seven Years’ War, providing a foundation for the materialization of a distinct frontier mindset that strongly influenced westward advancement, political and cultural institutions, and national Indian policy. Prior to the war, however, William Penn succeeded, if imperfectly, of creating a culture that treated native peoples justly under the law and dealt with them fairly when purchasing land. Pennsylvania, more than any other colony, strove to develop a truly pacifist Indian policy. An examination of Quaker literature in the early

\textsuperscript{141} A Letter to Edward Shippen of Lancaster from Mr. Harris of Paxton, 29 October 1755, \textit{CR}, 6:651.
\textsuperscript{142} A Petition to Governor Morris from the Inhabitants living on the West side of Sasquehannah, 20 October 1755, \textit{CR}, 6:647-48; Israel Pemberton to Dr. John Fothergill, 5th mo. 30, 1757, Etting-Pemberton Papers 29:23; this quote is also found in Silver, \textit{Our Savage Neighbors}, 74-76 and in the \textit{Colonial Records} under “Council Minutes,” 18 May 1757, 7:538-39.
eighteenth century provides ample testimony to Penn’s efforts of fostering a tolerant relationship between Indians and Europeans rooted in laws “written in his heart,” which would terminate the “unkindness and injustice that has been too much exercised towards [them] by people of these parts of the world.” Penn also required proprietary officials to legally secure native land through honest purchase and obtaining a proper title before settlement. He viewed Indians as the original landowners and they should be justly compensated for it. Penn made it clear that Indians were the “natural Lords of the Soil.” Their rightful sovereignty was equal to any other sovereign nation, and, therefore, “the law of all nations” applied to native land in Pennsylvania and “whosoever buys anything of the true owners becomes rightful owner of that which he bought.”

Avoiding the “standard model” of dispossessing Indians from their land – such as the Lockean concepts laid out in the Second Treatise on Government – Penn, instead, secured Indian land from Euro-American encroachment by establishing three important statutes in the early 1680s: he banned the sale of liquor to Indians; no private individual could purchase Indian land without proprietary approval; and a blended jury scheme that incorporated an equal division of Indians and Europeans to jointly settle disputes, although English law would decide the punishment. Treaties between proprietary officials and natives also demonstrated Penn’s desire to define social and geographic boundaries that treated Indians equally. He stipulated the rights of Indians to move “without molestation…quietly among us,” while the Delaware professed to “make no differences between the Quakers and the English” and themselves. In

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144 William Penn to William Markham, 1 September 1683, in PWP, 2:473.
145 John Locke, Two Treatises of Government (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 49, 301; The famous Lockean principle here was his use of American Indians as people in a state of nature without a concept of private property ownership and for Locke, this concept was the basic foundation to establish government. Therefore, Indians had no legal right or sovereignty over all the land in North America; Penn, “Conditions or Concessions to the First Purchasers,” in WPFP, 74.
other words, boundary lines would not be marked with barriers, but rather through the legal conversation of treaties, juries, and statutes. Meshing Europeans with Indians would not be easy. Indeed, Penn mostly incorporated Indians into a very Euro-centric cultural understanding of society providing opportunities for misunderstandings, but he avoided applying more harmful and violent means of colonization such as *res nullius*, or “nobody’s property,” which ultimately helped avoid the confrontations endemic in other colonies.¹⁴⁶

Through peaceful and fair concepts in areas such as law, land purchases, and an attempt to learn each other’s cultures, Penn established the guidelines for a beneficial relationship between Europeans and Native Americans in Pennsylvania. Guidelines which Penn wanted proprietary officials to emulate and to be an example to the rest of the inhabitants of Pennsylvania. Although conflict between colonies, imperial expansion, and faulty land acquisitions oftentimes threatened this fragile understanding it endured, battered and bruised, into the 1730s, where it wavered and then collapsed in the mid-1750s, when violence, war, and racial hatred emerged to eradicate Penn’s “Peaceable Kingdom.” The long border disputes with Maryland and Connecticut confirmed that white settlers could no longer be patient for Penn’s policies to unfold in the backcountry nor could they wait until large land speculators took advantage of their wealth and political connections to acquire hundreds of thousands of acres of prime real estate while they were left behind. The Ohio Country was where Penn’s best intentions unraveled under the pressures of uncertainty, competition, anarchy, and failed attempts at accommodation. Indian-hating in Pennsylvania, after all, developed from the bottom up, not vice-versa as the German and Scots-Irish settlers continued to force themselves westward and to continuously evaluate who belonged and who did not in their frontier society. Traditionally, the

markers which distinguished who was “in” simply revolved around ideas of Britishness – loyalty to Parliament and the Crown, the Reformed Protestant Tradition, and allegiance to the ancient constitution that provided the freedoms and liberties cherished by people of the United Kingdom as opposed to those who were “out,” such as Catholics, Spaniards, and French. Indians complicated this concept with their “savage” status and the possibility, with time, that they could be civilized, but settlers increasingly despised the possibility of being hacked to pieces or mutilated when they simply wanted to enjoy the liberties afforded to landed freeholds.

The reason why the anti-Indian sublime was so successful in Pennsylvania was because backcountry people, generally speaking, hated Indians. They were tired of waiting for civility to take hold. After all, Indians had become “rum debauched and Trader corrupted Thieves and vegabonds,” a people “indisputable unfaithful and perfidious.” Frontier settlers could justify the atrocities at places such Conestoga, Wyoming, or Gnadenhutten since, before the French and Indian War, “Pennsylvania was flourishing in Prosperity and Plenty,” until “their Savage Neighbors” attacked and then the province “became wretched and deplorable beyond Description.” It was the “Great Numbers of the back Settlers [who] were murdered, scalped and butchered, in the most shocking Manner, and their dead Bodies inhumanly mangled.” They recalled in explicit detail the myriad of horrors of skulls smashed, ribs torn out, and children “spitted alive and roasted.” Indians, they asserted, had captured and tortured hundreds, “in every Method of Cruelty which Indian Barbarity can suggest.” And, in reality, Indian barbarity forced them to “live worse than the Savages themselves.” Quaker officials explained that the

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149 “The Apology of the Paxton Volunteers Addressed to the Candid and Impartial World,” HSP, 1-4, 6, 8, 9-10; Griffin, *American Leviathan*, 64.
savageness of Indian warfare was due to the state of their development, which frontier settlers could comprehend. What they could not accept were the implications.

While frontier settlers, such as the Paxton Boys, regularly referred to themselves as “White People,” they also could accept similar cultural assumptions that Quakers used to defend Indian “customs.” They did not, however, demonize Indians as “reddish,” as Benjamin Franklin claimed they did, despite Franklin’s own “malicious painting” of the Paxton Boys “in the most odious and detestable Colours.” The Paxton settlers also did not see all Indians as being equal since the honorable Six Nations held true to their alliance, while Delaware and Shawnee operated under the auspice of the French imperial empire. Thus, Indians could be differentiated from each other and were not necessarily a consolidated race of foreign savages with an unknown culture; rather it was their culture, not their race that most Paxton settlers detested. Therefore, as Patrick Griffin has made clear, Paxton settlers employed racist language but they did not fully reject cultural understandings of difference. It was not just the Paxton Boys, however, that displayed these views, but by most of the men and women living along the frontier prompting Sir William Johnson to write to the Board of Trade, “I am so well convinced of the Utter aversion our People have for them [the Indians] in General, and of the imprudence with which they constantly express it” And Thomas Barton, in his Unanimity and Public Spirit, wrote that all Pennsylvanians should “Support …our common protestant cause…in this time of Public Danger,” when savage Indians engaged in “inhuman” enterprises that inflicted “the Horrors of a Savage War” on “our pure Protestant Faith, our equitable Laws, and our sacred

150 “Apology of the Paxton Volunteers,” 1-4, 6, 8, 9-10; Griffin, American Leviathan, 65.
151 Johnson to Lords of Trade, 26 December 1764.
Liberties.” Unless Protestants joined together, according to Barton, they, too, could transform into a savage Indian.152

The Seven Years’ War was a transformative experience for most Pennsylvanians where accommodation with Native Americans was no longer a distinct possibility. The conflict and killings in the border war with Maryland prior to the Seven Years’ War and the controversy in the Wyoming Valley after it, proves that Penn’s colony was not unique among other colonies if viewed from the “Peaceable Kingdom” perspective, but if we consider how Pennsylvania descended into anarchy, violence, and the loathing of Indians, then perhaps Penn’s colony was distinctive in how quickly events stumbled into war and hate. Understanding the relationship between whites and Indians in Pennsylvania’s backcountry is central to comprehending how the proprietary government obsessively sought ways to bring the scattered Indian population and white squatters into the political, economic, and cultural orbit of Philadelphia. Officials worked to limit the effects of dispersed settlement patterns by suppressing backcountry mobilization, guiding population relocation, enforcing justice, and securing boundaries between white frontiersmen and Native Americans. Their relationship also illustrates the important role that the militarization of the backcountry had in influencing new theories of colonial structure, agency, and in shaping cultural identity. Scattered frontier settlements pervaded western Pennsylvania and their vulnerability to French and native attack during the conflict, in conjunction with institutional weakness, created a nearly insoluble situation for both British politicians and the provincial administration. Devastating Indian raids coupled with no real response from Britain or the Assembly in Philadelphia forced frontiersmen to employ the anti-Indian sublime as a strategy to force the Quaker-led government to protect them from the incessantly brutal attacks

152 Thomas Barton, Unanimity and Public Spirit (Philadelphia, 1755), preface, xiv, 4, 10, 12, 15; also found in Griffin, American Leviathan, 67.
made by Native Americans on property, family, and livelihoods regardless of their ethnic, cultural, religious, or language differences. Finally, their volatile relationship during the Seven Years’ War revealed how the inability of the Board of Trade to manage agrarian insurrections and pan-Indian nativist movements reflected the unsustainability of the British Empire in the North American backcountry. In order for Britain to achieve their colonial ambitions in North America, they had to devise institutions that could assimilate and control the backcountry. These institutions – reformed Land Office, expanded court system, the use of militia – only became sources of irritation and resistance between the government and frontier populations as politicians struggled with the forbidding task of managing the vast new spaces and resources acquired after the war. Ironically for Pennsylvania, war shaped the political and social culture necessary for radical political realignment and the initiation of a prerevolutionary consciousness in the interwar years (1763-1775).

In three examples of backcountry agrarian insurrections against colonial and imperial authority – the border disputes between Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Connecticut and the conflict with Native Americans during the Seven Years’ War – settlers, Indians, and colonial administrators engaged in a violent and anarchic frontier at great distances from the imperial center. Despite different methods of resistance, backcountry settlers all shared a common denominator in trying to obtain better security and landed independence at the most favorable price from Pennsylvania’s proprietors, Maryland’s land agents, Connecticut’s land speculators, or with Native Americans. The examples of the Connojocular, French and Indian, and the Pennamite-Yankee Wars, also changed over time where, at the start, economic, social, religious, and ethnic differences among the various immigrants entering the Susquehanna River valley were tolerated, but by the end of the Seven Years’ War, differences between Euro-Americans
and Indians gradually took center stage, but quickly became characterized by race. Racism certainly was not a foregone conclusion in the 1740s and 1750s, but the competition for land, resources, security, and sovereignty produced increasingly exclusionary notions of national belonging by both Euro-Americans and Native Americans by the 1760s and into the Revolutionary Era. Finally, in all three instances, first violence and then reconstructing security characterized the methods through which backcountry settlers sought to obtain their goals.153

On the Pennsylvania-Maryland border, Thomas Cresap’s exceptional brand of violence, simultaneously idealistic and practical and wavering between fatalistic and paternalistic, was able to effect significant, if only temporary, changes in how settlers who positioned themselves between competitive proprietors could exact better land deals by professing their loyalty to the lowest bidder. Similarly in the Wyoming Valley, a culture of violence emerged over the pursuit of landed independence, reflective of “an undeniable legacy of bitter, racially charged conflict between Indians and colonists,” and later employed against other white settlers competing over the same land. The settlers in the Wyoming Valley only confirmed that the Pennsylvania-Maryland dispute was no anomaly, both Yankees and Pennamites had no problems switching sides in their pursuit of property. Backcountry settlers’ quest was so intense, claims Paul Moyer that, “loyalty to the state, ethnic affiliation, or a shared regional culture” took secondary importance to their desire for land, but not necessarily over kinship ties.154 Faced with “ill-disposed persons,” who “unlawfully intruded upon and surveyed” Wyoming land under the Connecticut claim, Pennsylvania’s provincial government resorted to sustained legal harassment, with draconian measures such as the Intrusion Act, to ward off Yankee troublemakers. But, much like the defiance of unruly settlers in the Pennsylvania-Maryland border dispute, provincial

154 Moyer, Wild Yankees, 14, 54.
authority was treated with “ridicule and contempt” as Connecticut claimants continued their defiance in “the thickest Veil of Darkness.”155 These two episodes were so intense, violent, and prolonged that it took larger, outside forces to finally compel Pennsylvanians and their opponents to pursue peace in the Susquehanna Valley. On May 25, 1738, the Board of Trade sent a letter to the Pennsylvania Assembly warning not to “permit or suffer any Tumults, Riots, or other Outrages…on the Borders,” and that they must “use their utmost endeavours to preserve Peace and Good Order amongst all His Majesty’s Subjects…inhabiting the said Borders.” Neither government was permitted to sale land grants, settle, nor claim unsettled lands until the boundary line was settled.156 And with the Compromise Act of 1799, the Wyoming controversy slowly subsided and came to a halt by 1810. The Compromise Act allowed Yankee settlers to obtain official Pennsylvania titles to their land and, thus, opened the door towards reconciliation between Yankees and Pennamites.157 These two examples suggest that violence was an important factor in how local backcountry peoples would regulate and rule their local communities, and through which government strategies, shaped by backcountry settlers, could come to influence imperial and later, national, designs on the periphery of empire.

These three violent episodes in eighteenth-century Pennsylvania reveal the limited ability of both colonial and imperial officials to administer backcountry peoples, the failure to institute a controlled settlement strategy, or to quell the violence through institutional means. In the Ohio Country, where Native Americans, Euro-Americans, and imperial empires clashed over competing notions of sovereignty, land ownership, and diverse human relationships, colonial officials were very aware of the threat that squatters and Indians posed to the balance of empire and to their profit. In order to maintain some resemblance of control, proprietary agents forged a

156 At the Court at Kensington, 25 May 1738, CR, 4:298-302.
157 Moyer, Wild Yankees, 120-22.
military-political alliance with the Six Nation Iroquois to oversee the numerous Indian groups living in western Pennsylvania, undertook expeditions to eject squatters, and signed land treaties with the Iroquois to extinguish any financial relationship between local Indians and their Euro-American tenants, thereby reestablishing Pennsylvania’s rights to locate and manage settlement. With the possibility of imperial conflict, however, the Ohio Valley’s rise to importance as a buffer zone, proprietary and British supervisors came to see local Indians and squatters as a danger to security, and championed the use of force as the best means to expand and maintain control over a vast new territory. War opened long-standing wounds between Pennsylvania’s Indians and the proprietary government over “the injuries they had receiv’d from the English in being cheated of the Fork Lands and obliged to retire further back over the Mountains” and “this so enraged them that they resolved no longer to bear the Injuries,” propelling the Delaware and Shawnee to ally with the French.158 In a personal, violent, and destructive struggle against former neighbors, the Delawares determined that “wherever the white man was settled within this disputed territory,” they would be attacked without mercy and, thus, began to see themselves and Euro-Americans in racial terms. Both Indians and whites ultimately created racial criteria for defining who could and who could not belong to Pennsylvania’s future.159

Jack P. Greene points out that historians traditionally interpret political authority in America as derived from old European centers thrust outwardly to the North American peripheries, but limited resources to enforce coercive power, distance, economic considerations, and heritage proved otherwise. Indeed, the actual construction of authority in colonial American provincial governments rested in the evolution of new “arenas” involving both individual and

local power. It was through the negotiation of that power between those arenas with the old European centers that “aspired to bring them under their jurisdiction and to which those arenas desired to be attached.” Increasingly, as the eighteenth century progressed, so too did colonial governments, which thwarted Parliament’s initiatives in order to maintain power locally within the various colonies while maintaining their rights as Englishmen. Thomas Pownall wrote in *Administration of the Colonies*, “From the earliest and first instance of the establishment of a BRITISH SENATE the principle of establishing the Imperium of government, on the basis of a representative legislature” was the defining characteristic of British rule. Focusing solely on how the imperial system developed between colony and metropole, however, fails to consider how diverse peoples living in the backcountry influenced local government and ultimately the empire. Demonstrating how backcountry inhabitants utilized violence to resist colonial and imperial institutions to obtain the security and landed independence they sought, the government initiatives taken to resolve each conflict highlights the importance of administering diverse and increasingly racialized violence occurring on Pennsylvania’s frontier. The reactive policies put into place to guide population relocation, suppress backcountry mobilization, enforce justice, and secure boundaries between colonies and colonists, reshaped the colony’s political and cultural institutions and deformed William Penn’s holy experiment.

Emphasizing how violence shaped backcountry culture has much to reveal about the development of eighteenth-century colonial Pennsylvania. The various techniques used by frontier settlers to resist colonial authority brings into focus the multiple ways in which they could influence the political, social, and cultural development of the province. This discourse

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can largely be found in the numerous publications coming out of Philadelphia by a wide range of writers, traders, missionaries, diplomats, and interpreters who all addressed utopian ideals of organized settlement and supreme administration over the backcountry. It was on the periphery of empire that new notions of sovereignty were constructed and landed independence was established. Frontier settlers fought against competing proprietors, provincial magistrates, and speculators who were determined to deny them their traditional English rights to acquiring property. They negotiated their loyalty, served as a buffer between Native Americans and the eastern urban centers, and fought in militias in order to expand and maintain their hard-fought freedoms, and in the process came to their own realization that Indians were racially inferior. Understanding these dynamics helps explains why backcountry settlers violently resisted colonial institutions: the competition, uncertainty, and anarchic conditions of the frontier, in addition to the threats from proprietors, land agents, and Indians, all posed threats to their very livelihood and existence.

The Wyoming Valley was intimately similar to the Susquehanna Valley dispute between Pennsylvania and Maryland. Ambiguous borders, lawlessness, violence, and the struggle to gain settler loyalty were all present. The Wyoming Valley had Lazarus Stewart and the Susquehanna Valley had Thomas Cresap, two men seen as troublemakers in Pennsylvania, but remembered as frontier heroes in Maryland and Connecticut respectively. Northeastern Pennsylvania was home to mostly Delaware Indians who named the valley Maughwauwame, or “the large plains,” but

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was later corrupted into *M’chweuwami* by Moravian missionaries, and then into *Wauwaumie*, *Wiomic*, and finally *Wyoming* by the settlers who found it difficult to pronounce. Originally, Connecticut was given all the territory bounded on the east by Narragansett Bay and on the north by Massachusetts. The western boundary was the Pacific Ocean, and thus, northeastern Pennsylvania was included in the 1622 charter. The confusion lay in the Dutch possession along the Hudson River, which blocked Connecticut’s territory to the west and, therefore, only permitted Connecticut to claim the area between Massachusetts to the north, Plymouth to the east, and the Dutch to the west. When New Netherland was conquered by English forces in 1665, the new English colony of New York still hindered Connecticut’s charter to the west, leading to an agreement between the two colonies to set the boundary line at Mamaroneck River and placing Long Island under New York’s jurisdiction. This agreement was ratified in 1683 and re-confirmed in 1731. Later, Connecticut officials would argue that the boundary agreement was only to settle the border between New York and themselves, not to determine if later claims could be made to the west along New York’s southern border. New Englanders had little need to settle the issue in the seventeenth century since there was relatively no overwhelming westward advancement to be addressed. Not until the pressure of population increases in the mid-eighteenth century did the need for more land arise.

Connecticut’s population increased from 70,000 people in 1749 to approximately 130,611 in 1756, placing a greater strain on available land for purchase. Population increase, however, does not provide a complete picture of Connecticut’s motivation for acquiring more property outside of its traditional boundaries. First, the natural migration to the western part of the colony in the 1750s, and then beyond, caused the devaluation of eastern farm properties to

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nearly one half of their former values. Second, although uncultivated lands held in reserve by both the government and land speculators still existed in the 1750s, reports emanating out Pennsylvania of high wheat and corn yields attracted many Connecticut farmers who could not produce similar results in their home colony. Third, the combination of reports coming from the West and the formation of large land speculation companies fueled an enthusiasm to emigrate and participate in the speculative process of purchasing, improving, and then selling territory for profit. Combined, these factors attracted many Connecticut colonists to the Wyoming Valley, where “several hundred people of this Colony have agreed to purchase a large tract of Land of the Six Nations of Indians of the Susquehanna, about 300 Leagues to the Westward, lying within the bounds of their Charter, to settle upon it, Expecting that it will be in a short time a distinct Government.”165

Starting in the early 1750s, petitions slowly rolled into the Assembly challenging Connecticut’s western border framed against the original charter’s description: “From the said Narraganset-Bay on the East, to the South Sea on the West Part.” A petition from Hartford in 1750, Norwalk in 1751, and one from the inhabitants of Windham, Farmington, Canterbury, Plainfield, and Voluntown in 1753, strategically used the ambiguous language in both the charter and the agreements with New York to press what they believed to be Connecticut’s rightful claims to Pennsylvania territory despite nearly a century of silence regarding the colony’s western border. These petitions all requested land west of the Hudson River and listed the benefits of an expanded trade network, a better relationship with the Six Nations, and “a

Howling Wilderness turned into fruitful fields.” The government of Connecticut, however, stifled all land speculation beyond its borders through the 1750s, citing the agreement with New York as the colony’s strict western boundary.166

The continued rejection of petitions requesting the formation of new townships beyond Connecticut’s borders by the Assembly did not extinguish the desire for westward expansion. By July 18, 1753, the largest and most extensive group of potential settlers formed a new company called the Susquehannah Company. Although many of the leaders of the Susquehannah Company petitioned the government previously with other organizers for a new township under Connecticut’s jurisdiction, they decided, instead, to create an entirely new colony, a New Connecticut, that would establish its own institutions, laws, and have its own subjects. The concept of forming a new colony may have been influenced by events at the Albany Congress in 1754. Several members from the Susquehannah Company attended the congress as representatives of Connecticut and they heard Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Pownall, Sir William Johnson, along with many others, advocate the formation of new colonies to the West in order to protect the existing colonies from French invasion. Indeed, on May 8, 1755, Connecticut’s Assembly approved the Susquehannah Company’s petition to form a new colony in the Wyoming Valley in order to resist French aggression, form closer diplomatic ties to the Six Nations, and to improve and extend the Indian trade, despite rejecting the Albany Plan of Union because they believed the infrastructure of a President General and Council was too small to govern all of the colonies at once.167

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167 SCP 1: lxiv-lxix. Boyd believes that the Susquehannah Company preempted the dialogue at Albany and Franklin’s suggestion of new colonies months prior to the Congress, see p. lxvi.
Pennsylvania’s charter of 1681 also included the Wyoming Valley. Already sensing encroachment into the northeastern section of the province by squatters from New York and Connecticut in the 1730s, the Penn family took steps to fortify their territorial sovereignty. The ongoing border conflict with Maryland led to an agreement with the Six Nations, Delaware, and Shawnee on October 11, 1736, to acquire all lands on the eastern and western sides of the Susquehanna River. They also capitalized on the Walking Purchase of 1737 with the Delaware Indians, to justify their proprietorship over all lands east of the Appalachian Mountains. As reports continued to flow into the Pennsylvania Assembly regarding New England squatters and the petitions being sent to the government in Connecticut requesting land along the Delaware and Susquehanna Rivers, Governor Hamilton sent representatives to Connecticut to inform them that, by treaty, Pennsylvania was “not to permit any Persons to settle upon Lands within the Bounds of the Province that have not been purchased from them,” otherwise, “it is apprehended those Indians may interpret such a Settlement a Violation of our Treaties–and may be induced to commit Hostilities that would be attended with Consequences most dangerous at this Juncture.” Pennsylvania officials tried to convey the important role that the Delaware played as a necessary buffer between several different interests in the province of Pennsylvania and to upset that balance would have catastrophic consequences. The French were building fortifications on Pennsylvania’s western frontier and the only barrier stopping them from entering Philadelphia were the Delaware Indians located in the Wyoming Valley. If Connecticut settlers forced the Delaware out of valley, it would open a straight path into the eastern part of both colonies. This in turn, threatened Iroquois hegemony in their ability to maintain the neutrality between the French and English by compromising the lands that both empires coveted. It appeared that Connecticut was unaware of this fragile relationship since the representatives reported that
“many were staggered at his acquainting them with the Situation of Wyomink, and the Injunctions that had issued against settling it at the Instance of the Indians.” Governor Hamilton feared a “civil War within this Province, as the Government would be obliged to oppose such tumultuous Settlements and Intrusions, and thus prove particularly hurtful to the general Interest at this time,” especially since “the French had actually invaded this Province, and we are likely to be involved in a War to repel them.” Pennsylvania vowed to take no responsibility for the lives of Connecticut settlers who decided to live on the sovereign lands of Indians in the Wyoming Valley.

There were several small groups of Indians living in the area, mostly Nanticokes, until the arrival of Teedyuscung and his followers in 1754. Teedyuscung moved into the Wyoming Valley in an attempt to thwart the occupation of the region by Connecticut settlers. During the early years of the Seven Years’ War, he chose to side with the French and their Ohio Valley Indian allies to forestall this process when Governor Morris proclaimed that “it seems clear…that the French have gained to their Interest the Delaware and Shawanese Indians under the ensnaring pretence of restoring them to their Country, Their intimate knowledge of which will make them very dangerous Enemys to the Colonys in general, and to this in particular.”

Teedyuscung’s options for maintaining territorial sovereignty were limited. Pressures of white settlement from the Susquehannah Company, provincial officials from Pennsylvania hassling the Delaware for peace, and the possible forfeiture of land from Six Nations Iroquois, who agreed to sell the lands of the Wyoming Valley to both Pennsylvania and the Susquehannah Company, most likely forced him to side with the French and their western Delaware brethren. He used the

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168 Council Minutes, 18 March 1754, CR, 5: 775, 774.
imperial conflict, however, as an opportunity to both exhibit Delaware independence from the Six Nations and as a tactic to recover land lost in Walking Purchase from Pennsylvania.170

On July 8, 1756, the Pennsylvania Gazette reported that “a Lad at Plough was chased by two Indians, who would certainly have taken him, had not two Men appeared, who fired their Guns and sounded a Horn, upon which the Indians ran off” at Harris Ferry.” The “Lad” was luckier than Martin Coppeler and his wife from Bethel Township, in Lancaster County, who, “were killed and scalped by three Indians,” and during this encounter, the Indians “also knocked down and scalped a Girl,” although she survived. At the same time, the Gazette reported that news from Bethlehem arrived warning “that some Hundred of our Enemy Indians, of different Nations, in and about the Allegheny Mountains, are gone to hold a Council, and form themselves into a Body, in order to come down and harass this and the neighbouring Provinces; and that a Number of disaffected Indians from Diaoga were gone to join them.”171 As the northern Susquehannah Valley became a place of violence and destruction, Pennsylvania officials needed Teedyuscung to abandon the war effort so that the province could secure its northern boundary against Indian attacks. Therefore, in October 1756, Teedyuscung agreed to meet Pennsylvania officials at Easton to “renew the Treaties of Friendship which William Penn had made with his Forefathers,” and “begged that what past might be forgotten.” He promised to “[lay] down the Hatchet, and would never make Use of it any more against the English.”172 Despite Teedyuscung’s gains at Easton in 1756 and 1757, he could no longer negotiate from a position of strength when a large contingent of Six Nations’ representatives appeared at the conference at

170 Council Minutes, 3 November 1755, CR, 6:670-72; Kenny, Peaceable Kingdom Lost, 83-86; Moyer, Wild Yankees, 18-23; Hinderaker, Elusive Empires, 142-43.
171 PA Gazette, July 8, 1756.
Easton in 1758. Teedyuscung correctly discerned that they came to reassert their suzerainty over all tributary peoples. Pennsylvania’s negotiators also realized this and made all attempts to isolate him so they did not have to surrender two and a half million acres of prime real estate as compensation for the Walking Purchase and because they preferred Iroquois hegemony to eastern Delaware independence. To ensure that the western Delaware were pliant, Conrad Weiser returned all of the Ohio Valley lands sold to Pennsylvania in 1754 back to the Iroquois. This alleviated the western Delaware’s fears of Pennsylvania’s intentions to take control of their homeland and reasserted the Six Nations authority over all Indians located within the province. The Easton Conference of 1758 effectively removed all Delaware Indians from the Seven Years’ War.173

During the conference, however, Thomas King, the Oneida representative, told Teedyuscung he could, for the time being, “make use of those Lands in Conjunction with our People, and all the rest of our Relations.”174 He was permitted to return to the Wyoming Valley with his people until further notice. Soon after, Teedyuscung led Delaware resistance to the settlements made by Connecticut settlers arriving in the Wyoming Valley. He met with Pennsylvania’s governor, requesting them to send a letter to Connecticut’s government stating “that if they do not go away the Indians will turn them off” and “it will be their own fault if anything happens.” Then, in another conference with Pennsylvania’s governor, Teedyuscung informed him that he confronted more than a hundred Connecticut settlers, “threaten[ing] them hard” with violence and destruction, encouraging them to leave.175 During Pontiac’s War in 1763, the New England settlers had enough of Teedyuscung and burned down his house with

173 Anderson, Crucible of War, 274-80.
175 Memorandum of a Conference with Teedyuscung, 18 September 1760, SCP 2:25; Wallace, Teedyuscung, 254-58; Conference with Teedyuscung, 19 November 1762, SCP 2:180-83.
him inside, murdering him and destroying the entire Delaware village. Within two weeks, Connecticut families moved onto the former settlement, planted crops, and began to build houses and barns. Other attempts, besides Teedyuscung’s were made to prevent Susquehannah Company members from migrating into Pennsylvania. The Privy Council in London issued orders soon after Teedyuscung’s death to discontinue moving into the Wyoming Valley and those already there were to return to Connecticut immediately. The orders arrived too late, however, for the New Englanders who settled on top of the destroyed Delaware village; Captain Bull, Teedyuscung’s son, retaliated by murdering or taking captive all of the Connecticut settlers who remained. No matter the atrocity, orders from London, or Pennsylvania’s remonstrance, Connecticut settlers were determined to move into the valley. This forced Pennsylvania to recruit loyal settlers who promised to keep New Englanders out of the province. Teedyuscung’s death ultimately ended native resistance in the Wyoming and Delaware River basins. The Treaty of Fort Stanwix in 1768 guaranteed that, but the Susquehannah and Delaware Companies interpreted the treaty as a nullification of orders from the Privy Council and open license to consolidate and expand their settlements.  

The Susquehannah Company’s claims to the Wyoming Valley rested on their agreement with the Six Nations land purchase they made at the Albany Congress in 1754. They were able to finesse a deal despite a new deed signed with Pennsylvania’s representatives that “promise[d]…Thomas Penn and Richard Penn, Esquires, the present Proprietors of the Province of Pennsylvania, that neither We nor any by our Authority shall sell, grant, or convey to any other than the said Proprietaries, their Heirs and Assigns, any Lands within the Limits of the said Province.” Although drunkenness was quoted by Governor James Hamilton in a letter to Sir

176 SCP 3:i-xvi; Minutes of a Meeting of the Susquehannah Company, 28 December 1768 and Instructions to Charles Stewart and Others, 1769, SCP 3:43-47, 331-32; Moyer, Wild Yankees, 23.
William Johnson as the reason why the Iroquois came to terms with not only Pennsylvania’s representatives but also with Connecticut’s during the congress, the Six Nations smothered any notions that they made a separate agreement with the New Englanders during a meeting between Hendrick, a Mohawk representative, and John Penn and Richard Peters in August, 1754, declaring “that those People [from Connecticut] would give the Proprietaries no further trouble” about their land purchase at the Albany Congress. Twice more, in 1758 and 1763, the Iroquois denied the legality of the agreement between themselves and the Susquehannah Company. In response, Connecticut settlers claimed that Pennsylvania’s agreements with the Six Nations were illegal since the purchases were made within the legal boundaries of Connecticut. The government, on the other hand, cited the Susquehannah Company’s agreement with the Six Nations a private purchase and, therefore, not amendable by Connecticut’s laws. The collision course had already begun in October 1753, almost one year prior to the Albany Congress, when members of the Susquehanna Company searched the Wyoming Valley for a new settlement. With this melancholy news, Richard Peters, Pennsylvania’s provincial secretary, lamented that New Englanders had “made great disturbance among the People,” by telling local inhabitants that they planned to return next spring “with a Thousand Men and settle those lands.” The Wyoming Dispute, then, rested on three considerations: border dispute, Indian title, and actual possession of property. Up until the summer of 1754, Connecticut’s Assembly rejected all petitions for new town grants, the Wyoming Indians maintained possession of the valley, and Pennsylvania retained complete proprietorship over its sovereign borders, but the Albany

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177 At a Meeting of the Indians of the Six Nations at Mr. James Stephenson’s in Albany, Saturday the Sixth of July, 1754, 6 July 1754, CR, 6:128-29; Shepherd, History of Proprietary Government, 150-52.  
Congress marked a crossroads for Pennsylvanians, Indians, and New Englanders in northeastern Pennsylvania.

The Wyoming Controversy spanned the Seven Years’ War, the Revolutionary War, and extended well into the new national era, concluding unofficially somewhere between 1807 and 1808. The controversy endured for so long that Paul Moyer, in *Wild Yankees*, broke the conflict down into three distinct chronological stages based on a contest over authority in the region. First, set between 1770 and 1774, beginning with successful settlement by Susquehannah Company members and ending with Connecticut’s decision to incorporate these gains into the boundaries of their own colony. Moyer characterizes this stage “as a jurisdictional conflict by proxy,” where the colony of Pennsylvania confronted land companies from Connecticut. Since the Connecticut claimants, who were known as “Yankees,” were politically disadvantaged and could not petition Connecticut to address their needs, they relied on violence as a response to Pennsylvania’s authority. Indeed, John Williamson asserted that “if any Sheriff came to molest

“...them they wou’d tie a Stone about his Neck, & send him down to his Governor.” This period witnessed aggressive politicking by Susquehannah Company members by lobbying in the Connecticut Assembly, publishing newspaper advertisements and articles, and through awarding generous company shares to politically significant individuals, including Governor Jonathan Trumbull. The Susquehannah Company aided their cause by militarily securing their sovereignty over Pennsylvania, or “Pennamite” settlers, and by stabilizing their settlements through rapid population increases. Similar to Pennsylvania’s methods of securing and organizing westward settlements, Connecticut incorporated the town of Westmoreland in 1774 and then arranged it as a county two years later, ending the first stage.\(^{180}\)

After the formation and annexation of Westmoreland County, the second stage began in 1774 and lasted until 1779, when Pennsylvania started the process to reassert its jurisdiction over the Wyoming Valley. Moyer notes that this period was characterized by eight years of Connecticut rule that pitted the Pennsylvania proprietors and leading landholders against the colony of Connecticut and its settlers in northeastern Pennsylvania. The Board of Trade, focused on the growing discontent in all of the colonies, delayed making any decision on jurisdiction in the early 1770s. The Continental Congress, however, did not want controversy between two colonies during the Revolution and in December 1775, determined that the Wyoming Valley would remain under the control of Connecticut until the region was more stable and settled.

Here, William Plunkett, a Northumberland magistrate from Pennsylvania, used privately raised funds to use armed force against Connecticut settlers in an attempt to remove them from the region. His five hundred man army was intercepted by Zebulon Butler and he lost nearly half a dozen men wounded or killed.181 Pennsylvania officials initiated the last stage in the conflict by requesting Connecticut to submit to a final decision under the Articles of Confederation by official tribunal of the new national government. Connecticut reluctantly agreed in November, 1782. After one month of testimony, the tribunal in Trenton, New Jersey, ruled “the Jurisdiction and Pre-emption of all the Territory lying within the Charter boundary of Pennsylvania, and now claimed by the State of Connecticut, do of right belong to the State of Pennsylvania.” Although the Trenton Decree did not end the violence and anarchy in the Wyoming Valley, it did determine which state had jurisdiction. According to Moyer, “the question now was not what state would have authority over the Wyoming region but how that authority would be constructed and exercised.” Moyer does not provide a fourth stage since the Trenton Decree

effectively ended Connecticut’s claim to a western colony resulting in an internal struggle that pitted Pennsylvania officials against both Yankee and Pennamite settlers. ¹⁸²

Once the Delaware were removed from the Wyoming Valley and the Fort Stanwix Treaty was signed in 1768, securing the entire valley from Indian claims, Governor Penn preempted Yankee resettlement by approving land grants of 100 acres each to Amos Ogden, John Jennings, and Charles Stewart who promised to protect Penn’s interests in the valley, defend it against Connecticut settlers, and provide patents to settlers loyal to Pennsylvania.  Penn’s experience with Maryland taught him the importance of loyalty on the frontier.  The Susquehannnah Company also sought to fulfill their rights to the valley when they published advertisements in The New London Gazette, the Connecticut Courant of Hartford, and the Pennsylvania Chronicle and Universal Advertiser of Philadelphia in early to mid-December, 1768, claiming “nothing reasonable lies in the way against Susquehanna purchasers going on and settling those lands, purchased by them lying within the line settled with the Indians at said Congress.”  A meeting would be held at the end of December for all who were interested in settling in northeastern Pennsylvania.  The meeting concluded with an agreement among members to send forty settlers ahead of a larger contingent to secure the land and to begin laying out the infrastructure of a new community.  These settlers would be known as the “First Forty.”¹⁸³

The earliest contact between Pennsylvania officials and Connecticut claimants was marked by assaults, shootouts, writs of arrest, and articles of capitulation.  The New Englanders made a few attempts at permanent settlement, but were beaten, arrested, chased away with the threat of force, or overwhelmed by numbers.  They were, however, able to gather enough settlers in May, 1769, to erect twenty cabins, a stockade, and plant crops.  They named their settlement

¹⁸³ Williamson and Fossler, Zebulon Butler, 17-19 (quote on p. 17-18); Moyer, Wild Yankees, 228.
Wilkesbarre after John Wilkes and Isaac Barre, two members of British Parliament who were known to support American views in London.\textsuperscript{184} After learning of the flourishing settlement, John Penn immediately wrote letters to Colonel Turbutt Francis at Fort Augusta, Charles Stewart, Amos Ogden, and John Jennings, Sheriff of Northampton County, to “exert your Influence in raising as good a Party as you can…to bring the Intruders to Justice.” In case “the New England Men threaten to oppose You in the execution of your Duty with Force and Violence, it is prudent…[to] furnish yourselves with Arms,” and to “oppose Force with Force.” Although Penn preferred no bloodshed, Jennings and his men were “required…to act a spirited and resolute Part in using your utmost Endeavors to arrest the Offenders.”\textsuperscript{185} Several individual attempts to dislodge the Connecticut settlers failed because of inferior numbers, but when Ogden was reinforced with more men and a cannon, he was able to assault and capture small parties of Yankees outside of the fortified community. Fortunately for Ogden, he captured Major John Durkee, leader of the Connecticut settlers. His arrest and imprisonment demoralized the Yankees and on November 14, 1769, they surrendered to the three hundred man combined force of Ogden and Jennings. Once the New Englanders vacated Wilkesbarre, the Pennsylvania “army” plundered and pillaged the settlement in violation of the terms of surrender, setting the stage for more personal violence.\textsuperscript{186}

Undeterred, the Yankees regrouped and were reinforced by Lazarus Stewart and his infamous Paxton Boys, marking an important transition in the use of violence in the Wyoming Valley. Prior to joining the Susquehannah Company in 1760, Stewart already had a long record


\textsuperscript{185} John Penn to Turbutt Francis, to Charles Stewart and Amos Ogden, and to John Jennings, 24 August 1769, \textit{SCP} 3:167-69 and in \textit{CR}, 9:606-09.

of using violence to achieve his means. He was wanted in Pennsylvania on charges of multiple murders, assault, riot, arson, and treason. Stewart was also part of the Paxton rangers who murdered and mutilated Conestoga Indians in Lancaster, where an eyewitness reported that men, women, and children were “spread about the prison yard; shot, scalped, hacked, and cut to pieces.”

He also participated in the subsequent march on Philadelphia, and then, as a member of the Black Boys unit, he helped attacked and destroy government supplies meant for the Indians and played a part in their resistance to British troops who arrived to reestablish order. And, he once told a Pennsylvania official who came to arrest him that he would “cut him to Pieces, and make a Breakfast of his Heart,” menacing him with an axe handle after “he had knocked down the Constable & beat him in a Cruel and Unmerciful manner.”

Although a violent outlaw, Stewart knew how to lead frontiersmen into battle and how to eliminate resistance. He was a trained Indian fighter and he planned to use his experience in exchange for guaranteed property and protection from Pennsylvania authorities in the Wyoming Valley.

Similar to the arrival of Thomas Cresap in the border conflict with Maryland, violence escalated upon the arrival of Lazarus Stewart. Indeed, Stewart immediately impacted events in northeastern Pennsylvania when he and his Paxton Boys raided Pennamite positions, houses, and garrisons, taking ammunition, cannon, and other supplies, and confronting Pennsylvania authorities to surrender starting the often fluctuating struggle to gain sovereignty in the

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Wyoming Valley. Stewart transformed the conflict from legal maneuvering to violence and bloodshed.  

The seesaw affair continued into the 1770s, first with Pennamites expelling Yankees and then, after being arrested and escaping twice, Stewart led a party that forced the Pennsylvanians out of the valley. Early in January 1771, another Pennamite army arrived and confronted Stewart and his followers in Fort Wyoming. During the encounter, three Pennamites, including Amos Ogden’s brother Nathan, were shot dead, but the Pennamites came in larger numbers kicking the Susquehannah Company’s supporters from the fort and occupying it. Zebulon Butler responded by leading another Connecticut force into the Wyoming Valley during the summer and laying siege to the same fort. With several wounded and dead on both sides, the Pennamites surrendered to Butler due to lack of supplies, ammunition, and reinforcements on August 15, 1771. A relief force en route from Easton returned after hearing of the capitulation, leaving the Yankees in possession of Wyoming for the next four years. Pennsylvania’s proprietors overlooked the violence and destruction committed by its subjects and was quick to condemn and jail Connecticut claimants without redress. No official inquiry or trial was conducted during these early years of conflict. The Penns did, however, take action by forming Northumberland County, which incorporated all of the territory claimed by the Susquehannah Company during this time, setting up its institutions, marking its boundaries, and appointing officials. Meanwhile, the Connecticut Assembly took no action until it received further notice from London whether the Wyoming Valley was part of Pennsylvania or Connecticut. 

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While the Susquehannah Company settlers waited for Connecticut’s Assembly to decide whether to adopt them or not, Butler organized the settlement militarily. In a meeting on November 18, 1772, Butler declared:

that Every man that Holds a Setling Right in Either of those Setling towns shall Provide himself a Good firelock & ammunition Sufficient according to ye Laws of ye Coloney of Connecticutt: that shall be [accepted] of by ye Comtee of Setlers & that by ye first mounday of December Next and then to appear Compleat in their arms at ye fort in wilksb[arre] at 12 of ye Clock on sd Day fitt for viewing as ye Law Directs &c.191

The Connecticut settlers were better prepared for the next wave of attacks from the Pennamites, should they come again. Moreover, the Susquehannah Company also took advantage of the extended peace by solidifying their presence in the Wyoming Valley. Similar to the border war with Maryland, the company chose to “crowd in [loyal] settlers with all our might, so as to get [a] good foothold,” and encourage either Connecticut or the Crown to approve their plans of being absorbed into the New England colony.192

Although the Crown had not ruled on who possessed jurisdiction of the Wyoming Valley, the Connecticut Assembly decided to proceed, based on the stability, established institutions, and increased population, to merge a portion of the Susquehannah Purchase with Connecticut in December 1773. Anticipating Pennsylvania’s rejection of this act, Governor Trumbull wrote to John Penn that “these Acts are made…for the Protection and Government of the Inhabitants of the Lands mentioned to preserve Peace and good Order among them [and] to prevent Hostilities, Animosities and Contentions among the people there,” along with encouraging “public Justice, to discourage Vice and Iniquity, and to put a Stop to Intruders entering on those Lands.”193 As expected, Penn replied that he would “do everything in [his] Power to avoid Contentions and

191 Minutes of Meeting of the Proprietors and Settlers in Wilkes-Barré, 18 November 1772, SCP 5:55-6.
192 Quote in Williamson and Fossler, Zebulon Butler, 29.
193 Jonathan Trumbull to John Penn, 31 January 1774, SCP 5:268.
Disorders among” the settlers in the Wyoming Valley, but “at the same Time, both my Interest and duty will prompt me to assert the Rights of” Pennsylvania, “and support its lawful Jurisdiction, and if disagreeable Consequences shall follow the proceedings” that Connecticut’s government has implemented, “I shall not look upon myself to be at all chargeable with them.” 194 The controversy morphed into two colonies battling over jurisdiction of the Wyoming Valley, giving Yankee settlers more legitimacy in the conflict.

As Wilkesbarre continued to expand and prosper, and with Connecticut’s approval to extend the county’s boundary to the Fort Stanwix Treaty Line in May 1775, settlers looked towards the West Branch of the Susquehanna River for further settlement. 195 John Vincent, leader of the migration, encouraged more New Englanders to move westward and promised to “not by force fraud Deceit or Sarcasm molest Disturb or by any ways or means disposses any person or persons that are Setled under the Proprietors of Pennsylvania neither will we use any threats to that purpose.” 196 Despite their letter and another one written to William Plunkett, colonel of Northumberland County militia, they were attacked by 500 of Plunkett’s men near their settlements of Charleston and Judea. One Yankee was killed and eight wounded in the ensuing battle. The leaders of this expedition, Joseph Sluman and William Judd were arrested and sent to Philadelphia to be imprisoned while three others were jailed locally and the women and children were sent back to Wilkesbarre. Their property and possessions were taken, buildings were torched, and the two Yankee settlements were destroyed. In another incident outside of the former Delaware Company’s settlement (eastern side of Wilkesbarre) in December 1774, Pennsylvania officials captured ten Yankees and forced them to sign documents that

194 John Penn to Jonathan Trumbull, 24 February 1774, SCP 5:302.
identified them as trespassers and required them to present themselves in court for the charges against them. These two incidents, on the opposite sides of Wilkesbarre, gave Pennsylvania officials confidence to retake the Wyoming Valley from the Connecticut intruders, but their plans were derailed with the upcoming war with Great Britain.197

From the middle of December 1775 until the winter of 1779, the Yankee-Pennamite dispute in the Wyoming Valley coincided with America’s War for Independence. Perhaps no other incident in the struggle over the Wyoming Valley perpetrates the violence, conflict, and anarchy of northeastern Pennsylvania’s frontier better than the battle that unfolded on July 3, 1778. Zebulon Butler led nearly three hundred Yankee soldiers against over seven hundred Indians, Loyalists, and former Pennamites. The army under British command overwhelmed Butler’s militia with sheer numbers. Once the badly outnumbered New Englanders realized they were losing and enveloped by native warriors, they broke and ran, only to be chased down, scalped, and killed by their enemies in a rout. More than half of Butler’s men were captured or killed. Over the next several days the remaining settlers were forced out of the valley, had their homes and property destroyed, and were demoralized. Referred to as the “Wyoming Massacre,” stories about Indian, British, and Pennamite atrocities streamed out of the valley and even made it into the Pennsylvania Gazette, which reported that Partial Terry, formerly of Wyoming, joined the British and returned to attack the Connecticut claimants, of which he “murdered his father, mother, brothers and sisters, stripped off their scalps, and cut off his father’s head.” Henry Pensell who escaped the initial defeat, returned to find his brother, John, a Tory supporter, and begged for his life, but John, showing no mercy, called his brother a “damned rebel,” shot him

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and then scalped him.\textsuperscript{198} Other atrocities emerged; examination of several dead bodies revealed broken bones to prevent flight, most likely to preserve their bodies for torture by Indians later in the day; some were burned at the stake; while others were beheaded or scalped; and it was reported that eighteen Yankees were arranged in a circle near a flat rock where their heads were smashed by an Indian matriarch. John Butler, the Tory leader, reported that 227 scalps were taken, while other reports listed 302 casualties. Pennsylvania’s response to “the late fatal Catastrophe which has befallen the Connecticut settlers, on the River Susquehanna, deplorable as it is, recollects the disputed footing on w[ich] these sufferers stood.” Indeed, all “Compassion for them, as well as justice to this State, require that they be reminded of the precarious nature of their tenure, before they re-establish themselves.”\textsuperscript{199}

Butler and his rangers were mostly Loyalists from New York, but there were also a great number of former Pennamites in his ranks, as well as Delaware warriors. Once war broke out along northeastern Pennsylvania frontier, many dissatisfied Pennamites joined the British, not because they supported the Crown against other Americans, but because they believed by joining Indians, Tories, and British military leadership, they could regain their property and independence in the Wyoming Valley. Their brutal attacks against the Yankees at Wilkesbarre and the subsequent killings, torture, and destruction of property were reminiscent of native warfare experienced during the Seven Years’ War and were identified by the Yankees as such.\textsuperscript{200} Although Butler’s raid on the Wyoming Valley was a large-scale maneuver, as was Colonel Thomas Hartley’s and Major General John Sullivan’s invasions of Indian country, the

\textsuperscript{199} Williamson and Fossler, \textit{Zebulon Butler}, 59; Council to the Assembly, 7 August 1778, \textit{PA Archives}, 1\textsuperscript{st} series, 6:685.  
\textsuperscript{200} Moyer, \textit{Wild Yankees}, 31-36.
Revolutionary War years in the Wyoming Valley were marked by ambush, small raids, and captive taking, sometimes resulting in death such as Luke Swetland’s capture by Seneca Indians on August 6, and Timothy Keyes’s and James Hocksey’s capture, murder, and scalping in early September 1778. Indian attacks became more frequent in November, December, and January in Wyoming as evidenced by the death of fourteen men and at least six women taken as prisoners at the end of 1778, and five more inhabitants were attacked and killed while, on March 23, about 250 native warriors attempted to surround and assault Fort Wyoming. Both the major campaigns and the small raids on Indians and by Indians, added to the complexity of conflict in northeastern Pennsylvania. The struggle of who possessed authority would not be established until after Sullivan’s devastating and successful raid against the Six Nations in August 1779. The raids and counter raids, however, were so devastating in the number of deaths, homes burned, and crops destroyed that the Connecticut settlements were reduced from more than 500 taxable subjects (and 3,000 total settlers) in 1778 down to just one hundred in 1780, with a recorded £38,308 in damages. 201

Many of the original settlers from Connecticut never returned, but many more did come after the Revolution, introducing a new generation to the Wyoming controversy. This generation, however, was schooled in the brutality of Indian warfare and even though Lazarus Steward was laid to rest, they used its methods and techniques to devastating efficiency after the war against their Pennsylvanian adversaries. This was decidedly so after a series of events, once again, transformed the struggle over the Wyoming Valley. The Trenton Decree was announced on January 6, 1783, by a court of commissioners who declared: “We are unanimously of opinion that the State of Connecticut has no rights to the lands in controversy. We are also unanimously

of opinion that the jurisdiction and preemption of all the territory lying within the charter boundary of Pennsylvania, and now claimed by the State of Connecticut, do of right belong to the State of Pennsylvania.”202 This decision, however, only determined state boundaries, not who actually possessed property in the region. In order to establish who owned what land, Pennsylvania sent a Land Claimants Association along with two companies of Pennsylvania troops, making many New Englanders suspicious of the state’s intentions. Upon arriving, the commissioners announced that they would prioritize Pennsylvania claims first, and then Connecticut’s claims, although they would permit current residents to conduct one-year leases in most cases. This jeopardized all Yankee claims in the Wyoming Valley and triggered a “civil war” between Pennamites and Yankees. This time, however, it would be between the political machinations of land speculators and rival settlers, instead of between colonial governments.203

The Pennsylvania Assembly, in 1783, consisted of a majority of land speculators who held titles in the Wyoming Valley and largely sympathized with Pennamites. They maneuvered to take control over the valley and eject the Connecticut claimants. Beginning on October 31, 1783, Pennsylvania troops arrested eleven Yankee settlers (mostly elderly men) and imprisoned them for ten days. While in prison, their families were forcibly removed and their farms occupied by the soldiers.204 When a flood destroyed much of the Wyoming Valley in March 1784, the fences and property markers that were replaced by the residents were torn down and the houses that survived the flood were torched by Pennsylvania troops, displacing approximately 150 Connecticut families. On July 20, 1874, Alexander Patterson, justice of the peace, hired out his own personal army and sent forty troops to ambush Connecticut farmers harvesting grain. Two farmers were killed and three soldiers were wounded. Captain John

202 Judgment of the Court Convened at Trenton, 30 December 1782, SCP 7:245-46.
203 Williamson and Fossler, Zebulon Butler, 97-99.
Franklin, now leading the displaced New Englanders, retaliated by attacking Fort Dickerson and ejecting all Pennamite families along his way. He failed to take the fort and lost two men killed, but his response reignited the seesaw violent conflict between Pennamites and Yankees in the Wyoming Valley.205

Many Pennsylvania leaders who were sent to Wyoming to ensure peace and stability got caught up in the Pennamite land grab, particularly John Armstrong, Jr. and John Boyd who proved untrustworthy among the Yankees. When these two men became part of a four man committee to restore peace in the valley, New Englanders protested, but it was not the protests that doomed the committee, it was violence. In May 1784, Pennsylvania president John Dickinson received a letter from Northumberland County officials reporting the “outrageous conduct” of the state’s troops, detailing how they “intimidated and confined under a close Military Guard” representatives directed to restoring peace and notifying the president that, “instead of aiding the Civil Authority,” the army had “set it at defiance, and place[d] themselves above the Laws.” Dickinson immediately recalled the army.206 Also, these same officials continued to gather evidence of wrongdoing and ultimately indicted forty-five Pennamites on charges of riot, assault, robbery, and false imprisonment. These court cases succeeded in forcing top Pennsylvania officials and military commanders out of the Wyoming Valley and breaking the Pennamite grip on power in the region.207

Removing these officials did not stop the violence and conflict in the Wyoming Valley, but the Compromise Act of 1799, which permitted New Englanders with land

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206 John Buyers and Others to John Dickinson, 17 May 1784, and John Dickinson to James Moore, 20 April 1784, SCP 7:410-11, 393.
207 Thomas McKean, William Atlee, and Jacob Rush to John Dickinson, 7 June 1784, SCP 7:431-32; Minutes of the Court at Sunbury, 8 November 1784, SCP 8:145-46.
claims prior to the Trenton Decree, granted secure titles to properly claimed land. Similar to the Confirming Act of 1787, the new law supported those Yankee claimants who reconciled with Pennsylvania and separated themselves from large land speculators and their claims after the decree. This forced a split of a powerful alliance. By the summer of 1801, members of the Susquehannah and Delaware Companies started to distance themselves from the use of violence and moved toward accommodation using the court system to settle disputes instead of orchestrated terror.208

Throughout the controversy Connecticut Yankees and Pennsylvania Pennamites employed a strategy of violence as a matter of recourse against government officials, speculators, Indians, and each other in an anarchic environment to achieve their goal of landed independence. Pennsylvania’s proprietary officials attempted to control the northeastern borderland through similar methods they employed in the border conflict with Maryland. They pressed their interpretation of the border through their chartered rights. Then, they provided evidence of Indian purchases they made prior to the conflict. Third, when Connecticut claimants moved into the valley anyways, they employed loyal settlers, magistrates, justices of the peace, and sheriffs to arrest, imprison, and harass the New Englanders through shady legal maneuvers, and finally, just short of declaring war, they supported both public and private enterprises to retake the valley by force. Again, the willingness of the Pennsylvania’s proprietors to engage in violence to secure their borders undermines the long-held beliefs of Pennsylvania being a “Peaceable Kingdom.” And, just like the border conflict with Maryland, outside forces were necessary to end hostilities and uphold Pennsylvania’s territorial sovereignty.

208 The Compromise Act of 1799, 4 April 1799, SCP 10:468-74; The Confirming Act, 28 March 1787, SCP 9:82-86; Moyer, Wild Yankees, 121-27.
The Yankee-Pennamite war provides an opportunity to re-examine the social contexts of agrarian violence in eighteenth-century Pennsylvania. The goal of personal independence enticed men from Connecticut to settle in the Wyoming Valley also drew them into violent encounters with Indians, colonial and then state governments, land speculators, and other settlers who also sought landed independence while, at the same time, resisting government authority, conventional property rights, and challenging elites over the same land. Much of the violence that occurred between Yankees and Pennamites resembled conflict with natives and less like traditional European warfare. The destruction of property, taking prisoners, ambushes, and mostly small-scale attacks was a brand of violence many of the settlers learned fighting Indians in the Seven Years’ War or during Pontiac’s War. They employed the terror tactics learned through decades of bloody, interracial confrontations with Indians to devastating effect against each other, government officials, and land speculators during and after the American Revolution. Indeed, Indian policy and Indian land rights dominated the early stages of the conflict and was used to justify jurisdiction in the region, but after Connecticut settlers violently removed the native Indians from the Wyoming Valley, Pennsylvania realized it would have to alter its strategy by deploying loyal settlers and government agents to the region to maintain its territorial sovereignty, and as Richard Peters observed, the conflict was not only “between Subject and Subject but between Indian and Englishman.”209 Teedyuscung’s failure to maintain Indian autonomy in the Wyoming Valley provided opportunities for white settlers to combatively pursue property and establish authority in northeastern Pennsylvania. Connecticut settlers rapidly moved onto Indian lands and violently removed them through arson, murder, threats, and finally by numbers. Anti-Indian violence was a reflection of backcountry settlers’ apprehension

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over achieving landed independence. All Indians posed a potential threat to the peaceful possession of property and the security it was supposed to provide.

Violent outbursts against colonial and imperial officials occurred because, as Lazarus Stewart argued, they did not distribute land fairly or equitably, often giving choice lands and first opportunities to elite land owners or political alliances. This resistance provided the nexus to why British administrators failed to control the outbreak of violence, first, between Indians and white settlers, and second, between Yankees and Pennamites: imperial authority was distant and weak on the frontier. Colonies such as Maryland, Connecticut, Virginia, and Pennsylvania viewed each other as competition in available territory and westward expansion. This encouraged them to seek land for their own benefit rather than the good of the empire or concerns over the larger issues of imperial geopolitical growth. This was dangerous since it undermined native alliances such as in the Susquehanna River valley in Pennsylvania or indirectly strengthening the position of neighboring imperial power such as France. This was especially evident at the Albany Congress in 1754, where Connecticut and Pennsylvania representatives tried to broker deals detrimental to the Delaware’s strategic role in northeastern Pennsylvania and potentially removing the only barrier to direct attack by the French into Philadelphia or Hartford. Thus, territorial and jurisdictional disputes made it difficult for officials to direct westward expansion or protect Indian territorial sovereignty.

The struggle in the Wyoming Valley spawned increasing levels of brutality rarely seen in other backcountry agrarian resistance movements. The violence was so enduring and encompassed many different phases that Paul Moyer labeled it a “culture of violence.” The culture of violence was shaped by backcountry people’s contact and experience with the “bitter,
The struggle of obtaining land on the frontier and dealing with Indians left a distinct legacy of conflict that was repeated by white settlers over and over, and clearly demonstrated in the Wyoming controversy and epitomized by Lazarus Stewart and the Paxton Boys. On March 27, 1769, Stewart petitioned the Pennsylvania Assembly to express his frustration with the proprietor’s land policies. In particular, he cited favoritism by the fact he was not granted property in the “New Purchase.” Although no claims could exceed a three-hundred-acre grant, many landed elites, government officials, and speculators managed to gain well over the maximum. Unbelievably, these same people were also allowed to file their claims before the backcountry inhabitants could, giving them thousands of acres of prime real estate. Soon after, Stewart took his followers to the Wyoming Valley, and he displayed his appreciation to the Susquehannah Company’s generosity by exercising his experience as a frontier “white Indian.”

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211 *SCP* 3:xv-xviii, 101-02; 185.
“The Drum is beating to Arms, and Bells ringing & all the people under Arms”:
White-Indian Violence in the Pennsylvania Backcountry

I must therefore, Gentlemen, once more intreat you to lay aside every thing that may admit of Dispute between us till a more favourable Season, and enter seriously into the Consideration of the Danger to which your Country is exposed, and not only grant the Supplies recommended by the Crown but enable me to raise a considerable Body of Men, to be employed in Conjunction with Troops His Majesty has destined for this Service, and by establishing a regular Militia and providing the necessary Stores of War, leave us no longer for want of Discipline an easy Prey to a much weaker Body of Men than are now encamped within a few days’ March of this City.  

-Robert Hunter Morris, Governor of Pennsylvania

"Since the late Defeat of our Army, we in these Parts lie much exposed to the Incursions of the Enemy. But if our Superiors would take Advantage of the Spirit that is at this Time among the People, all might be soon retrieved. I am confident that were Matters well plann, and headed by Men of Importance in the different Colonies, there would be no Want of Voluntiers sufficient to do the Work, and willing to bear great Part of their own Expences, or at least would be very willing to pay such a Tax as would be sufficient, if it amounted to Half their Estates. The single Question now with most People here seems to be, Whether they shall go West, and take a Chance of saving their Estates, or East, and lose all."  

-Extract of a Letter from Carlisle, 28 July 1755

On April 15, 1756, with the Pennsylvania Regiment fully reorganized, Governor Robert Hunter Morris called upon the Assembly to receive his declaration of war against the Delaware Indians. Morris claimed that the Delaware, “contrary to their most Solemn Treaties,” decided to attack “this Province and in a most cruel, savage, and prefidious Manner, killed and butchered great Numbers of the Inhabitants, and carried others into barbarous Captivity; burning and destroying their Habitations, and laying waste the Country.” In spite of numerous “friendly Remonstrances made to them by this Government” and repeated “positive

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212 Council Minutes, 1 January 1755, CR 6:223.
213 Extract of a Letter from Carlisle, 28 July 1755, PA Gazette, August 7, 1755.
Orders of our faithful Friends and allies the Six Nations…to desist from any further Acts of Hostility against us, and to return to their Allegiance,” the Delaware continued “their cruel Murders and Ravages, sparing neither age nor Sex.” In light of this information, Morris proclaimed “the said Delaware Indians, and all others who, in Conjunction with them, have committed Hostilities against” the people of Pennsylvania “to be Enemies, Rebels, and Traitors.” Therefore, the governor proposed that Pennsylvanians “embrace all Opportunities of pursuing, taking, killing, and destroying” the Delaware and their allies who have “committ[ed] Hostilities, Incursions, Murders, or Ravages upon this Province.” In one part, noting how personal the war had become, and in another part, addressing the demands of backcountry petitions, Morris provided rewards to those who “exert and use their utmost Endeavor to pursue, attack, take, and destroy our said Enemies” by taking scalps and for those who could “release, redeem, and recover” captives would be given bounties from “the Sixty Thousands Pounds…for His Majesty’s Use.” This included all male Indians aged twelve and above, as well as women.214 Governor Morris did, however, extend an olive branch to Teedyuscung and the eastern Delaware. Although Teedyuscung replied favorably while at Easton, his people were under heavy duress, fearing attack from Pennsylvanians, western Delawares, and even the Six Nations, they were also short on food, clothing, and supplies.215 Morris outlined in his declaration of war: “I do therefore declare, that the said friendly Indians that have separated themselves from our said Enemies…are expressly excepted out of this Declaration,” and all who are involved in the conflict should “afford them Protection and Assistance.” In addition, Morris granted a thirty day cease-fire in June to permit the Indians safe passage through Pennsylvania.216

214 A Proclamation of War, 14 April 1756, CR 7:88-90.
216 A Proclamation of War, 14 April 1756, CR 7:88-90.
The western Delaware were afforded no such luxury as their military success reached deep inside the heart of the Susquehanna River valley. Pennsylvania had been under siege since General Edward Braddock’s combined forces were routed along the Monongahela River in July, 1755, by a much smaller French and Indian force protecting Fort Duquesne. Shocked by the brilliant ambush conducted by the French and Indians, the entire British army evacuated, first to Philadelphia, and then to New York, leaving the entire mid-Atlantic colonies’ backcountry exposed to Indian attacks. Successfully orchestrated, destructive, and the strategic use of fear and brutality, gave the Delaware and Shawnee Indians, familiar with petite guerre, or “little wars,” a distinct advantage early in the conflict. Demoralizing raids at Penn’s Creek, the Big Cove, and numerous other settlements spread all over Pennsylvania’s backcountry, shocked frontier families into retreating back towards the relative safety of Philadelphia during 1755 and again in 1756. Braddock’s march to Fort Duquesne was the only large-scale military campaign in Pennsylvania until General John Forbes led a much larger, more methodical, and a considerably more informed expedition on Fort Duquesne during the summer of 1758. The three intermediate years required Pennsylvania officials to overcome their differences in the Assembly in order to construct a military strategy of their own while the backcountry remained exposed to the devastating attacks by Native Americans.

Few stories about the Seven Years’ War in Pennsylvania are retold as often as the highly successful Indian raids on the backcountry after General Edward Braddock’s shocking defeat along the banks of the Monongahela River by a smaller French and Indian army outside of Fort Duquesne. A deeper investigation into the two year period when Pennsylvania settlers endured devastating raids on their property, families, and livelihoods reveals a transformation in how these backcountry farmers understood their relationship with Native Americans, and their
struggle to define an appropriate response to wartime violence. The countless brutal, cruel, and fearful encounters with Indians profoundly shaped frontier settlers’ culture and society. Mutual misunderstandings were plenty, but the disfigured bodies, chopped limbs, scalped heads, and bashed brains, prominently displayed in burned out houses or barns or near slaughtered farm animals, could only be, in their minds, perpetuated by a barbaric, savage, uncivilized enemy. Indians were prime targets for receiving the most extreme and violent revenge that the settlers could possibly imagine.

Pennsylvania, in particular, was not the place one would have imagined Indian-hating to take hold as the conditions that usually preceded such horrific violence and pathological hatred did not exist in the province. Although the myths surrounding William Penn’s Peaceable Kingdom have largely been debunked by current scholarship, popular memory and civic pride still muddy the waters when it comes to explaining relationships, coexistence, and cultural understanding between natives, white settlers, and the provincial government in colonial Pennsylvania. Benjamin West’s painting *William Penn’s Treaty with the Indians when He Founded the Province of Pennsylvania in North America* (1771-72) and Edward Hick’s *Penn’s Treaty with the Indians* (c. 1830), are two prime examples of the exaggerated imagery we have of a colony that supposedly initiated a remarkable era of harmony and cooperation. Penn, after all, set the precedent on Indian relations when he signed the Great Treaty of Peace with the Delaware Indians under the elm tree at Shackamaxon and purchased land instead of fighting for it in 1682.217 Initially, during the late seventeenth century, Indians and whites co-existed

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peacefully, linked by bonds of commerce and kinship. This early “middle ground” incorporated Europeans into Indian kinship networks while natives became part of European market economies. During early contact, both Indian and European immigrants looked to Pennsylvania as a safe refuge. Here, they struggled to negotiate autonomous communities while trying to discover their status as “subjects” of an expanding empire, whether British or Iroquois, and as neighbors to people drastically different to themselves. Their similarities, however, created a temporary and delicate relationship of accommodation and mutual understanding. After all, those who migrated to Pennsylvania reflected Penn’s desire to welcome a diverse European community unlike those of Virginia or New England. Those who arrived, however, had little in common as they spoke different languages, practiced different religions, and had different cultures. These Europeans were often the ones who moved west and came into close proximity with Indians. This diversity, however, often brought a fresh appreciation of their own distinctive or “traditional” ways as they grappled with the novelties that came with living on Pennsylvania’s frontier. 218

Accommodation between whites and Indians in Pennsylvania, then, either existed very briefly or not at all, and, either way, the Seven Years’ War ended any hope that did exist through violence, war, and racial hatred. As neighbors, frontier inhabitants – both Indian and white – were interdependent, intimately coexisting, borrowing from each other culturally, and finding a common enemy in the colonial authorities who professed to control them. As the white population increased, however, the competition for land and resources on the frontier intensified,

engendering distrust, fear, anger, and violence among settlers and Indians who shared common space on the margins of English society. The differences among Pennsylvania immigrants (political, economic, social, religious, ethnic, or racial) were often tolerated at the local level, but by the 1760s, these differences increasingly became characterized by race or “Indianess.” Racial divisiveness was not a foregone conclusion in the eighteenth century, especially in light of the colony’s initial policy of tolerance, but the backcountry increasingly became a place where colonial and imperial institutions collided with the desire of Native American and white frontiersman trying to carve out their own small world in North America. Europeans continued to carry their biases from the Old World, only cooperating until a brighter future emerged – one without Indians. Indians, on the other hand, did pursue coexistence, but only designed to keep colonists at arm’s length in order to determine their own destiny. Combined, the closeness and familiarity of the middle ground bred contempt and fertilized racial thinking.²¹⁹ It would be real war, and not only the passing threat of one, to transform the relations between colonial groups. Indian-hating crystallized during the Seven Years’ War and then matured into new forms in its wake.

The Seven Years’ War spans a great deal of the colonial literature of eighteenth-century Pennsylvania and it is simply impossible to take into account the totality of the profound military influences that deformed and reshaped the political and cultural institutions of Penn’s province. This chapter, therefore, only covers the events surrounding the Kittanning Raid of 1756. This permits a sharper focus on how Pennsylvanians came to the conclusion of what was appropriate conduct in war with Native Americans. By concentrating on the Kittanning Raid, we can see as an example, the white-Indian violence that defined the conflict and confines the nucleus of the raid to the political and military exigencies that motivated a counterattack against the Delaware

Indians in the Allegheny River valley in the first place. The training, experiences, and expectations of the men who composed the Second Pennsylvania Battalion are also important in defining wartime violence. Although their outlook on the battle was shaped by events happening in the backcountry, they could dictate strategic events through their own actions guarding settlements, conducting raids, and enduring the hardships of being a soldier along the frontier of eighteenth-century Pennsylvania.

The isolated settlement patterns of Pennsylvania’s backcountry, minimal defensive structures, and the general unpreparedness of the entire province for war, gave the western Delaware easy and accessible targets. These deficiencies permitted natives to maximize the destruction of property, the taking of captives, and the removal of white settlers from the frontier. They took hundreds of women and children as prisoners, burned down farms, homes, and crops, slaughtered livestock, killed men out farming or defending their families, and performed gruesome terror tactics by mutilating, and then prominently displaying, the bodies of the dead to encourage those they did not kill to escape similar fates by evacuating western Pennsylvania. Their objective was to prey on these vulnerabilities in an effort to make the fear so unbearable among the backcountry settlers that they would sue for peace. It was an almost impossible task for the Pennsylvania government to protect its inhabitants from an enemy who “lurk[s] in the woods until they have an opportunity of surprising unguarded settlers.” These skulking tactics were so terrifying that rumors and exaggerated details of the brutality manifested itself in the backcountry, but no official from Philadelphia could measure its effectiveness “unless your eyes [have] seen and your ears heard their cries.” Even with guards, backcountry farmers complained that “You cannot form no just idea of the distressed and distracted condition of our out inhabitants,” who refused to leave the relative safety of their homes to clear, plant, or harvest
their crops. Delaware war leaders Shingas and Captain Jacobs were so effective in carrying out these raids that vast stretches of the backcountry had “been entirely deserted…[and] the houses and improvement reduced to ashes.”

Since Pennsylvania’s inception, Quakers faced the pressures of balancing their beliefs in pacifism against the Crown’s demands to address provincial defense. Most often, Quakers addressed their military obligations through words of loyalty and indirect financial contributions “for the Crown’s use” instead of physical sacrifice or the mustering of men. The Charter of Privileges, along with religious freedom and the absence of taxes, guaranteed no military obligations for its inhabitants. Indeed, William Penn considered war as organized murder, relying, instead, on protest, petition, or the exercise of “passive resistance,” which was not popular among the non-Quakers living in Pennsylvania and Delaware. Indeed, in the “Laws Agreed Upon in England, “provision IV stated that no Money or Goods shall be raised upon, or paid by any of the People of this Province, by way of a publick Tax, Custom or Contribution, but by a Law for that purpose made: And whosoever shall Leavy, Collect or Pay any Money or Goods contrary thereunto, shall be held a publick Enemy to the Province, and a Betrayer of the Liberty of the People thereof.” This provision halted all taxes and levies collected for war unless approved by the Assembly, which consisted of a Quaker majority. Royal officials persistently questioned the Pennsylvania Assembly throughout the colonial wars whether they

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222 Dunn and Dunn, eds., Papers of William Penn, 2:221.
223 Comfort, Quakers, 29.
would ever fulfill its military obligations, while non-Quakers continued to plead for royal protection.224

The refusal to create provisions for a military establishment was, in the eyes of Penn’s adversaries, all that was wrong with colonial rule. During King William’s War (1689-1697), neighboring colonies became alarmed at Pennsylvania’s refusal to defend itself and quickly reasoned the colony to be a liability in the war effort. New York and Maryland, especially, petitioned the Crown to consider Pennsylvania’s position since it had the potential to “be fatal to most of these Colonies” if not compelled to comply. The Crown agreed and passed control from Penn to Governor Benjamin Fletcher of New York to coordinate both colonies’ backcountry defenses. He understood the Quaker’s position, therefore, he only requested help in “feed[ing] the Hungrie and Cloath[ing] the Naked” soldiers by providing money, the Quakers refused.225

Again, in 1702 during Queen Anne’s War, Penn came under strict orders to inform the Assembly of their obligation to contribute to the defense of the empire by supporting the northern colonies against the French. The Assembly promptly reported that the expenses for maintaining a friendly relationship with the natives did not permit them any additional funds to contribute to the defense of the northern colonies. Governor Andrew Hamilton, however, commissioned officers and ordered them to enlist men for the defense of the colony by power invested in him to “Levy, Muster and Traine all Sorts of Men, of what condition soever, or wheresoever born, in the said Province of Pennsylvania for the Time being, and to make War, and to pursue the Enemies and Robbers aforesaid, as well as by land, even without Limits of the said Province.”226

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224 Smolenski, *Friends and Strangers*, 118-21, 180, 189-93.
a bill for money to equip and feed the men being raised. In order to not take any responsibility for the military legislation, the Quaker-led Assembly stipulated the funds to be used by Queen Anne at her own discretion. King George’s War erupted in 1740, and the Crown requested provisions and transport for troops headed for the West Indies. Learning from previous experience, the Assembly granted £3,000 for the King’s use.²²⁷

Pennsylvania was a turbulent place in the middle of the eighteenth century. Two major factions had developed within the government, especially with Thomas Penn possessing two-thirds of the Proprietorship and no longer emphasizing Quaker ideals, directed the colony’s affairs through the governor and his council. The Quaker faction, controlling the Pennsylvania Assembly, transformed Pennsylvania into one of the most democratic provinces in British North America and, as a result, were most always at odds with the Proprietors. Another source of friction was the once fair treatment of the Indians that William Penn insisted upon from the very beginning. His heirs no longer saw the necessity of dealing with the Indians justly and often cheated the Indians out of their land possessions, such as in the Walking Purchase of 1737. Thomas Penn saw renting the best lands to turn a profit, while the Quakers needed the Indians to continue the profitable trade that they provided. But, it was division over a militia act, Indians seeking retribution in the Ohio Country, and the French building fortifications in Pennsylvania’s backcountry in 1754, that was causing turmoil in the Assembly. Penn’s charter, however, eschewed violence and relied on fair dealings with the native inhabitants in order to carry out his dream of a non-violent Quaker commonwealth in the New World. Because of this ideology of a peaceful cohabitation, Pennsylvania never considered maintaining a standing army. When war did come to the province, the assembly had no experience in raising troops, training them, or supplying them. The colony provided troops in the past and contributed funds to the King’s

²²⁷ Thayer, Pennsylvania Politics, 10; 13.
service, but the assembly never possessed any authority over the men they raised and they never
served within the boundaries of the province.228 France’s arrival in the Ohio Valley in 1753
forced the Assembly and the proprietorship to confront the issues they had avoided since the
colony’s conception. Divided, it would be hard to imagine a colony more unprepared for war
than Pennsylvania. Arms and ammunition were in short supply, there were no frontier
fortifications, and there was no money in which to pay the soldiers or to purchase food.

Notoriously stubborn when pushed to supply funding for military expeditions, but not
necessarily because of pacific principles, Pennsylvania’s Assembly refused to pass an act of
legislation that would recruit, supply, or train an army, despite the desperate pleas emanating out
of the backcountry. Their main obstacle was the refusal of the proprietary family to permit
taxing of their estates or manors. Morris repeatedly attempted to get a defense bill through the
Assembly prior to Braddock’s campaign and revealed his disappointment in a letter to Braddock:

I am, Sir, almost ashamed to tell You that We have in this Province upward of
Three Hundred Thousand Inhabitants; that We are blessed with a rich soil and
temperate Climate, and besides our own Consumption raise Provisions enough to
supply an Army of One Hundred Thousand Men, which is yearly exported from
this City, and with other Commodities employs upwards of five hundred
Vessels…we are burthened with no Taxes and are not only out of Debt, but have a
revenue of Seven Thousand a Year and Fifteen Thousand Pounds in Bank…And
yet when their All is invaded they refuse to contribute to the necessary Defence of
their Country, either by establishing a Militia or furnishing Men, Money, or
Provisions.

Morris emphasized that the Assembly was led by Quakers “from whom nothing good is to be
expected” on military matters.229 Even after the most destructive summer raids from the Indians,
no action was taken by the Assembly despite the number of atrocities cited by frontiersmen who
began to circulate letters and sending petitions to the government clamoring that “We are all in

Historical and Museum Commission, 1960), 194.
229 A Letter to General Braddock from Governor Morris, 12 March 1755, CR 6:335-338.
uproar, all in Disorder, all willing to do, and have little in our power” and that they had “no authority, no commissions, no officers practised in War.” These men warned that “If we are not immediately supported we must not be sacrificed, and therefore are determined to go down with all that will follow us to Philadelphia, & Quarter ourselves on its Inhabitants and wait our Fate with them.” Other letters streamed into the Assembly with similar warnings for the legislature to provide for a military response to the Indian attacks on the frontier. The culminating protest came later in the year when approximately seven hundred frontiersmen loaded dead corpses on wagons and hauled them around the streets of Philadelphia for all to see what was happening on the frontier. John Churchman, a famous minister and missionary of the Society of Friends, witnessed the protest, and remarked, “What will become of Pennsylvania?” Thus, locked in a debate over taxation, disagreement over finances, and wracked by internal discord, the government was paralyzed in their efforts to facilitate frontier defense.

By the end of November, 1755, pressure mounted on the Assembly to address the issues of providing security to the backcountry. The proprietary family, no longer Quaker and interested in protecting their landed investment, tried to motivate the Assembly to move onto a war footing, but the Quakers, with internal unity and strict principles, were able to stall the passing of any legislation promoting the use of force or violence, despite provisions in Pennsylvania’s Charter that permitted the right to “levy, muster and traine all sorts of men…and to make war and pursue the enemies.” Meanwhile, Morris actively promoted military measures in a variety of ways, especially when both the Council and the Assembly refused to accept a militia law, although they did appropriate £1,000, which supported the voluntary units,

231 Churchman, Life and Travels, 175.
supplies, and newly erected forts at Carlisle and Shippensburg. Morris then approached Dunbar, who was still in Philadelphia, about garrisoning the fortifications, but Dunbar already planned to evacuate his entire army, including Provincial soldiers, to New York City for winter quarters.\textsuperscript{233} Benjamin Franklin introduced a voluntary militia bill (Militia Act) near the end of November, which passed through the Assembly. It was extremely limited in scope – soldiers could nominate their officers, serve a maximum of three weeks garrison duty, were immune from military law, could only be tried in civil court, and could only travel three days march from an inhabited community, however, two days later, the Assembly agreed to a £60,000 bill (Supply Act) to recruit and supply the volunteer troops for a selected term of service.\textsuperscript{234}

Pennsylvania never had a professional army, nor did they have rules, regulations, or experience when they finally formed a new regiment in the spring of 1756. The soldiers that comprised Pennsylvania’s army throughout the Seven Years’ War were notoriously bad. They lacked discipline, morale, and overall battlefield effectiveness due to their short, one year period of enlistment. With diversified backgrounds, they lacked the cohesion necessary for success. Indeed, the volunteers who filled the ranks of the Second Battalion consisted mostly of the “dregs” of society – landless tenants, poor artisans, debtors, recent immigrants, and indentured servants. European-born recruits provided approximately seventy-five percent of the Pennsylvania battalions, while less than ten percent were actually born in the colony. The majority of the Europeans who served were considered indentured servants; not exactly the kind of inexperienced men who could provide the necessary discipline to combat a skilful and capable enemy in the backwoods of Pennsylvania.\textsuperscript{235}

\textsuperscript{233} Hunter, \textit{Forts on the Pennsylvania Frontier}, 184, 37.
\textsuperscript{234} Votes of the Assembly, \textit{PA Archives}, 8th series, 5:4130.
Recent work by Fred Anderson, Harold Selesky, and John Ferling suggests that the men who composed these early provincial units reflected the small communities they were from and they elected the officers they wanted to serve under. For Pennsylvania, unlike New England’s or Virginia’s colonial armies, enlistment in the Pennsylvania Regiment was unique from other provincial armies in North America, in that it was ethnically diverse. The Provincial Army from Pennsylvania contained the highest number of Scots-Irish soldiers at forty-one percent followed by Germans at seventeen percent. Great Britain provided approximately thirteen percent and the rest were made up of smaller number of other countries such as the East Indies, Sweden, and Hungary. Only about fourteen and a half percent were natively born in Pennsylvania. Weiser, who was German born, once remarked, “There is always some National Jealousy among the meaner sort of people,” which oftentimes created friction among the men. The large number of immigrants reflected the large number of indentured servants living in the colony. Their active recruitment created an army that was nearly three-quarters foreign born, but they readily enlisted, since they were offered money and served less time than if they joined the Royal American Regiment, a British military outfit being formed at the same time. Pennsylvania required a one- to three-year enlistment period, opposed to the Royal American’s requirement to serve for life. The Pennsylvania Regiment regularly offered freedom from indenture or at least an opportunity to escape the impoverished life so characteristic of servants at that time. Additionally, provincial officials preferred members of the lower rungs of Pennsylvania society to fill the ranks of the regiment, because a draft would be unpopular for a government already regarded as inept in

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military matters. The lower rungs that largely comprised the army, however, led Captain Joseph Shippen to remark: “If we attempt to personate soldiers in the field we shall soon be hissed off the military stage...[having only]...raw men unacquainted with discipline and obedience to command.”

With diversity came ethnic division, as many of the German soldiers could not communicate effectively with their English-speaking commanders, which further complicated local defensive efforts. The lack of cohesion among the units caused factions to form and tension developed on the frontier. These hostilities were perhaps the reason for the fall of Fort Granville, as it was reported that “some of the Germans Flag’d very much” during the action, “Often urg[ing] him [Armstrong] to Surrender” despite a spirited defense by the other soldiers. The provincials earned their infamous reputation due to several recorded accounts of their behavior over the formative years of their creation. Most men only served for a short period of time due to their civilian responsibilities, which made training and discipline difficult. Short-term enlistments meant that units were constantly unseasoned and thus, unprepared, could not take part in offensive actions. Many units suffered extreme unprofessionalism, as exposed in a letter from William Parsons to Richard Peters:

When I [William Parsons] came to the Company at the Foot of the Mountain, about 100 in all, I found one half of them without any Powder or Lead. However, I advised them to go forward, and them that have no ammunition I advised to take Axes, in order to make a breast work of Trees for their Security at Night; and the next day I advised they should go forward to the Upper Gap of Swaratawio...But they went no farther than to the Top of the Mountain, and there those that had ammunition, spent most of it shooting up into the Air, and then returned back again, firing all the way, to the great Terror of all the Inhabitants thereabout, and this was the Case with almost all the others, being about 500 in different parts of the Neighbourhood.

238 Joseph Shippen to Edward Shippen, March 4 and June 6, 1757, Shippen Papers, HSP.
Provincials also had a reputation for an inability to defend their communities in the isolated frontier environment. When an Indian raiding party attacked Gnadenhutten, which was defended by provincial soldiers, “the men cowered in a blockhouse, offering no protection to the village’s women and children” while the Indians were free to destroy the settlement without resistance.²⁴⁰ It remained a challenge to install discipline and establish the chain-of-command from officers who were not much better than the soldiers who were under them. Captain Jacob Orndt, during the summer of 1756, experienced difficulties in trying to maintain order with his lieutenant, Anthony Miller, who permitted his men to randomly fire off half of their ammunition, causing fear among the inhabitants and wasting precious supplies. Orndt tried to reestablish order by reprimanding his lieutenant only to receive the reply: “I should not think that he would always do what I should command him.” The lieutenant was determined to prove his independence from his captain by leaving on personal business without informing anybody else, although his orders were to remain with the troops. Orndt disgustedly reported, “Every one of the soldiers…was master by himself.”²⁴¹

As with ethnic tension, religion played a role in overcoming differences to form a cohesive military unit. In the late 1740s, a large influx of Germans from the Rhineland Palatine entered Pennsylvania to escape continuous conflict from King George’s War and, seeing no end to the war and devastation, immigrated to the western frontier of the province. They primarily settled between Easton in the north and Carlisle in the South, bringing their own brand of Protestantism with them. Tired of warfare, the Germans promoted a peaceful existence in their new surroundings and their religious beliefs permitted a political alliance with the Quakers. This

²⁴⁰ Richard Peters to Thomas Penn, Feb. 17, 1756, Penn Papers, Official Correspondence, 2:29-31; PA Gazette, Jan., 8, 1756.
²⁴¹ Quote in Stephenson, “Pennsylvania Provincial Soldiers,” 201.
association concerned many who favored a military presence to defend Pennsylvania from the
encroaching French, especially Benjamin Franklin, who wrote:

Indeed in the last war our Germans showed a general disposition that seems to
bode us no good; for when the English who were not Quakers, alarmed by the
dangers arising from the defenceless state of our country entered unanimously
into an Association within this Government and the lower Countries [Delaware],
raised armed and disciplined 10,000 men, the Germans except a very few in
proportion to their numbers refused to engage in it giving our one among another,
and even in print, that if they were quiet the French, should they take the Country,
would not molest them.

Franklin’s fears were unfounded as the more recent German immigrants believed in mainstream
religious sects and did not view events in cohesion with the Quakers, making them allies rather
than opponents in the Assembly. During the same period, the Scots-Irish population swelled
by twelve thousand arriving annually in Pennsylvania. Originating from Ulster province in
Northern Ireland, they brought Presbyterianism to the province in large numbers and in a short
period of time, raising concerns even among the Indians. Calvinism, in complete contrast to
Quakerism, placed them politically and culturally opposed to each other. Moreover, the Scots-
Irish could be belligerent towards their German neighbors on the frontier. They too, settled in
their own distinct ethnic communities and quickly pushed Pennsylvania’s frontier further
westward. The Scots-Irish largely absorbed the brunt of Indian attacks since they were often
forced to the very edge of the frontier with Indians upon their arrival in North America and they
quickly blamed the Quakers for their lack of protection in men and materials.

As immigration continued to diversify backcountry communities and as Indian raids
claimed lives and destroyed property, suspicion grew between neighbors. Many believed their

242 Larabee, Papers of Benjamin Franklin, 4:234; Samuel J. Newland, The Pennsylvania Militia: Defending the
243 Joseph J. Kelley, Pennsylvania: The Colonial Years: 1681-1776 (Garden City: 1980), 175; Robert L. Davidson,
244 A Letter from Mr. Edward Biddle, at Reading, to his Father in the City, 18 November 1755, CR, 6:705.
neighbors were treacherous or were aiding the French with supplies or information. In Bethlehem, Moravians were accused of French sympathies, despite the destruction of Gnadenhutten, a town dominated by Moravians.\textsuperscript{245} Rumors and prejudice towards religious beliefs led Conrad Weiser to write a scathing letter against the Roman Catholics in Berks County. Weiser claimed that Catholics showed “great Joy at the bad News lately come from the Army” and believing the situation dire, wanted “some legal Authority to disarm or otherwise to disable Papists from doing Injury to other People who are not of their vile Principles,” because, as all Protestants knew, Catholic principles are the “worst Subjects and worst of Neighbors.” Their arrogance and large church in the county was a bastion of evil deeds since reports proved that “30 Indians are now lurking, well armed with Guns and Swords and Cutlashes “inside of the chapel. The priests of the church even delayed mass for nine weeks in order to “consult with our Enemies at Du Quesne” to prepare for a massacre against the Protestants in the county.\textsuperscript{246}

Tensions and animosity continued to grow between the different ethnic groups, but people living in Philadelphia showed indifference to what was happening on the frontier. Much of the blame centered on the German and Scots-Irish farmers who were living on Indian land, provoking and perhaps, deserving of what they were receiving. In fact, many merchants in Philadelphia were either trading with the French, the Indians or both, making a profit in the process. Indeed, the feeling in Philadelphia was that “No one scarce seems to be effected with the distress of their Neighbors…and for that reason none will Stir but those that are next [to] the Enemy and in immediate danger.”\textsuperscript{247}

Benjamin Franklin’s Associator companies, before the Militia Act of 1755, and then the

\textsuperscript{245} Ward, \textit{Breaking the Backcountry}, 90.
\textsuperscript{246} A Letter from the Justices of Berks County concerning the Roman Catholicks there, 23 July, 1755, \textit{CR} 6:503.
\textsuperscript{247} William Trent to Richard Peters, 15 February 1756, \textit{PA Archives}, 1\textsuperscript{st} series, 2:575.
formation of the regiment in the spring of 1756, did not alter the traditional banding together of ethnic groups to form a defense of their communities. This was evident in Joseph Armstrong’s Cumberland County company formed in a predominately Scots-Irish area. Armstrong had sixty-eight men in his company and thirty-five of the men shared a surname. In George Reynolds’ company, fifty-two men were present and forty-eight of them were either German immigrants or were German descendants. Captain Joseph Inslee’s provincial company had at least thirteen groups of two or more men sharing common surnames. These initial defensive forces were clannish in nature, inclusive in character, and reflected the cultural landscape of the backcountry locales where they were formed. This produced extreme difficulties in developing a Provincial army, which was finally formed in April, 1756. The diversity of Pennsylvania’s population made for many difficulties in establishing a military force that could work together in a common cause of either defending the province or attacking its enemies, but many of the good officers, like Armstrong, Shippen, or Burd, were aware of these problems and spent a great deal of time trying to alleviate the situation in order to coordinate their troops for either raids into the backcountry or defending frontier settlements. Indeed, while Armstrong was training his men noted that only “through divine favor we yet have peace, and carefully inculcate a good understanding and agreement betwixt the German and Irish soldiers.”

As evidenced above, the ability to raise an army consisting of indentured servants, poor immigrants, and other members on the lower rungs of society was not nearly equal to the ability of maintaining and controlling it. Pennsylvania simply did not have the organizational infrastructure or the necessary institutions to adequately feed, pay, or train it. These failures caused unprofessionalism and individualism among the ranks and nearly made any type of

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249 Letter from Colonel Armstrong to the Honourable Robert Hunter Morris, Late Governor, 20 August 1756, CR 7:232.
offensive action during the war impossible. It did not take the military long to spend the appropriated funds and as Ward points out, “a colonial militia was comparatively cheap to maintain, whereas the annual cost of sustaining the Pennsylvania Regiment was £127,285, an enormous sum for the colony.” Given this statistic, Pennsylvania was operating on the threshold of their ability to maintain an armed force and when payroll was not met, soldiers became a threat to everybody. Administering control, then, becomes an essential public service of instilling social values among the soldiers. In part because the Assembly failed to adequately supply or pay the soldiers, a new culture developed, one that is rarely, if ever, given sufficient consideration to the sizable role that the military had in influencing new theories of colonial structure, agency, or in shaping cultural identity. Yet, the attempts to wage war – under the pressures of a French and Indian invasion of western Pennsylvania – ultimately reshaped the administration of the colony and deformed the ideology of William Penn’s holy experiment. And, although officers lacked the institutional tools necessary to train their men, the military still profoundly influenced how the war would be fought. Moreover, the experience of fighting against Indians in the backcountry, also affected this new cultural identity, which came to reflect how Pennsylvanians generally saw themselves after the conflict, which was rural and racially white.

The limitations of the newly formed Pennsylvania Regiment and the lack of financial resources largely guided the defensive posture that was favored over offensive operations that required better organization, professionalization, and experience. Provincial leaders, therefore, decided to erect a series of forts along the frontier to provide both a base of operations for rangers and as a barrier to Indian incursions. The officials decided to build the forts from Shamokin down to the border with Maryland. They defended the passive, defensive strategy by

250 Ward, “An Army of Servants,” 79
claiming that “When the Indians first began to Infest our Frontiers, the Commissioners were of Oppinio[n] that the best means of Securing our Inhabitants was to carry the warr into the Enemy’s Country and hunt them” in their own territory, but “having sent for Croghan & others in order to obtain their Opinion, and they advising that by a Chain of forts the Frontier should first be in some degree secured before we acted Offencively,” which they all agreed and the “Building of Forts immediately set about.” The four main fortifications were at Augwhick, where Croghan maintained a trading post and he named it Fort Shirley in honor of the governor of Massachusetts, a second was to be built near the sugar cabins, on Burd’s Road and named Fort Lyttleton after Sir George Lyttleton, Chancellor of the Exchequer, a third one was built near modern day Lewistown on the Juniata River and called Fort Granville after John Carteret, second earl of Granville. The fourth, and final fort, was Fort Pomfret Castle in honor of Juliana Penn, wife of Thomas Penn, but it was never constructed. These fortifications were Pennsylvania’s front line of defense and to be garrisoned with Provincial soldiers under the colony’s pay.

It was urgent that the fortifications get built and ranger patrols begin because the previous winter “the Indians ha[d] been burning and destroying all before them…and have already burnt fifty Houses here, murdered above one hundred Persons, & are still continuing their Ravages, Murders, and Devastations” and have “laid great waste a great part of [the frontier settlements]. The Indians, however, remained elusive as they left countryside “in a dismal Condition” after their successful raids, rendering the backcountry inhabitants in “Consternation, Poverty, Confusion,” with “All Trade…stoped…& the back Inhabitants will have no place of Security left for their Wives and Children when they are out either against the enemy, or taking care of their Plantations & Cattle, & when things should come to Extremity.”

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251 Hunter, *Forts on the Pennsylvania Frontier*, 186; A Letter to the Governor from the Commissioners, 8 June 1756, CR 7:155.

became Commissary General of Musters, reported the atrocities near Carlisle, discovered by the burial crew that “the Country People are all leaving their houses to come down, as there is great reason to fear many more Indians will soon be among them.” Young did not know what to do with the money appropriated for defense, since he believed that there was “no doubt there are Several parties of Indians within our Forts, and we have only a small Party of men in Each Fort, the others being all scatter’d in small parties, at a Considerable distance from Each other” and that “neither can I be Suplyed with proper Escorts from the Forts without leaving them Empty.” The scouting parties were no more successful than the soldiers guarding the farmers as forty of his men were out scouting for Indians as far as Shamokin and continued approximately fifty more miles due west and saw none of the enemy. Young concluded his letter that he had “Endeavourd to put this Large Fort in the Best poster of Defence I can, but am sorry to say the People of this town cannot be prevaild on to do anything for their own safety,” even though the Indians were “now Committing murder but ten miles from them” and that they seemed to be “lulld into Fatal Security” of the fort being nearby.253

The defensive system had major defects: they were poorly constructed, many were never completed or started, the distance between them was too great to be effective, and they were built for economic reasons rather than for good lines of communication with the outlying settlements. Coordination between the forts and the frontier communities was vital for a rapid response to Indian attacks. Hit-and-run tactics by the Indians, which rangers or patrols located at the forts were unable to prevent, demonstrated how ineffective the garrisoned forts were.254 Reports in the Pennsylvania Gazette validated the shortcomings of the fortifications and their inability to

properly defend the frontier from Indian raids. On January 27, 1756, attacks along the Juniata River and Sherman’s Creek resulted in the death of over fifteen people and numerous others taken prisoner, along with the wanton destruction of property and livestock. At Conococheague, in early February at McDowell’s Mill and David Davis’ Fort in the Little Cove near the Maryland border, inhabitants were found dead and scalped with houses burned and prisoners taken. March 30, 1756 saw an attack on Patterson’s Fort and on April 1, 1756, the burning of McCord’s Fort along with the murders of at least seventeen people including women and children. A search-and-destroy unit consisting of both frontiersmen and rangers caught up with the Indians, who had attacked the forts at Sideling Hill, but were soundly defeated in a heavy engagement. The battle resulted in at least half of the party killed and numerous others mortally wounded. William Trent claimed, in a letter to Secretary Peters, after witnessing the aftermath of many of the attacks that “[he] was of opinion the Forts, as they were built, would be of no service; I was laughed at for it, but now the Inhabitants here are convinced of it.” Major Burd wrote to the Assembly about how thinly the troops were garrisoned and that there were “Barely sufficient [men] to Defend [the forts], for which reason they can be of no service to the Country around them” since they could not “come to the assistance of the people,” their garrison being lightly guarded. The fortifications, according to Burd, could “only Defend so much ground as each Fort stood upon” because the Indians did not use paths, rivers, or passes, rather “every place is a Pass to them, and we cannot pretend to stop their marches by Guarding Passes.” Indian successes against the Pennsylvanian regiment, if not soon resolved, would have the

“Province of Pennsylvania been Embarrassed & had our Limbs lop’t off, and our once

255 Extract of a Letter from Patterson Fort, on Juniata, 28 January 1756; PA Gazette, February 5 and 12, 1756.
256 Account from the Reverend Mr. Steel, PA Gazette, March, 18, 1756; William Trent to Richard Peters, 15 February 1756, PA Archives, 1st ser., 2:575-76.
257 PA Gazette, April 8, 15, 22, 29, 1756; PA Archives, 1st ser., 2:609, 611, 613, 617.
258 William Trent to Richard Peters, 15 February 1756, PA Archives, 1st ser., 2: 575-76.
flourishing Country greatly laid waste.”\textsuperscript{259} The rangers were mostly unsuccessful in their pursuit of Indian invaders; rarely did they ever prevent an Indian raid, thus limiting their effectiveness and demonstrating the handicap of the defensive strategy – “Skulking Indians keep around us every day,” reported a frustrated ranger, “[we] discover their fresh tracks but cannot come up with them.”\textsuperscript{260}

By the middle of summer 1756, it was evident that the defensive posture of the province was not successful. The fortifications were lightly manned and the rangers were unable to both garrison the forts and protect farmers clearing, planting, or gathering their harvests. Their locations were often positioned too far beyond the settlements they were supposed to protect, complicating the communication between the defensive structures, thus, leaving gaping holes that permitted Indians to easily bypass the forts and commit depredations behind them. The lack of military roads made contact between them cumbersome, since numerous mountain ranges intersected the forts and long travel routes had to be established, making a quick response a hopeless proposition. The fortifications were so isolated, that in one case, the Indians surprised the sentinels and then “they killd and scalp’d one, the other they carried off” and a third soldier went missing who escorted two women to the spring to get water. On the other side of the mill, a man and woman were found scalped, and a day earlier, settlers discovered an old woman killed and two children were reported taken captive with another young boy escaping on horseback. The old woman’s husband was never found.\textsuperscript{261} Although deadly and humiliating to the soldiers when Indians successfully attacked settlements close to the forts, or the forts themselves, perhaps

\textsuperscript{259} Major Burd’s Proposal for Protection, 1757, \textit{PA Archives}, 1\textsuperscript{st} series 3:99-104.
\textsuperscript{261} \textit{PA Archives}, 1\textsuperscript{st} series 2:716-717.
most embarrassing was the combined attack by French and Indians, led by Delaware leaders Shingas and Captain Jacobs, on Fort Granville on July 30, 1756.

Fort Granville, one of the major western frontier fortifications Pennsylvanians relied on to protect frontier inhabitants from the Indian raids. The fort was approached by Indians previously in an attempt to engage the forces inside, but the commander refused due to a lack of defenders who were away from the fort protecting farmers harvesting their grain. On July 30, 1756, the fort was undermanned, poorly situated (a small ravine came within thirty to forty feet of the fort), and isolated on the frontier. The Indians observed Captain Edward Ward march from the fort with the majority of the defenders, leaving Lieutenant Edward Armstrong in command of a small detachment inside. Soon after Ward left, the Indians lay siege all afternoon and into the night, where they then discovered the deep ravine, which allowed them to approach within twelve to fifteen yards of the walls. Secure in their position, they were able set fire to the wooden walls and burn a large hole in the side of the fort where they could then fire inside, killing Armstrong and one other soldier, and wounding three others. After Armstrong was killed, the rest of the defenders surrendered, agreeing to terms that would spare their lives if they quit the engagement. Twenty-two men, three women, and a few children became captives, the fort was plundered, and then burned to the ground. Upon arriving at the Delaware village of Kittanning, John Turner, the man who opened the gates of Fort Granville to the Indians, was burned at the stake for his cowardice, “enduring the most horrible torment that could be inflicted upon him for a period of three hours, during which time red-hot gun barrels were forced through parts of his body, his scalp was torn from his head and burning splinters were stuck in his flesh until at last an Indian
boy was held up for the purpose who sunk a hatchet in the brain of the victim and so released him from this cruel torture.”

The shocking defeat and subsequent destruction of Fort Granville highlighted the depressing reality that defensive war against a determined Indian enemy could not succeed. Immediately after, Colonel John Armstrong, Edward’s brother, made plans with Governor Morris to retaliate, who then reported to the new governor, William Denny and the council on August 27, 1756:

that upon receiving repeated Information from the Prisoners taken by the Indians, who had made their Escape, that Shingas and Jacobs, the two heads of the Enemy Indians lived at Kittannin, a Town about twenty Miles above Fort Duquesne; and that from thence the Indians were fitted out for their Incursions on this and the Neighboring Provinces and the Prisoners and Plunder carried there, he had concerted an Expedition against it, to be conducted by Col. John Armstrong…that the Affair was to be kept as secret as possible, and the Officers and Men ordered to March to Fort Shirley, and from thence to set out for the Expedition.

263 Council Minutes, 27 August, 1756, CR, 7:230-231; Morris to Armstrong, July 31, 1756, French and Indians War Group, Gratz Collection, HSP.
Armstrong replied to Morris, before it was presented to Denny and the councilors, that on August 20, 1756, his men were marching and ready to rendezvous at Fort Shirley with all of the necessary supplies and men, ready to begin the expedition. There was some concern on Armstrong’s part regarding the experience, training, and ethnic backgrounds of the men involved in the expedition as he mentioned in his letter to Morris: “on this Occasion that does not give me
Sensible uneasiness, lest thro’ the want of Experience and fewness of Our Numbers, the good end proposed shou’d fail of being obtained.”

The Kittanning Expedition involved careful planning and strong leadership. It would require the culmination of all of Armstrong’s military experience up to this point in his life, including the example of Braddock’s defeat. The expedition necessitated stamina, discipline, confidence in command, delegation of authority, trust, and a sound strategic plan predicated on stealth and surprise. Armstrong was taking a largely untrained and poorly equipped army over 150 miles of Pennsylvania wilderness into enemy territory, and did so undetected and as quickly as possible. Armstrong thoroughly prepared for the expedition, collecting intelligence from former captive, John Baker, who provided details about the geographic layout of Kittanning and where buildings and hostages were located. For Armstrong, the two most important structures were emphasized on the map, the location of Shingas’ and Captain Jacobs’ residences, the war-leaders who were responsible for his brother-in-law’s death, the massacres at the Great Cove and Penn’s Creek, and the humiliating destruction of Fort Granville. His recruiting efforts yielded more men than expected, about three hundred in number, but his men were poorly supplied and lacked canteens and tents, which were never delivered. Armstrong, however, believed his supplies were adequate and that it was probably a good thing that the cumbersome tents were not delivered, making transportation to Kittanning easier.

Shingas and Jacobs were formidable adversaries with unmitigated success in their raids across both Pennsylvania and Virginia. As early as 1752, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and the Six Nations recognized Shingas as “King of the Delawares.” Alumapees (or Sasoonan), the old Delaware “king” who died at Shamokin in 1747, was Shingas’ uncle. Shingas was part of the

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265 Council Minutes, 27 August, 1756, CR, 7:231
migration west from the Susquehanna Valley to remove themselves from the encroaching white population to find better security and stability, although his people did have a congenial friendship and a close trade relationship with Pennsylvania traders. Kittanning became the main concentration of the Delaware people; however, it was not simply a single village, but a cluster of settlements that were located on both sides of the Allegheny River, approximately forty miles upstream from modern day Pittsburgh. Other important Delaware Villages sprang up along the Allegheny and its tributaries, including Kuskuskies (New Castle) on the Shenango River, Saucunk (Beaver Falls) on the Beaver River, and Venango (Franklin) located at the confluence of the Allegheny River and French Creek.  

During Braddock’s campaign, Shingas contemplated accommodation with the English, but Braddock was too rash and uncompromising. When Shingas asked Braddock if the British would respect sovereign Delaware territory in the Ohio Country, Braddock arrogantly replied that he intended to incorporate Delaware land into the British North American Empire and that “no savage shall inherit the land.” Disgusted, Shingas and his warriors left Braddock’s camp, but not before warning him that, “if they might not have the liberty to live on the land, they would not fight for it.” Braddock would not live to regret his mistake. The failure to include Indian auxiliaries and to accommodate natives, whether his own or not, cost Britain the most spectacular defeat in the entire imperial conflict in North America.

Both Captain Jacobs and Shingas were recent migrants to the Allegheny River valley. Their many successful exploits on the Pennsylvania frontier quickly gained them a reputation as able and competent war leaders. Captain Jacobs, or Tewea, came from the mixed Delaware-

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267 Barr, “Victory at Kittanning?” 11.
Shawnee village of Ohesson, located near Fort Granville (Lewistown), where he was an important leader. In 1754, Jacobs reportedly made a decision that dramatically changed his outlook on his relationship with frontier traders and the encroaching white settlers. He sold some of his land to Robert Buchanon, a trader with whom Jacobs trusted. Buchanon, then, invited more settlers to live on the land that he sold to him, leading Jacobs to destroy his village and move west to Kittanning. Jacobs got his revenge when he successfully attacked and destroyed Fort Granville, one of Pennsylvania’s most embarrassing debacles on the frontier. On January 1, 1756, a seven-hundred-dollar reward was offered in Philadelphia for their scalps, a price increased to one hundred pistoles in Virginia by the end of April.

On Armstrong’s march from Carlisle to Fort Shirley, he examined the destruction at Fort Granville, where his brother died, and noted its deficiencies. He also concluded that Fort Shirley was not serviceable because of a lack of a water supply and it was not easily defended. Only “Lyttelton, Shippensburg, and Carlisle (the two last not finished), are the only Forts now built that will, in my Opinion, be Serviceable to the publick.” Armstrong knew that the fort at Carlisle would not be finished anytime soon since he was on the expedition to Kittanning. This was another reason why the attack on the Delaware had to be secretive – to protect the highly vulnerable, lightly garrisoned, unfinished forts along the frontier, while the bulk of the army was marching to Kittanning. This report was the final admission that the whole western defensive system had failed, as almost every fort initially designed for protecting frontier families was either destroyed, unsuitable for defense, or located too far from the other fortifications.

Armstrong’s men finally caught up to his advance party on September 3, at the “Beaver

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270 Letter from Colonel Armstrong to the Honourable Robert Hunter Morris, Late Governor, 20 August 1756, CR 7:233.
Dams a few miles from Franks Town on the North Branch of the Juniata (Hollidaysburg).” The advance party discovered tracks of two Indian hunters on the east side of the mountain, but as far as anybody knew, they were yet to be discovered, “which might be looked upon as a particular Providence in our Favour that we were not discovered.” The next morning, the combined force moved forward cautiously and undetected along the Indian path used by traders heading west towards the Allegheny River valley. By September 7, the small force of a little over three hundred men came within striking distance of Kittanning. Armstrong felt his army was close enough to send out a reconnaissance mission to get the best possible intelligence of the situation around Kittanning. In this, Armstrong sent “an Officer with one of the Pilots and two Soldiers were sent off for that purpose.” The following day, the scouts returned while Armstrong and his men continued their march to the Allegheny River, whereupon they informed the colonel that the “Roads were entirely clear of the Enemy, and that they had the Greatest Reason to believe they were not discovered.” Here, Armstrong faced one of his biggest hurdles of the operation, as the scouts were questioned further about the intelligence of the town, it became obvious “they had not been nigh enough the Town either to perceive the true Situation of it, the Number of the Enemy, or what way it might be advantageously be attacked.”

Armstrong had a critical decision to make. His men were in unfamiliar territory, far from their homes and the most recent intelligence that he received gave him no advantage to what the Indians were doing, how many men were currently in the villages, or even if Jacobs or Shingas were present. No captives were reportedly discovered, nor was any route favored for a surprise attack that could maximize success. Armstrong still had some valuable information on his side however, as he possessed both John Baker as a guide and his map and, up to this point in the operation, his men were undiscovered. Armstrong decided to continue with the operation and to

get as close to Kittanning as possible so that he could attack first thing in the morning. As a
frontiersman, Armstrong knew that this was an identical strategy to what the Indians used to
successfully raid the frontier and now he was going to use it to his advantage. James Burd
relayed this method of attack to the Assembly in Philadelphia:

They [Indians] come within a little way of that part of the Inhabitants they Intend
to strike, and encamp in the most remote place they can find to be quite free from
discovery, the next Day they send one, or sometimes two of the Nimblest Young
fellows down into they [the] Inhabitants to different places, to view the different
situations of the Houses, the number of people at Each House, the places the
People most frequent, & to observe at each House where there is most men, or
women…[then] they arrive at their differ' destinations long before day, and
knowing exactly the situation of the family and the Number they have to engage,
they make their attack about break of Day in the morning to the best Advantage,
seldom fail to kill, and make prisoners the whole Family…it’s agreed that the
moment Which party has Executed their part, they retreat with their Prisoners and
Scalps..by this means they are instantly assembled by different roads, marching in
a Body from thence directly for Ohio all that day, and perhaps the next night
before they Halt.272

Another problem arose, however, as they approached the outer region of the villages. Late at
night, as the men were trying to get closer, a guide approached Armstrong with information that
he discovered a fire with two or three Indians around it only a few feet to the front of the
column.273

An immediate retreat to the rear was ordered to consult the best possible approach to
handle the situation without being discovered by the enemy. The pilot returned for a second time
confirming his first report of there being only three or four Indians at the fire. The immediate
response was to overwhelm them with numbers, but Armstrong decided that it was too risky if
one escaped or a gunshot was fired, the entire operation would be compromised. Armstrong also
knew that he could not wait all night until the Indians fell asleep, for a couple of reasons. First,
his men were tired from eight straight days of marching through the wilderness, and second,

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because he wanted to be within striking distance by sunrise to attack Kittanning by surprise. It was finally decided that Lieutenant Hogg and twelve men would stay behind to observe the Indians and to coordinate their assault by attacking them at daybreak as not to give away the presence of the entire army. This decision was to have a major impact on the overall battle at Kittanning.

After the countermeasures were determined, Armstrong ordered his men to leave behind their blankets, baggage, and horses to ensure that the men were lightly equipped for the attack and to restrict as much noise as possible over the rough terrain while trying to get into position. Armstrong encountered another problem relating to his guides; they were lost. It was only after they followed the beating of Indian drums in the town that Armstrong was able to get his men to within about 150 yards of Kittanning. It was fortunate that the Second Battalion was not discovered with the enormous amount of time it took the army to bivouac and finally locate the Indian village. By the time the army moved into position, the moon had set and there was little else Armstrong could do until first light, so his men lay down in a nearby cornfield to rest their exhausted bodies and await the rising sun.

Once daylight broke, Armstrong decided to send a small portion of his men back over a ridgeline to encircle Jacobs’ village to cut off any kind of retreat. A two-pronged-attack was extremely risky, especially since timing was involved and the scouts were largely unfamiliar with the terrain. Another reason why this strategy could have failed is because the Provincial army most likely did not have enough training to successfully perform such a tactic. Armstrong kept most of the men with him to attack where he believed to be the location of the most resistance. It appears that the Delaware were completely surprised with the dawn attack on their

village and Armstrong’s men gained the initiative, but Jacobs “immediately gave the War Whoop, and with Sundry other Indians, as the English Prisoners afterwards told, cried the White Men were at last come, they wou’d have Scalps enough,” but soon ordered the women and children into the woods for protection. The exchange of fire became heavy on the battlefield as Armstrong’s men were receiving shots from the cornfield, the houses in the center of town, and from across the Allegheny River, where other Delawares from Shingas’ followers were firing from. Armstrong reported that his men had great resolve, as his “Men with great Eagerness passed thro’ and Fired in the Corn Field” and then pushed forward to the location of the houses where they receiving the fiercest resistance. It was during this time that Armstrong charged forward to take control of the situation near the houses and was shot with a musket ball through the shoulder, but remained in command.276

The “Kittanning Destroyed Medal”

Captain Jacobs and his followers continued to put up a staunch resistance from the houses as they “return’d [fire] with a great deal of Resolution” to which place the “Advantage of the House and Port Holes, sundry of our People were wounded, and some killed.” Armstrong realized that his men’s return fire was ineffective and ordered that the buildings be set on fire to destroy the Indians advantage. This was not an easy task as the Indians were “always firing, whenever an Object presented it self, and seldom mist of Wounding or killing some of our People.” Despite the fire and the concentration of musket balls entering the dwellings, the Indians were defiant until their death. Upon the order of surrender, one Indian in particular replied, “he did not care for, he wou’d kill four of five before he died, and had we not desisted from exposing ourselves, they wou’d have killed a great many more.” As the smoke grew thick among the houses, another Indian began to sing, displaying to the others his manhood and fearlessness to his fate. A squaw inside the house began to shriek and cry, but was rebuked by the men for showing weakness. The fire accomplished its goal as the heat inside became unbearable and two men and a women jumped out of one of the houses and made for the cornfield, but were shot down immediately. Armstrong had his men surround the remaining house, and soon after, Captain Jacobs “tumbled himself our at a Garret of Cock loft Window, at which he was Shot.” Jacobs’ identity was verified by some of the prisoners who recognized a powder horn that he carried. The powder horn was an exchange made by Jacobs to a Frenchman for a pair of boots that belonged to Edward Armstrong, killed at Fort Granville. We are not sure of Armstrong’s feelings about this since he did not record them, but it must have given him much satisfaction to recover a symbol of his brother-in-law’s death and to be able to confirm that his murderer was deceased.277

Armstrong and his men were not out of danger, however, as reports indicated that the Indians located on the other side of the Allegheny River were cutting off the avenue of retreat and Armstrong ordered the remaining houses be set on fire and for everybody to retreat to a hill overlooking the village where many of the wounded, including Captain Hugh Mercer, were gathering. The fire engulfed approximately thirty houses and the men were happy to hear the large explosions indicating that the large stores of gun powder had been destroyed, enough, as the prisoners claimed to hear the Indians say that they, “had a sufficient stock of ammunition for ten Years War with the English.” The explosion was so great that within Captain Jacobs’ house, “when the Powder blew up was thrown the Leg and Thigh of an Indian with a Child of three or four Years Old, such a height that they appeared as nothing and fell in the adjacent Corn Field.” Included in the irretrievable damages were a “Great quantity Goods” in the form of presents received just ten days prior by French.278

As Armstrong was receiving treatment for his wounded shoulder, the prisoners informed him that he attacked Kittanning just in time. The French were coming to Kittanning to join Jacobs with approximately twenty-four Delaware warriors, who just arrived, in a planned attack on Fort Shirley or to raid Pennsylvania’s backcountry. Armstrong immediately thought of the fire they discovered the previous night and began to doubt the fate of Lieutenant Hogg. Armed with this information – encirclement by the Indians, the French arriving on the opposite shore, Lieutenant Hogg’s unfavorable fate, the numerous wounded on hand, and the safety of the prisoners – led Armstrong to believe that an urgent retreat was in order for fear of being caught in the wilderness, disorganized, with Indians attacking his flanks in an “irregular” fashion. Indeed, on returning to the site of the fire, Armstrong learned of Hogg’s fate and all of the blankets, supplies, and horses were lost. Hogg was overwhelmed and many of his men fled the

278 Ibid, 260-261.
fighting, leaving the lieutenant to defend himself. After receiving two bullet wounds, he was found by deserters in Captain Mercer’s outfit only to be attacked by more Indians and there he received a fatal wound to the stomach.\textsuperscript{279}

The results of the Kittanning campaign very among historians, from clear military victory, to more of a draw. It is easy to find many of the numerical errors that, perhaps, do not make Armstrong’s raid a clear military victory. He had overwhelming numbers (3 to 1), his army had the advantage of a surprise attack, he recovered less than ten of the more than one hundred captives, he failed to capture or eliminate Shingas as a frontier threat, they did not completely burn the cornfield, they lost their baggage and horses at the battle of “Blanket Hill,” and he lost more men as casualties than the enemy did. The army also returned to Fort Lyttleton in four days compared to the nine days it took to reach Kittanning in much disorder. In Armstrong’s final report, he summarizes what could have been:

\begin{quote}
Upon the whole, had our Pilots understood the true situation of the Town and the Paths leading to it, so as to have posted us at a convenient place, where the Disposition of the Men and the Duty assign’d to then cou’d have been performed with greater Advantage, we had, by divine Assistance, destroy’d a much greater Number of the Enemy, recovered more Prisoners and sustained less damage than what we at present have; but tho’ the advantage gained over these our Common Enemy is far from being satisfactory to us, must we not dispise the smallest degrees of Success…especially at a time of such general Calamity, when the attempts of our Enemys have been so prevalent and successful.
\end{quote}

Armstrong realized that complete success was so near, but even with the mistakes made by the guides, Armstrong and his men were still able to launch a surprise attack that put the Indians on their heels and to accomplish something that the Delaware never expected, an attack by Provincial soldiers on their own villages – the same thing they were so successful doing for the past year. Moral victory has been claimed by many others, but there was not an overwhelming return to the frontier by its inhabitants. Indeed, not only did the massacres and raids increase, the

\textsuperscript{279} Armstrong’s Report, 14 September 1756, \textit{CR} 7:261-62.
frontier line of defense receded back to the eastern side of the Susquehanna River. Numbers, however, cannot explain the significance of what John Armstrong did for the province of Pennsylvania.\textsuperscript{280}

Armstrong skillfully showed adaptability in his plans for attack. His scouts misguided him in approaching the battlefield as “to which place rather than by the Pilots we were guided by the beating of the Drum and the Whooping of the Warriors at their Dance.” Realizing the situation, however, he was able to adapt his plan while he was within one hundred perches of the Indian village.\textsuperscript{281} He was able to develop his men into an effective fighting force and get them to follow him into a wilderness where very few Euro-Americans had ever been. The landscape beyond the Alleghenies was uncharted and mysterious to many Pennsylvanians. His men followed him because they trusted him as a true leader.

The Delaware were dramatically affected by the raid at Kittanning. There are several accounts of the Indians discontent at being located between the French and English in western Pennsylvania. At first, the Indians decided on an uneasy alliance with the French believing that they could subdue the French at their leisure. After the Kittanning Raid, however, they blamed the French for what the English had done to them. Pennsylvania provincials captured a defector to the French and took him to Fort Fredrick for interrogation. The defector was at Fort Duquesne after the raid on Kittanning and claimed that the Indians complained that:

\begin{quote}
After the taking of Kittanning the Indians came to Fort DuQuesne, and told that they had buried upwards of 50 of their People that were killed there, and that more were missing: That their Brethren the English had never struck them before in their Towns, and that it was at the Instigation of the French they had struck the English, and had now lost all the Goods they had received for Scalps, besides the Loss of their People; they therefore desired the French to let them know where they must settle…but the Indians told them, they would no longer continue any
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{281} \textit{PA Archives}, 1st series, 2:772.
Place between them and the English, but would remove to the other side of Fort DuQuesne, a Place of greater Safety.\textsuperscript{282}

Although the claimed casualty numbers may have been higher than what they actually were, the message was clear: Armstrong’s raid was a surprising blow to the Indians. The destruction of their village and supplies by the provincial soldiers strained the Delaware’s important alliance with the French and forced them to relocate beyond Fort Duquesne.

According to Marie Le Roy and Barbara Leininger, captives at Kittanning during the raid claimed that when “Col. Armstrong arrived with his men…at that time, the Indians were greatly in dread of Col. Armstrong’s corps” and they reported that the “town had been burned to the ground.”\textsuperscript{283} Indeed, the \textit{Pennsylvania Gazette} hailed the raid “to be the greatest Blow the Indians have received since the War began, and if well followed, may soon make them weary of continuing it.”\textsuperscript{284} Armstrong gave a beleaguered colony a glimpse of hope that the Assembly in Philadelphia finally committed itself to actively protect its frontier.

War is a violent way to communicate intentions towards an enemy. Very rarely is that message total elimination; rather violent acts carry meaning and convey intentions. How a society decides to employ its resources, strategies, and how they decide to enforce social norms on both their own soldiers and those they fight against reveals those intentions. Most often, the intensity of violence escalates as war progresses and the opposing armies seek to achieve victory. War against Indians, however, was waged with terrifying violence and because of the general view that natives were subhuman or “savages,” fighting on a level below civilized Euro-Americans, allowed frontier settlers and soldiers to convince themselves of the righteousness of their actions compared to the ruthlessness of their enemy. Although settlers and Indians located

\textsuperscript{282} \textit{PA Gazette}, October 28, 1756.  
\textsuperscript{283} \textit{PA Archives}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} series, 7:405.  
\textsuperscript{284} \textit{PA Gazette}, September 23, 1756.
in the warzone of western Pennsylvania could reasonably expect that there would be many inconveniences, even bloodshed, they also imagined that there would be reasonable limitations on each other’s destructiveness. It was not unfathomable that soldiers or warriors struggled over to what extent they could apply those limits while on the battlefield, or if they could actually restrain their violence on their enemies in the heat of battle. Even against Indians, the goal of incorporating them into society served as reason enough to place limits on violence, but when the restraints failed, or were intentionally ignored, violence escalated to unprecedented levels requiring either a commitment of greater resources or an expansion of destructiveness that would enlarge the struggle in both space and time. Once either of these escalations were reached, the often distinctive brutality of native warfare – mutilations, tortures, scalpings, and multiple killings and their display – became commonplace among both Indians and whites. Although these characteristics were culture specific and not normally associated with European warfare, Indians no longer employed them ritualistically, but rather, conducted this violence as a way to instill unbridled fear in settlers, which they hoped, would force Pennsylvania’s government to abandon the war and pursue peace. Backcountry settlers, however, were quick to adopt the Indian way of war.285

As the Seven Years’ War dragged on into 1757, Indian attacks escalated in both number and in violence across western Pennsylvania. There were approximately eighty-eight independently separate raids conducted by Indians on white settlers after the Kittanning Raid resulting in 228 killed and 173 captured. That was an increase of ten raids over the same amount of time prior to Armstrong’s attack, although there were 144 fewer people killed and 29 fewer captives taken, most likely because the number of accessible targets decreased with mass flight

back to the east occurred mostly in the fall of 1755. For Pennsylvania, this was the first real large-scale damage done to the Delaware Indians since the start of the war. The burning of crops, houses, and other property along with intention of trying to capture or kill Shingas and Captain Jacobs, revealed Pennsylvania’s quantitative and qualitative escalation, or “frightfulness” of the war: the razing and destroying of an enemy village, killing women and children, intimidating and brutalizing enemy noncombatants, and assassinating enemy leaders. The anti-Indian sublime, or the cultural demonization of Indian violence in the backcountry, largely contributed to the Second Battalion’s “frightfulness.”

This proliferation of anti-Indian imagery seems to have quickly ingrained itself in the colonial psyche, leading eventually to the prevalence of strong anti-Indian sentiment called the “anti-Indian sublime.” The anti-Indian sublime took hold during the Seven Years’ War. Literary anti-Indianism was an electrifying set of images, purpose-built for the interpretation of suffering in terms of injury by Indians. Many colonists came to hate natives because some among them spread tales of horrors committed on Euro-Americans by their indigenous neighbors. To a surprising degree, Pennsylvanians experienced Indian war as being about the communication of strong emotions – always starting with fear and ending for some with a wish to be backed by the full power of the colonial government. The shock they felt at Indian violence was so intense because of the ways it swerved away from what seemed normal to them, even for a world at war. The response of the countryside to Indian war, then, was controlled almost wholly by fear, a fear that made colonists afraid to be alone at home, or out tending the fields, or anywhere apart from large groups of colonists who might defend them if Indians attacked. Once fully realized, the rhetoric of the anti-Indian sublime could fit new agendas. For example, the Seven Years’ War


\[287\] Lee, Barbarians and Brothers, 2-9.
helped create the notion of Europeans to be collectively known as “white people.” The premise of being part of the “white people” said something about how one thought and acted about Indians war, and toward Indians. It created images of a single, suffering peoplehood that encompassed nearly all of Pennsylvania’s diverse European ethnic groups – except Quakers – flourished in the press. The “white people” became a building block for public discourse, and the first outlines were sketched as a coalition that would help to push all pacifists out of Pennsylvania’s government and most Indians from their territory. The reasons for violence lay deep in the nature of intercultural relations in the countryside, a countryside that had come alive with fear. The growth in anti-Indian sublime drove ethnically and religiously diverse colonists into each other’s arms.288 Indeed, Indian wars pushed country people down roads and rivers and into country towns. This mass reverse migration pushed together more – and more varied – Europeans than had ever been the case before. There were no precedents for coming together in the countryside this way, and sometimes the experience inspired at least fleeting feelings of unity. The sudden flurries of “refugeeism” and mustering that followed Indian attacks, with different speaking peoples from different townships and churches, from country towns and countryside, tumbling together to make themselves safer – must have struck their participants as new and strange. Promises to defend and die together helped the country people to imagine themselves linked together against outside threats.289 Fear, then, is crucial to the story.

The Seven Years’ War was the catalyst in this transformation as Pennsylvania’s backcountry erupted into violence, settlers struggled with the issue of defining who could be a citizen of Pennsylvania. Their solution proved paramount in determining the level of wartime violence against natives. These frontier farmers learned to successfully demand protection and

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288 Silver, Our Savage Neighbors, xvi, xvii-xviii, 190, 317, 371.
security from colonial officials, while simultaneously writing the Indians out of the colony. These struggles also “produced good and evil, new beliefs [towards] liberty, and a new willingness to exclude and destroy” as the war dragged on.290 Also during this time, the British and Six Nations Iroquois found it increasingly difficult to maintain control over the distant reaches of empire as white settlers began to demonize Delaware and Shawnee neighbors, and Quakers protested fraudulent Indian land claims. The resulting hostilities created the first steps in racialized images and thinking of all Indians. More and more, Pennsylvanians looked for permanent means of making political boundaries to separate Indians physically from non-Indians. Indians, in response, created intertribal alliances to counter those political pressures and to help secure resources for their economic survival. In defining these new strategies for survival, Ohio Indians acted less as individual clans or communities and they more often spoke of themselves and their situation in terms of region or national identity. Stereotypes became entrenched as rhetoric about the essential qualities of Indians crystallized in the early 1760s, forcing Indians to redefine themselves in relation to that discourse. Whites more readily and more publicly drew on dehumanizing racial descriptions of native savage behavior to distinguish and demonstrate their own “whiteness.” Prior to the war, inclusion into the empire only required loyalty to the Crown and an enjoyment of English liberties outlined in the ancient constitution, but as society became more diverse, natives clouded the basic requirements. Savageness was, after all, part of a progression that could ultimately open the door to cultural inclusion, but the Indian had to completely reorganize their own society first. As evidence of the determined resistance by Ohio Valley natives during the Seven Years’ War, Pontiac’s War, and the American Revolution, only made the goals harder to achieve and escalated the violence between white and red exponentially.

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290 Lee, Barbarians and Brothers, 6.
Race soon became a tool for placing individuals on one side or the other of those national boundaries. Boundaries instead of accommodation-binding communities were now the norm. Instead of community-based strategies for negotiating alliances and coexistence, Native Americans and Euro-American settlers turned to once distrusted confederations or empires for support and protection. The Paxton Boys’ massacre at Conestoga is often used by scholars of Pennsylvania history to legitimize the creation of racial identities. The massacres committed by these frontier vigilantes are still used as the most prolific example of the collapse of Indian-white relations in Pennsylvania as well as the rise of racial attitudes in the backcountry population.

During the Seven Years’ War, the people of Paxton suffered the brunt of native warfare and repeatedly and pleadingly asked Quaker officials for military assistance to help defend their property and families. They never received any. Shortly thereafter, during Pontiac’s War, Paxton rangers traveled to the Wyoming Valley after learning about a massacre that occurred there. Instead of finding Indian warriors, however, they found a Connecticut settlement with disfigured bodies, dead animals, and the smoldering remains of their houses and barns. No longer willing to wait for government assistance, they preempted the next Indian attack by ultimately murdering all of the peaceful Indians at Conestoga and Lancaster. The murdering of the domesticated Conestoga Indians and the following march to Philadelphia is described in Krista Camenzind’s article, “Violence, Race, and the Paxton Boys” as “repres[ing] a crucial turning point in the history of Pennsylvania...[f]or the first time in the province’s history, a group of colonists engaged in an extralegal, large-scale, and organized act of racial violence.” Camenzind finds the often difficult topic of racism was rooted in gender. In other words, the Paxton Boys created a native enemy whom they racialized to justify the killing of unarmed men, women, and children as a legitimized act of manhood. The Paxton Boys inability to halt attacks
on their own families during the Seven Years’ War led to a loss of patriarchal identities and a hatred of all Indians – friend and foe. Thus, “war, gender, race, and violence became inextricably intertwined,” the unification of these dynamics, “produced the Paxton Boys.”  

The Paxton Boys rhetorically differentiated themselves from their “savage neighbors” and demanded autonomy and privileges that they thought native inhabitants commanded, especially the rights to frontier land and protection. As the Paxton Boys massacre demonstrates, some forms of racism had their roots in the internal struggles over resources and power, gender, as well as nascent nationalism. The Paxton’s generated a sense of group solidarity by recalling a common past of settlers persecuted by colonial authorities and Indians. They tied national and racial differences together to create an Indian enemy whose blood descendants could and would not be disinherit from their claims to a “native” American past and, thereby, the land they possessed.

The Proclamation Line of 1763 was established after the Seven Years’ War to better administer the vast quantity of territory gained from France in the Treaty of Paris. With the French gone, several barriers were removed and provided new opportunities in the Ohio Country, especially land speculation, but the Line replaced the French, restricting settlement beyond the Ohio as many people were already envisioning moving into the Illinois Country. The Proclamation was issued mostly to avert another Indian war similar to the expensive and exhausting war against western Indians immediately after the Seven Years’ War. Resentment of this denial was expressed all along the Pennsylvania backcountry. The Proclamation asserted that all natives were now under the protection of the British Empire and any settlers living in

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292 Silver, Our Savage Neighbors, 123, 175, 179-82, 226, 255, 294, 320, 336.
Indian Territory had to abandon it and this policy was enforced by regular British soldiers stationed along the Line. Paradoxically, because contentious frontier factions insisted that the British Empire acknowledge and protect their claims to separate national identities, Indians and whites helped the crown consolidate its control over the American colonial world in the second half of the eighteenth century. What they thought would bring them separation and autonomy instead empowered British imperial forces. The Proclamation Line was a symbol of that power, carving up territories without colonial consent, keeping white settlers from expanding to the west, and preventing large Indian groups from remaining in the east. Relations between Indians and white deteriorated quickly on the frontier, leading to bitterness against the British as well. Moreover, Britain held Americans responsible for the cost of preventing them from crossing the Line angering them even further. The Line gave a new physical boundary to the empire, but cultural ideology was just beginning to emerge on how to govern distant and scattered Native American peoples. It also gave pretext to start another war.293

“Most people in this Country would advize the killing of every Savage young, & Old”:
America’s Culture of Violence

The particular Circumstances of this state render an attention to Indian affairs indispensably necessary; and as the present time seems in several Respects favorable, for obtaining a final and advantageous settlement of all Differences, We earnestly desire that you will use your utmost Exertions in Congress, to prevail on that Honorable Body to adopt without Loss of Time the most effectual measures, for making Peace with all the Indian nations.²⁹⁴

- John Dickinson

In the extreme prejudice against Indians Generally, at this time it will not be possible to keep them [settlers] much longer off from those lands, they would not put the Indians at defiance, & they say you ought to send your Soldiers to fight the Indians rather than Emploie them to keep the Whites from their own land.²⁹⁵

- Mathew Lyon

²⁹⁴ President John Dickinson to Delegates in Congress, 4 April 1783, PA Archives, 1st series, 10:25.
The hour is at hand; we are not yet prepared to kiss the hand that wields the tomahawk and scalping knife against the heads of our old men, our women and infants.\textsuperscript{296} -Kentucky Gazette

Captain Nathaniel Hart, leader of the Lexington Light Infantry, survived the heavily contested battle at Frenchtown in January 1813, with a severe wound to his ankle. Too injured to walk as a prisoner of the British, he was helped into the house of Jean-Baptiste Jerome, a local resident, with approximately forty other men and officers to await the return of sleighs to transport the wounded men back to Amherstburg, where the British were stationed. The next morning, approximately one hour after daylight, about a half dozen Indians burst open the door and entered the Jerome house. Medard Couture, another resident of Frenchtown trapped in the Jerome house, realized that the situation unfolding around him was potentially fatal informed Hart, “\textit{Capitaine Hart, nous sommes perdus (We are all lost). The Indians are coming instead of the sleds promised by the British.}”\textsuperscript{297} The Indians ransacked the basement looking for liquor while others brandished their tomahawks among the wounded threatening them with murder should they resist. Hart asked Couture, “\textit{What do the Indians intend to do with us?}” Couture grimly replied, “\textit{On a l’intention de vous tuer,}” (\textit{They intend to kill you}).”\textsuperscript{298}

The Indians took clothing and blankets from the wounded and vandalized the rooms of the house. A doctor helped Hart to exit the Jerome house where he negotiated with Osamed, a Potawatomi Indian, to transport him safely back to Detroit for one hundred dollars. Osamed

\textsuperscript{296} Kentucky Gazette, September 15, 1812.
\textsuperscript{297} Hezekiah Lord Hosmer, \textit{Early History of the Maumee Valley} (Toledo: Hosmer and Harris, 1858), 39.
\textsuperscript{298} Deposition of Dr. John Todd, April 24, 1813, in \textit{Barbarities of the Enemy, Exposed in a Report of the Committee of the House of Representatives, and the Documents accompanying said Report} (Troy: Francis Adancourt, 1813), 141-45.
aided Hart onto a horse to begin the short journey away from the danger. Hart was relieved to get on the trail and away from the house when Osamed and a Wyandot, who were both escorting Hart, got into a heated argument over who would claim him as their captive. It was an intense moment as both Indians raised their rifles at each other, but with mutual consent, soon lowered them. Suddenly, the Wyandot raised his rifle again, but this time took aim at Hart and shot him in the left side and then ran over and pulled him off of the horse. Another warrior hit Hart on the head with a war club knocking him down to the ground where they tomahawked and scalped him. The warriors left Hart on the side of the road, where their dogs and pigs tore his flesh while they ate his body. By the end of the day, the Indians massacred and mutilated 379 out of the 561 wounded American soldiers captured after the battle of Frenchtown.299

Stories of Indian atrocities such as this one from Frenchtown soon filled the pages of newspapers across the country during the War of 1812. Although Indian-hating rhetoric existed since the Seven Years’ War, it still shocked the sensibilities of frontier families who constantly lived in fear of Indian warfare and their desire to take captives. This literary was successful for two reasons. First, it recreated the well-worn image of the savage Indian with tomahawk raised standing over a prostrate frontiersman who typically had fear in his eyes while begging for life, if not a quick death. Second, this type of literature challenged the stereotypical understanding of the masculinity of men living in a frontier environment in the early nineteenth century. Frontiersmen represented the exemplar of masculinity: a combination of the civilized gentility and compassion inherited from their English ancestry while possessing the violent savagery of Indians necessary to live on the edge of empire. Hence, the results of these perceived invasions so prominently printed in the news media was clear: in the wake of Indian depredations,

299 For a detailed story of the massacre, see: Naveaux, Invaded on All Sides, 221-259; Sandy Antal, A Wampum Denied: Procter’s War of 1812 (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1998).
frontiersmen declared vengeance in the name of protecting their families and property, to avenge the deaths of friends and loved ones, and to safeguard their masculine identity. Moreover, Indian-hating literature was potent propaganda, which often forced pacifists to reconsider their position in light of frontier atrocities.\textsuperscript{300} Here, then, the human catastrophe at Frenchtown and the murder and scalping of Captain Hart are graphic images that have popularly, albeit negatively, portrayed the personal and violent confrontation between Indians and white Americans in the West during the War of 1812.

They key to understanding the war in the West may be a closer examination of the chaos that emerged out of Kentucky prior to the conflict. Backcountry rebellions and conspiracies, both white and Indian, disturbed the Virginian and national governments greatly in the years following the American Revolution. Another important factor was the poorly planned and uncontrolled rush into Kentucky in the 1770s and 1780s. This concerned many government officials who were convinced that such a vast territory would be “overrun with land jobbers, speculators, and monopolizers, or even with scattered settlers,” which would go against “wisdom and policy” because they believed that the unruly frontiersmen would not, contribut[e] in the smallest degree to the support of the government, or consider themselves as amenable to its laws.” Moreover, “their unrestrained conduct” and “inextricable perplexities,” would most likely cause “a great deal of bloodshed” with the Indians inhabiting the region. Frontiersmen in general were not highly regarded and were considered a “people of abandon’d Morals and profligate Principles, the lowest Pack of Wretches” and often called “white Indians” due to their near savageness and the deplorable conditions that they lived under. This highly opinionated view of

frontier settlers by government officials along with the potential conflict with Indians and the
fear of backcountry agitations in Kentucky ultimately influenced the national government’s
designs for the Northwest Territory in the early nineteenth century.301

The disorder that transpired in Kentucky originated in ideas about land. The early settlers
of Kentucky brought with them Old World concepts regarding the possession of land, which
centered on the improvement of wasted or unappropriated territory and the permanent wealth it
represented in the form of family inheritance. Land was a tangible indicator of economic, social,
and political value that symbolized both status and permanency. Initially, many of the earliest
settlers in Kentucky were able to acquire clear titles, by preemption, for up to 400 acres under
the Land Law of 1776. The provision was revised in 1779 and a Land Office was created. There
was no limit under the 1779 law for the amount of land one could purchase, but a forty pound fee
was required for every 100 acres. Thus, the new Land Law of 1779 promoted the interests of
speculators and jobbers, much to the fear of smaller land holders. These frustrations were openly
expressed in the petitions sent to the Virginia Assembly where they explicitly justified their
reasons for land ownership and explained why it was so difficult to obtain a title. The petitions
also illustrate the heightening tensions with Virginia’s nascent political institutions – the court
system, militia, and Land Office – that became areas of conflict, rather than solutions, that
further antagonized the settlers and their land disputes. The frontier petitions suggest that the
settlers felt ignored and were denied justice and these two factors combined to confuse and

Being His Correspondence, Addresses, Messages, and Other Papers, Official and Private, Jared Sparks, ed., 12 vols.
(Boston: Russell,, Odiome, and Metcalf, and Hilliard, Gray, and Company, 1835), 8: 477-78; Report of the
Committee on Indian Affairs for the Northern Department, Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789, Edited
1904-37), 25:690; Quote found in Stephen Aron, How the West was Lost: The Transformation of Kentucky from
redefine how frontiersmen in Kentucky understood settlement, production, mobility, warfare, and trade.302 The farmers’ petitions from the frontier reflect many similar issues: the inability of Virginia to protect the “Destressed Inhabitants” from Indians, the difficulty of frontier farmers to secure title to their land because of their “Scatter’d Situation,” and the failure for most settlers “to ascertain the true meaning of the Law” due to distance from the land office or the lack of funds to engage in “Tedious Letigations.” In Kentucky, the problem underlying all of these issues was dispersal. Dispersal raised many questions for the central government: How would orderly settlement be carried out? How would backcountry settlers remain linked to political and cultural institutions? How could dispersal be the crux of resistance? And, how would scattered Indians be assimilated into the Anglo-American infrastructure?

Kentucky settlers, like many of the backcountry families of the eastern colonies, adopted an isolated farm layout that placed vast amounts of land between themselves and others, making them all vulnerable to “the infernal rage and fury” of the Indians. It also inhibited travel throughout the countryside since not many roads had been cleared. Therefore, when considering the evolution of Kentucky’s backcountry, the managing of extensive new spaces and resources along with institutional weakness must be taken into account. Dispersal was a fundamental concern that was central to settling Kentucky as it illustrated how isolation and disintegration were important cultural elements that displayed peril, separation, vulnerability, and violence. Despite this, the settlers saw their problems as one rooted in Virginia’s administrative powerlessness to provide security against Indians and oversee land claims, not one of sacrificing their independence for protection. Therefore, Virginia’s power over the backcountry was one of

proximity. So by the time Kentucky was inundated with emigration and overwhelmed with multiple legal battles over property titles, the anger and frustration over acquiring land had already been established.303

The biggest threat to the backwoods farmer’s independence was Indians and speculators. The Land Law of 1779 provided legitimacy to land ownership and this, in turn, led to mass speculation in Kentucky through both honest and dishonest methods. Thus, by 1781, the court had recognized 2,847 Treasury Warrants, which were “used for patenting waste and unappropriated land.” Treasury Warrants required “no proof of prior military service or residency,” and there were no limitations to the amount of land one could purchase under the warrant. Therefore, this law was particularly favorable to land speculators who could buy thousands of acres of land. This brought widespread discontent and misery to most small-scale farmers who were threatened by this because they believed it jeopardized their independence and their ability to provide land for their children in the future. But Kentucky, by the mid-1790s, was already in the midst of transforming from a “homestead ethic” to commercialization as the frontier territory realized statehood and stability in 1792.304

Speculation affected how frontier families interacted with the land in Kentucky. Many of the initial settlers of Kentucky strongly linked land possession with independence and a form of inheritance. Money was scarce in trans-Appalachia, thus, land was a valuable source of income that could be passed down among children. Many in the backcountry explained the reason why they took the dangerous risk of moving to Kentucky was “the pleasing prospect I have of acquiring a Computant Fortune for my Children that they may never expereance the

303 Roberson, Petitions, 8, 45-47, 62-65; These are good questions to raise regarding most of America’s frontiers, see: White, Backcountry and City, 35; Aron, How the West was Lost, 58; ibid, 70.
fatigue & hard ships of Acquireing it themselves.” Levi Todd explained that despite his father’s losses in moving to Kentucky, he was satisfied at “the Prospect of seeing all his Children settled Comfortably in one Neighborhood their Arms open at any Time to receive & assist him, with Gratitude at the same Time for parental Care & tenderness” that will give him “a greater degree of Happiness than any other Situation.” William Hickman believed that “if [he] could get [his] children in this rich new country, it might be to their advantage,” especially since he had no money to leave behind. Their discontent with the land policies was that speculators would have the power to obtain warrants or claims of property over those who already had risked their lives and made improvements on the land when Indian raids, ignorance, or distance prevented them from doing so in the required amount of time. The ferocity to which they tried to maintain this lifestyle is illustrated in their triumph over the Transylvania Colony and their feudalistic attempts at reinstituting the quit-rent system. With fixed prices and a depreciating currency, however, Kentucky lands were ripe for speculation, land jobbers, and profit.305

Although many settlers were able to obtain clear title to their land, others were left disillusioned and frustrated as their land was sometimes taken right from under their feet by speculators and land jobbers. Edward Mann Butler summarized it nicely: “The breaking up of family homes, improved at the hazard of the owner’s life, and fondly looked to as a support for declining age; and a reward for affectionate children, swept away by refinements above popular comprehension” over the “scramble for land” that characterized Kentucky after 1779. Some estimates place the number of adult white males that did not own land at fifty to seventy-five

percent by 1800. Unable to acquire a title, many landless whites moved to the larger towns of
Louisville or Lexington to find work or offered themselves as tenants, neither occupation one
that they desired. This was unsatisfying and did not provide the “safety valve” that they sought
when coming to Kentucky. The result would be a “distancing…from pioneer culture, tenants
and family farmers subordinated public rights to personal interests” while “their ferocious pursuit
of private lands weakened commitments to rights in the woods and eased accommodation to a
more fully privatized regime” that would manifest itself in the Northwest Territory. Moreover,
landlessness was not only a loss of independence and inheritance, but it also meant being
disenfranchised. Kentucky would be immersed in land litigation well into the early nineteenth
century. Indeed, a backwoodsman once complained about Kentucky’s land laws that one “who
buys land there, buys a lawsuit.”

Speculators were tolerated, but Indians were hated. For the first two decades of white
settlement in Kentucky, sporadic Indian raids and frequent retaliatory militia strikes were
routinely part of life. Indian depredations litter the petitions coming out of Kentucky’s
backcountry. Indians were customarily used as justifications for land claims and as a grievance
for Virginia’s indifference to the backcountry’s plight. On October 14, 1779, a petition reached
the Virginia Assembly from “the Destressed Inhabitants of the county of Kentuckky” who,
because they “settl[ed] and defend[ed] this extensive country,” against Indian attacks, believed
they deserved a “speedy redress by this our petition” for their “most sacred rights and
priviledges” in order “to receve some compensation in Land for his loss trouble and risk.” On
May 30, 1782, settlers petitioned Virginia because they “continue to be Invaded by the Merciless
Banditty…confin’d to stations, and even debarr’d from applying the necessary means for the

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306 Butler quote in Harrison and Klotter, New History, 55; Eslinger, Running Mad, 251; Harrison and Klotter, New
History, 55; Friend, Kentucke’s Frontiers, 188-89; Aron, How the West was Lost, 103; Harrison and Klotter, A New
History, 52-55, quote on 54.
support of their Families,” which led them “to redress through your Honourable Body” to “Act for their safety and defence.” In both cases, if Virginia found it possible to defend the settlers and provide them titles to their land based on “the ancient Cultivation Law,” then this would be “the most easy and Indubitable way of defending this Country.”

Kentucky, however, was too far geographically removed from Virginia to permit timely communication or efficient administration. Kentuckians already believed that officials in the East did not understand the pressures and dangers that bore upon the settlers in the West and, therefore, desired separation from Virginia. Although the convention for statehood was not necessarily a radical movement per se, there existed radical elements in Kentucky that not only wanted to break away from Virginia, but also from the United States. James Wilkinson was the lead conspirator. In 1787 he traveled to New Orleans and proposed to the Spanish that he could determine Kentucky’s future direction and place it under Spanish influence. Wilkinson was also involved in Aaron Burr’s conspiracy to invade Mexico and establish an independent government in the Mississippi River Valley. To the North, many Kentuckians blamed Indian depredations on the British who continued to possess fortifications along the border of Canada. These posts were viewed as centers of encouragement, supplies, and intrigue that stimulated the Indians to raid Kentucky. It was, after all, the inability of Kentuckians to use public funds to mount adequate force against Indian raids that was pivotal in the process of Kentucky’s separation from Virginia. Although the conspiracies failed and the Indian menace was removed from Kentucky by 1795, it made the central government aware of the internal and external threats to its territorial sovereignty.

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The successful peace treaties with the Ohio Valley Indians at Greenville and the Creek and Cherokee at Tellico Block-House in 1794-95, seemingly ended Kentucky’s two-front war against Native Americans, led John Bradford, editor of the *Kentucky Gazette*, to write in his “Notes on Kentucky” that the Indian menace was finally over. With Kentucky’s admission as a state in 1792 and with mass emigration pouring into the backcountry, it appeared that Kentucky had, indeed, secured its borders and left behind its status as a frontier territory. Moreover, the early settlements of Boonesborough, Louisville, Harrodsburg, Frankfort, and Lexington were already permanently established with growing populations, as was much of central Kentucky. It appeared that the kidnappings, murders, and horse stealing of the Indians, ever so present during the previous twenty years, were finally behind them. Kentucky’s development, however, had a profound influence in the Northwest Territory.309

What is most noticeable in the petitions is the backcountry’s lack of stability, safety, and defense, most particularly against Indians and the land laws. Westerners demanded protection from Indians as the only way to continue their way of life, which was one of dispersal. But in dispersal, we see the core problems of obtaining a land title and how speculators and jobbers were able to exploit the backcountry farmers from their property. Speculation, in turn, challenged the traditional notions of the family economy into a more modern understanding of an emerging landed commercial world. Initially, migrants came to Kentucky to “support by honest Industery…that Independency of Spirit and Circumstances which is requisite to Happiness.” Happiness was providing property to successive generations within the traditional family. Many Kentuckians were left landless and had to find other means of survival. The Northwest Territory provided an outlet to those still seeking land. The Northwest Ordinances provided better stability, organization, and most importantly, guaranteed titles for those who purchased land.

from the federal government as an alternative to Kentucky’s reckless experiment with land
distribution. So when Kentuckians migrated into Indiana, Ohio, and Illinois, they transformed
their traditional understandings of land and began to treat it as speculative commodity.\(^{310}\)

The national government provided political and judicial institutions in the Northwest
Territory that ensured “the safety of their investment and the prospect of security and growth to
the settlers who purchased from them.” In order to guarantee the continuation and success of
emigration into the Northwest Territory, the United States government realized that it had to
secure its claims of sovereignty from both internal and external threats. This included removing
the British and Spanish from the borders of the continental United States and the Indian presence
from the Northwest Territory. These pressures culminated in the War of 1812. This is not a
proclamation as to the cause of war, necessarily, but rather an explanation of how backcountry
settlers and Ohio Valley Indians shaped war. The Northwest Ordinance, which represents
solutions to the turmoil of Kentucky’s evolution into statehood, ultimately provides orderly
settlement (as opposed to scattered settlements), guaranteed land titles, government authority
manifested in both political and judicial institutions, and the removal of external threats.
Stronger links to political and cultural institutions in the Northwest also reduced the
opportunities for rebellions, conspiracies, and secession. The Northwest Ordinance was a
blueprint for an American empire in the West. An empire that was based on land: organized by
the national government, taken from Indians, and secured America’s territorial integrity.

The Americans living in Kentucky, the Ohio Valley, Tennessee, and western
Pennsylvania did, however, have an interest in the Northwestern lands, but they had to remove

the Indians who lived on the other side of the Ohio River in order to obtain it. Violent removal was their choice. Indeed, Mathew Lyon, a United States representative from Kentucky wanted “the immediate Extermination of every [Indian] Nation who have aided in the Attack of our Troops, not by killing men women & Children, but by killing, or driveing every Man out of our territory” or by “makeing Slaves of the Women & Children.” Lyon believed that this should be official Indian policy and by publishing and distributing it, make natives understand that this suggestion was ordained by a benevolent Christian government who surely knew that “God sanctioned the Mosaic disposition of Justice,” and that it should never be considered “cruel to make Slaves of the American Savages who have been butchering our friends.” It should be noted that Lyon truly believed that “Most people in this Country would advize the killing of every Savage young, & Old.” Lyon also issued a strong warning to the president of the growing restlessness of his Kentucky constituents and their unhappiness with government policy. Indians had been long removed from the interior of Kentucky, but they maintained possession of their land. Kentuckians now claimed those lands and Lyon reported that the frontiersmen “say you ought to send your Soldiers to fight the Indians rather than Emploie them to keep the Whites off from their own land.”

In another letter to the president, inhabitants from the Michigan Territory reported the minutes from two of their meetings in December 1811. The colorfully dramatic letter voiced their concerns over Indian depredations and how to defend against it by playing into the vivid imagery so prevalent in newspapers and letters at the time:

The horrors of savage belligerence description cannot paint. No picture can resemble the reality. No effect can bring the imagination up to the standard of the fact. The short remnant of life, left to the hoary head, trembling with age and infirmities, is snatched away. The tenderest infant, yet imbibing nutrition from the mamilla of maternal love, and the agonized mother herself, alike wait the stroke of the relentless tomahawk. No vestige is left what fire can consume. Nothing which breathes the breath of life is spared. The animals reared by the

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cares of civilized men are involved in his destruction. It is in the dead of the night, in the darkness of the moon, the howling of the storm, that the demoniac deed is done.\textsuperscript{312}

The use of Indian-hating discourse provides insight into the national and local intentions of the western theater during the War of 1812. The federal government used negative imagery of Native Americans to justify an attack on Canada, for recruitment, and to implement a policy of removal after the war. For frontiersmen living in Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee, and western Pennsylvania, they used the horror associated with Indian attacks to validate their claims to the lands of an “uncivilized” and “dangerous” people who could “not be productive in their domesticity,” to defend their own atrocities committed against native peoples, and, ultimately, to conquer the entire Northwest Territory by forcibly removing Indians from the region. Indeed, federal commissioners were sent to Piqua, Ohio, to inform the native peoples who remained in the area after the declaration of war “that if [they] gave satisfactory assurances that they will preserve the peace with good faith,” the government could guarantee Indian annuities, land, and protection. If, however, a “single murder occur on the frontier, the murderer shall be forthwith delivered up, or the Tribe to which he shall belong shall be driven beyond the Mississippi – their Lands shall be forfeited and their Annuities shall cease forever.”\textsuperscript{313} No such warning was issued to the white citizens of the United States.

Newspapers and pamphlets predominately presented the brutalities of Indian resistance as unlawful acts while often neglecting to portray the injustices and hardships inflicted on the lives of natives. Surely the Indians had stories to tell about the destructive raids by militiamen on unsuspecting villages of defenseless women, children, and the elderly who were at the mercy of the “long knife?” Such was the case of Colonel Benjamin Logan who decided to raise a militia

\textsuperscript{312} Ibid, 60-63.
\textsuperscript{313} Francis Preston to James Madison, July 5, 1812 in Stagg, Papers of James Madison, 563.
to attack a Shawnee town on the Scioto River in the Ohio Valley. He used the diversion of General George Rodgers Clark’s expedition against the Wabash Indians and “as was expected, Col. Logan surprised an Indian town, killed several warriors, and took most of the women and children prisoners.”314 Typically, militia raids were more devastating because, as John Bowman’s attack on the Piqua towns of the Shawnee illustrates, the burning of village huts and corn at its roasting ear stage left Indian families with a shortage or no rations at all with the approach of the harsh winter months that left them starving and facing death. More devastating because native societies simply could not recover since they did not produce excess commodities as Euro-American societies did for profit, rather, they cultivated just enough to survive until the next planting season.315 There is little doubt that the media only offered one side of the struggle for the land of the Northwest Territory. Evidence does not show that white America considered the land they were fighting over may have legitimately belonged to the indigenous people who had possessed it before the arrival of Europeans; instead, the prevailing theme was that white settlers were entitled to the land by divine right or manifest destiny.316

The battles and atrocities committed by both Native Americans and frontiersmen reveal a more complex story within the War of 1812 itself. A violent and emotional struggle for the land north of the Ohio River culminated in a final military effort by the Great Lakes Indians for an autonomous native homeland, while an ethnic war of extermination by white backwoodsman was being waged simultaneously over the same land. The federal government validated the war with Indian-hating language in favor of removing the Indians by force. By retracing the legacy of bloody conflict over the importance of land in the Old Northwest Territory between Native

314 “Notes on Kentucky,” Kentucky Gazette, December 22, 1826.
Americans and frontiersmen will prove that the War of 1812 was an extension of government policy to obtain continuous land cessions from the native peoples living there. Moreover, by placing Native American peoples at the center of the conversation and by actively seeking their causes for fighting the war, instead of focusing solely on the war being a white man’s struggle, will demonstrate that the protection of their land was the single most important reason why Indians decided to ally themselves with the British. “Ally,” however, did not necessarily mean that Britain and the Northwest Indians fought for the same end; rather, it was a convenient alliance for the Indians to achieve their own goal of an autonomous homeland. This was best exemplified through Tecumseh’s leadership in the Northwest Indian confederation and his ability to greatly influence the British army’s tactical and strategic military decisions in the western theater of war.317

Thousands of settlers had been pouring into the Great Lakes region since the end of the American Revolution, bringing with them the revolutionary insurgency that was rooted in the ideology that natural laws were more important than constitutional ones. Many of the settlers defined that ideology as those who possessed land and improved it had innate right to it, thereby validating squatting on lands that belonged to Indians or absentee landowners. Where these settlers saw themselves as respectable farmers seeking equality, dignity, and a competent living, the United States government and Indian peoples viewed them as squatters, rebels, or savages.318 The government, however, was tired of war and bankrupt. As a result, few soldiers could be stationed on the frontier to enforce treaty regulations or to prevent the many depredations occurring between whites and Indians. Indeed, both whites and natives crossed the demarcation

318 Stephen Aron, How the West was Lost: The Transformation of Kentucky from Daniel Boone to Henry Clay (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1996), 58, 70.
line set during the Treaty of Greenville in 1795 to burn each other’s towns; to kill settlers and chieftains; and to poach one another’s wildlife. To help provide stability where the government could not, an uneasy alliance formed as federal officials relied on frontiersmen to develop and govern the West; buy and farm the land; sit on juries and volunteer for militia service; and to vote for the Republican Party, binding them to the national government. Federal support would have a darker side when war erupted on the frontier. In order to not lose control over frontiersmen, who were already skeptical of a government that they did not trust, the government employed the use of racist language to validate the frontiersmen fight against Native Americans. By vilifying the opponent, the government gained consensus among the white American population to authorize a long and expensive war against the Northwest Indian confederation without restraint or limitations. These reasons are also why Kentucky and Tennessee militias were never punished for their total war against Indian peoples and property.

Kentuckians were quick to join militia companies upon the declaration of war in June 1812. This was most likely because it gave them an opportunity to strike back against an enemy that they had despised ever since settling in the former western district of Virginia. Personal atrocities and vicious raids characterized the borderlands in Kentucky, especially during the Revolutionary era, and persisted until the signing of the Treaty of Greenville in 1795. Most Native peoples moved further north in the Ohio Country to avoid retribution and to assure themselves of some semblance of security in both subsistence and survival. The difficult life of a frontiersmen and the threat of constant attack by Indians earned the backwoodsmen of Kentucky a reputation of violence and of masculinity, which reflected the stereotyped

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Kentuckian who was often called “Long-Knife” by Indians. This perceived repute of the hardy backwoodsman of Kentucky led Henry Clay to boast that “the militia of Kentucky are alone competent to place Montreal and Upper Canada at our feet.”

The militia was expected to have a good turnout in Kentucky, Pennsylvania, and Ohio since they not only had much experience in fighting Indians, but because the prospects of conquering Canada would provide the opportunity to obtain cheap, arable land. Politicians and military leaders manipulated the media to achieve these ends. The *Western World* reported that The Kentucky militia would not rest “until the flag with thirteen stripes shall adorn the ramparts of Quebec,” while another editor declared:

> Behold ye slaves of a weak and embecile monarch, the ease with which troops are raised in a country warmed by the genial sun of liberty. No press gangs patrol the country or infest the streets of our towns; it is only necessary to inform the people that men are wanting to defend our country, or avenge our wrongs

The hatred of Canada came from the often held belief that the British were supplying food, firearms, and ammunition to the Natives of the Great Lakes region to encourage resistance and promote the subjugation of America to become, once again, a part of the British Empire. Although there is much truth to that belief, the British probably saw the Indians as a less expensive buffer that protected Canada from America instead of having to garrison fortifications with regular British troops who were desperately needed in Europe to fight against Napoleon. In fact, British ministers preferred America to self-destruct as a young republic and to come begging back to Parliament to rejoin the empire as is evidenced in the signing of the Jay Treaty of 1784, which avoided war by withdrawing all British troops from American frontier

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fortifications gained from victory in the Revolution. Moreover, the British recognized the various Native peoples as independent, whereas Americans saw them as subjugated peoples that should depend upon the federal government.\textsuperscript{322}

Understanding what participation in the militia was and what it ultimately represented can give a clearer picture into what backcountry Americans were fighting for in the West. The American militia came to represent the identity of a community – its social and civic values, its integrity, its “power and right of self-determination” - and most importantly, its defense. The militia embodied republican ideals that characterized the Revolution and emerged as the protector of the community’s liberties, and represented unselfishness in a time of real danger that exhibited a man’s commitment to order, majority rule, and solidified his position within that society. Although not uniquely American, the militia in the United States did come to distinctively represent states’ rights and served as a safeguard against the dangers of a standing federal army, including its expense and potential political liabilities. Therefore, in analyzing the commitment of the common man to defend his property and way of life by serving in the militia it is safe to say that actions spoke louder than words.\textsuperscript{323} The federal army, on the other hand, was a deeper commitment to the principles of the United States government and required longer terms of service. Serving in the national army required its soldiers, at times, to travel far from home and its effectiveness necessitated the need for stricter discipline, more physical endurance, and a greater chance of death. More often than not, soldiers in the army were compelled to form in the most precarious position on the line and, therefore, serve in the most dangerous situations during battle risking their own well-being. In this situation, dying for one’s country must be interpreted with a strong belief in what the federal government was trying to accomplish, in this

\textsuperscript{322} Western World, July 30, 1807 and August 6, 1807.
\textsuperscript{323} For an excellent ideological discussion of the American militia, see Mary Ellen Rowe, Bulwark of the Republic: The American Militia in Antebellum West, Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2003, x-xi.
case conquer Canada. This interpretation, however, is wrought with potential liabilities because one could argue that joining the federal army provided opportunity for promotion or jobs for the poor as it often had in the past. Promotion, though, was mostly reserved for the elite class, political maneuvering, or by patronage. As for the poor, it is evident from the disappointing recruiting numbers that the government did not offer a sizeable bounty or enough land to fill its ranks during the war as an incentive for even the landless or working poor to join the army. Indeed, factory jobs which were increasing in the early nineteenth century still offered a higher salary per month than the military did, offering no motivation to risk one’s life for the country. Congress, therefore, attempted to recruit soldiers with the promise of 160 acres of western land, but most men wanted immediate cash not a promise of future land when one could be killed before ever receiving it. A potential recruit from Ohio informed his U.S. Senator that the bounty was not enough for a man to “turn out and get himself killed.” In fact, he “wished every member of Congress had 160 acres of land stuffed up his [ass].” Patriot fuel would not run on cheap methods of motivation and promises of the future.

Examination of the events that led up to the war in the West and the relationship between Native Americans and white frontiersmen can also provide answers as to why backcountry settlers enthusiastically chose war in the West. After the American Revolution, Native Americans found themselves alone in trying to deal with the new American nation. Soon after, an autonomous native homeland became the focus during a series of bloody battles from 1785-1795 in the Ohio Valley, also known generically as the Northwest Indian Wars (or Little Turtle’s War). The situation, however, had deteriorated by 1812 when Indian agent John Stickney had to

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324 During the summer of 1812, road workers in western New York could earn twelve dollars per month plus room, board, and whiskey as compared to a sixteen dollar enlistment bounty and five dollars per monthly pay. See the Buffalo Gazette, August 12, 1812 in Taylor, The Civil War of 1812, 533n.

325 Quotes found in Taylor, The Civil War of 1812, 325.
make an announcement to the chiefs of the local Delaware Nation that he had “been requested by the white people of the frontier of Ohio, to warn all red people to keep clear of them: for so many of the white people have been killed by the red ones; that they are determined not to permit any red men to come among them until the present difficulties are in some way settled.” War was not inevitable, but perhaps Charley, the Eel River Indian chief, summed up the division that racked the native peoples of the Great Lakes Region the best when he told Eustis that “We all wish to observe the Treaty of Greenville, and keep bright the chain of friendship that was then formed: was then formed: what was then told to our old Chiefs, is fresh in our memories: those old Chiefs are now dead, and those who now govern, have not the same influence. Therefore, we cannot with propriety speak with the same confidence that our Old Chiefs did. No more to say at the present.”

But, war did break out and British General Isaac Brock utilized his native warriors from the very beginning to great success. During the siege of Detroit, Brock offered terms to American General William Hull that explicitly made use of Indian terror to provoke surrender. Brock had never seen Native Americans in action, but he was aware of their reputation of being unrestrained during the heat of combat. Therefore, Brock advised Hull that “it is far from my intention to join in a war of extermination, but you must be aware of, that the numerous body of Indians who have attached themselves to my troops, will be beyond control the moment the contest commences.” Hull’s fear of “native savagery” induced him to surrender, claiming that “the fort at this time was filled with women, children, and old and decrepit people of the town and country,” and that they were “unsafe in the town” as every direction was open and that there

327 Stickney to Eustis, April 21, 1812, Thornbrough, Letter Book, 110.
was “no safety for them on account of the Indians.”\textsuperscript{329} His fear of Indians was so great that he surrendered not only the detachments of Lewis Cass and Duncan McArthur located outside Fort Detroit in relative safety, but also that of Thomas Bush at Frenchtown, as well as the small garrison in the blockhouse at the Maumee Rapids. In apology, Hull said: “I have done what my conscious directed. I have saved Detroit and the Territory from the horrors of an Indian massacre.”\textsuperscript{330}

Brock took a psychological gamble and won because his native allies were not present during the siege, but had only set out the day of surrender from Fort Michilimackinac after consuming vast amounts of alcohol. Moreover, Indians could play only a limited role in assaulting a fortification, making them less of a factor until surrender. Robert Lucas expressed the same sentiments as many of Hull’s critics when he exclaimed: “My feelings were affected beyond expression. My God, who could bare the sight without vowing eternal vengeance against the nation that would employ such detestable savage allies… to see our colors prostitute [and to hear]…the yells of savages” inside of Fort Detroit?\textsuperscript{331} Indeed, President Madison declared to Congress that the alliance of Britain and the Northwest Indians was an “outrage” against the “benevolent policy” of the republic, calling forth the “patriotic zeal and invigorated efforts” of all Americans to confront the “blood-thirsty savages…let loose by the enemy.”\textsuperscript{332} The victory at Fort Detroit consummated the British-Native alliance and brought the only court-marshal that recommended a sentence of death to an American commanding general in the history of the United States.\textsuperscript{333}

\textsuperscript{330} Manson, \textit{Trial of Brigadier General William Hull}, 103.
\textsuperscript{331} \textit{Niles Weekly Register}, 15 Sept. 1812; \textit{Lucas Journal}, 67.
\textsuperscript{332} \textit{Notices of the War}, vol. 1, 53; Madison’s Address to Congress, 4 Nov. 1812, \textit{The Annual Register or A View of the History, Politics and Literature for the Year 1812}, 444-45.
\textsuperscript{333} Heidler and Heidler, eds., \textit{Encyclopedia}, 248.
Britain maximized the visual image Americans had of Indians to use them effectively as an instrument of terror. This strategy helped make the Great Lakes Indians successful and their insurgency caused widespread alarm through the war years. As a result of their early triumphs, Madison announced in September 1812, that he had taken steps to command the situation in the Northwest to secure “peace with and control of the savages,” and then authorized an increase of the army by 20,000 men. Henry Clay presented a passionate plea of “moral justification” to Congress over British-Indian atrocities and to conduct an offensive into Canada to crush the alliance in the Northwest Territory:

Canada innocent? Canada unoffending? Is it not in Canada that the tomahawk of the savage has been molded into its death-like form?...which [has] enabled the savage hordes to butcher the garrison of Chicago and to commit other horrid murders? Was it not by the joint co-operation of Canadians and Indians that a remote fort, Michilimackinac, was assaulted and reduced while in ignorance of war? The united energies of one people arrayed against the combined energies of another.

Again, a call for an invasion of Canada was not necessarily to conquer it, but rather, it was an attempt to relieve the presence of Native Americans in the Northwest Territory.

After the fall of Fort Detroit and Michilimackinac, the massacre at Frenchtown, and the tactical blunder at Fort Meigs, recruitment for volunteers relied on survival and dignity in the face of Indian victories and depredations. Kentucky Governor Shelby retorted: “Our enemy can never be taught the rules of civilized warfare but by retaliation.” Lt. General John Allen, foremost Lawyer in Kentucky, delivered a passionate speech to his fellow men: “Can we turn a deaf ear to the cries of men, women, and children, about to perish under the scalping knife and tomahawk of the savage?...Will it be said that a thousand freemen are unequal to a contest with

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334 Madison’s Address to Congress, The War, 31 Oct. 1812.
three hundred savages and slaves? Cass and McArthur also used Indian terror in their recruiting efforts: “Our government is engaged in no schemes of aggrandizement, no plans of ambition...Are you prepared to have your midnight slumbers awakened by the Indian yell, and the conflagration of your own dwellings gleam upon the last act of savage barbarity? These evils can only be averted by a vigorous prosecution of the war.”

The plasticity of Native terror was easily transferred over to British soldiers in an effort to unify Americans in the face of a hated enemy. It was convenient that many (not all) Great Lakes Indians allied themselves with the British during the war as the same politicians and army officers who were condemning Indian violence were also able to mimic the same language when talking about British atrocities. It was a convenient alliance for soldiers and politicians to condemn British soldiers as barbarians incapable of civilization, just like Indians. Indeed, American politicians were able to embarrass British leadership on the same levels as their “savage” allies in “Barbarities of the Enemy.” The preamble argues the following point regarding the massacre at the River Raisin near Frenchtown:

The massacre of the 23rd January, after the capitulation, was perpetrated without any exertion on their part to prevent it; indeed, it is apparent from all the circumstances, that if the British officers did not connive at their destruction, they were criminally indifferent about the fate of the wounded prisoners. But what marks more strongly the degradation of the British soldiers, is the refusal of the last offices of humanity to the bodies of the dead.

And perhaps President Madison’s colorful and animated speech to Congress on the massacre sums up the anti-Indian rhetoric that nineteenth century white Americans used to portray an image of the “savage” Native who murdered without restraint; was an enemy that had to be eradicated; and offered a flexible likeness in language to demonize the invading British:

338 McArthur and Cass to the Young Men of Ohio, 2 April 1813, The War, 27 April 1813.
They [the British] have not, it is true, taken into their own hands the hatchet and the knife, devoted to indiscriminate massacre; but they have let loose the savages armed with these cruel instruments; have allured them into their service and carried them into battle by their sides eager to glut their savage thirst with the blood of the vanquished, and to finish the work of torture and death on maimed and defenseless captives and what had never been seen before, British commanders have exhorted victory over the unconquerable valor of our troops by presenting to the sympathy of their chief awaiting massacre from their savage allies.\footnote{President Madison’s Address, 4 March 1813, \textit{Annual Register or A View of the History, Politics, and Literature for the Year 1813}, 395.}

Native Americans did rely on British food and military supplies and with Britain’s naval defeat on Lake Erie, the British were no longer to adequately supply their allies. The confederacy achieved many things, but with Tecumseh’s death, the federation fell apart, withered, and died. Indeed, “the defeat of Tecumseh and Tenskwatawa’s confederacy removed the last significant obstacle to the United States’ conquest of the Trans-Appalachian West. During the 15 years following the War of 1812…Andrew Jackson occupied the White House [and]…closed the federal fur trading factories, denounced the civilization policy a failure, and enacted a coercive Indian Removal Program that expelled most of the Woodland Indians from their homelands.”\footnote{Nichols, \textit{Red Gentleman and White Savages}, 199.} General Harrison’s methodical advance had neutralized guerilla warfare, the preferred tactics of the Indians, which they used to measure their success on the battlefield. With Harrison preferring to defend his army inside fortifications, Indians were deprived of their motivating influences for going to war – scalps, plunder, revenge, and personal glory. With Harrison’s success and British failure to help them reduce the fortifications, it could be said that Harrison’s “steady advance had done much to negate the impact of Native terror.”\footnote{Antal, \textit{A Wampum Denied}, 262.} The War of
1812 had a devastating impact on Native American communities in the Great Lakes region. Known Indian-hater, Andrew Jackson, would ride the wave of victories from Horseshoe Bend to New Orleans into the White House and begin a program removing all of the Woodland Indians to the west of the Mississippi, ending the dream of an autonomous Indian homeland in the Old Northwest Territory.

Following Tecumseh’s War and the War of 1812, the federal government decided to alter its policy of coexistence, especially since the British were no longer a direct threat and the Indian coalition was shattered. The policy of removal gained favor in Washington mostly in response to the atrocities committed by the Indians in the Northwest Territory during the war. This was clearly evident in the Treaty of St. Mary’s in 1817, which was a supplemental treaty to the one signed on the Maumee Rapids earlier in the year. St. Mary’s changed the terms of the original treaty by setting aside parcels of land that were not to be grants that could be used for a period of time, but rather, it was land that would be owned by the Indians permanently. The United States government made these lands reservations. Originally, it might have appeared to be beneficial to Native Americans as a form of protection, but what radically changed was the status of Indians from an autonomous nation to one of dependency.343

Soon after the War of 1812 concluded, the white population of the Northwest Territory swelled to over 3.3 million people and by 1829, 16 Senators and 47 Representatives would represent the former western territories and states in the United States Congress. Andrew Jackson, a westerner, would become president and implement a full-scale Indian removal policy by 1830. Western men now controlled frontier policy in Washington and they immediately

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placed their energy in carrying out the Indian Removal Act.\textsuperscript{344} Indian-hating rhetoric soon evolved into a racial language and theory based on scientific evidence that Native Americans were innately inferior and that it was natural that they simply disappear among the Anglo-Saxons, a more superior race of people. The American republic was now a white Anglo-Saxon republic that intentionally excluded all non-whites from participation in politics and in the economy, especially land acquisition. Assimilation had failed and the historiography of the era overwhelmingly illustrates that the white population and politicians believed that Indians could effectively become part of white society and, thus, gave them confidence in enacting policies of removal. Here, race and western expansion became intermingled as it was no longer about civilization against savagery as in the previous century; it was now the white race verses all other colored races.\textsuperscript{345}

Relatively few historians have examined Native Americans and frontiersmen in the War of 1812, and most of the studies that have focus on the traditional, monographic approach of Tecumseh leading a monolithic people as savage allies of the British Empire and frontiersmen as the helpless victims of brutal Indian depredations. They use the conquest of Canada as a neat and tidy package to explain what war was in the western theater. Instead, two antagonists fought desperately over something they both believed to be of extreme importance and no matter how vicious they confronted each other, they both professed their legitimate claim over the land of the Northwest Territory by justifying the use of force to achieve their objective. Frontiersmen mobilized to fight the war because of their hatred for Indians, but that hatred turned to dread whenever they met Indians in the northern forests and as defeats continued to mount, the call to

\textsuperscript{344} Nichols, \textit{Red Gentlemen and White Savages}, 199. Men such as Thomas Hart Benton, Lewis Cass, and Andrew Jackson.

obliterate Indians from the region mounted. Unable to beat them in battle, the *Aurora* concluded, “The hand of vengeance must be roused against them, and a war of extermination waged until they shall disappear from the borders of our extensive country.”\(^{346}\) Consolidating their hatred of Indians through literary propaganda, western politicians denounced the British as co-conspirators and manipulators of Indian savagery. Indians, on the other hand, were not a monolithic people allied with Britain because they saw them to be the lesser evil. Rather, the Indians of the Great Lakes region were diverse people with their own political, economic, and religious agendas. Pan-Indianism swept the region, but not all Indians joined. Many refuted Tecumseh’s attempts to form an autonomous homeland the region as they attempted to present themselves to the American government as civilized participants in the democratic political process. What later came to be termed “the noble savage.” The war ended ominously for Native Americans and forced their removal beyond the Mississippi River. Manifest Destiny and the desire to conquer the West would soon engulf a racist “Anglo-Saxon” nation after the war. Somewhere in between is the story of how white-Indian interactions in the Northwest Territory determined this outcome and nowhere is the conquest of Canada a reason for any of it.

\(^{346}\) *Aurora*, March 24, 1813.
The people seem determined to defend themselves; every man walks with his rifle in his hand so
enured are they to alarms. They are very civil, but possess that roughness of manner so
universally attendant on seclusion from general society, where, and where only the graces are, or
will be wooed, or the rough covering of the human disposition be rubbed off. This misfortune of
the early settlers of new countries seem, as all other things, widely disposed by providence, it fits
them for the state they are in, and enables them to bear the hardships which refined men will not
submit to in the first settling a country, and answers the grand purposes of extending a frontier,
and introducing the rudiments of law in the wilds of America, and are fully entitled to their share
of merit in a certain line; and in the first instance are the most useful people in the land, and
merit great encouragement for their hardship, dangers and adventures.

- General Richard Butler, 1785

The American Revolution, steeped in over a century’s worth of historiography,
continues to dominate the history of the eighteenth century because it continues to
inform our understanding of American politics, society, and culture. At the heart of
interpreting the Revolution is the “Republican Megasynthesis.” This Megasynthesis
has established a “hegemonic interpretation” of American cultural and political beliefs, which
emerged out of the conflict, and has nearly overshadowed all other master narratives. Bernard
Bailyn’s Ideological Origins of the American Revolution, Gordon Wood’s The Creation of the
American Republic, and The Radicalism of the American Revolution, and J. G. A. Pocock’s The
Machiavellian Moment are foundation of this synthesis. Wood, for instance, in his title claims
the Revolution was radical, in fact, “as radical and as revolutionary as any [such upheaval] in
history,” and the revolutionaries “brilliantly reconstructed the framework for a new republican
polity, a reconstruction that radically changed the future discussion of politics.” Bailyn
classified the Revolution as a “great, transforming debate.” And, Pocock asserts that “patterns of
language and thought” are “kinetic and paradigmatic structures, which act upon the intention
using them and the consciousness which they express, and modify the world just as the world modifies them.” Bailyn, Wood, and Pocock saw the Revolution as social and political turmoil that was supported and energized by new ideas that would separate America from Old World restrictions emanating out of monarchies, social hierarchies, deference, and privileges from heredity and primogeniture.

In short, the Republican Megasynthesis is about the progress of human civilization, “but the realization, the comprehension and fulfillment, of the inheritance of liberty and of what was taken to be America’s destiny in the context of the world.” A change that resulted in more equality, more opportunities for ordinary people, and far greater individual autonomy, but this definition is harder to comprehend when evaluating violence on the frontier, even after the American Revolution.347 Once Great Britain surrendered, emigration to the western frontier was in full force as thousands of settlers moved into Kentucky, the Tennessee Valley, and western Pennsylvania, bringing with them the revolutionary insurgency that was rooted in the ideology that natural laws were more important than constitutional ones. Many of the settlers defined that ideology as those who possessed land and improved it had innate right to it, thereby validating squatting on lands that belonged to Indians and absentee landowners. Where these settlers saw themselves as respectable farmers seeking equality, dignity, and a competent living, the United States government and Indian peoples viewed them as squatters, rebels, or savages.348 The government, however, was tired of war and bankrupt. As a result, few soldiers could be stationed on the frontier to enforce treaty regulations or to prevent the many depredations.

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occurring between whites and Indians. Indeed, both whites and Natives crossed the demarcation line and burned towns, killed settlers and chiefs, and poached each other’s wildlife. To help provide stability where the government could not, an uneasy alliance formed as federal officials relied on frontiersmen to develop and govern the West; buy and farm the land; sit on juries and volunteer for militia service; and to vote for the Republican Party, binding them to the Union. Government support would have a darker side when war erupted on the frontier. In order to not lose control over frontiersmen, who were already skeptical of a government that they did not trust, the government employed the use of racist language to validate the frontiersmen fight against Native Americans. By vilifying the opponent, the government gained consensus among the white American population to authorize a long and expensive war against the Northwest Indian confederation without restraint or limitations. These reasons are also why Kentucky and Tennessee militias were never punished for their total war against Indian peoples and property.349

Personal atrocities and vicious raids had characterized the borderlands in Kentucky, especially during the Revolutionary era, and persisted until the signing of the Treaty of Greenville in 1795. Most Native peoples moved further north in the Ohio Country to avoid retribution and to assure themselves of some semblance of security in both subsistence and survival.

Kentucky was all the rage after the American Revolution. General Richard Butler kept a journal of his travels down the Ohio River in 1785 and wrote: “the lands on each side are really delightful…on one side of every bend is a grand and extensive bottom of very rich land; and opposite high and beautiful bills of good land, generally on easy slope or ascent, and seldom rocky; and will, in my opinion, before many years be the seats of opulent farmers.” Others, such as John Melish, exclaimed upon his arrival in Kentucky that “it is the most beautiful tract of land

I ever saw.” Settlers used descriptions such as “unrivalled richness of soil,” “rich and luxuriant country,” and “unsurpassed rural beauty” when entering Kentucky. Land was not the only coveted item in early white settlement, Dr. Thomas Walker’s party of hunters “killed in the Journey 13 Buffaloes, 8 Elks, 53 Bears, 20 Deer, 4 Wild Geese, about 150 Turkeys, besides small game,” and he believed that “we might have killed three times as much meat, if we had wanted it.” Built on the fantastic stories of adventurers and the long hunters, men such as Daniel and Squire Boone, John Finlay, Hancock and Richard Taylor, James Knox, Will Emery, and James Smith, among others, told of a land of pristine forests, rich soil, and abundant game, all ripe for the taking. New settlers would soon be “Running Mad for Kentucky.”350

The only force holding them back from the “Canaan of the West” was the Indians. A long-time location for hunting and habitation for natives, Kentucky was neither “open” nor “available” for Anglo-American settlement. John Bradford, editor of the Kentucky Gazette, went to great lengths describing the constant and devastating Indian raids on the settlements at Boonesborough; Ruddle’s, Martin’s, and Logan’s Stations; and Harrodsburg, among others. Furthermore, settlers were being ambushed, scalped, and murdered along the paths and river routes into Kentucky. Colonel John Floyd reported in the fall of 1779 while moving his family into the region: “Whole families were destroyed, without regard to age or sex” and “Infants are torn from their mothers arms & their brains dashed out against trees, as they are necessarily removing from one fort to another for safety…not a week passes without some of our distressed inhabitants feeling the fatal effects of the infernal rage and fury of those excrable Hell hounds.”

And George Rogers Clark wrote in May 1780, about being “constantly exposed to the Incursions and Depredations of the Indians on the North west side of the Ohio” and the “extremely expensive and difficult, if not impracticable” inability “to protect so extensive a frontier against the Savages by troops stationed among the Settlements.” Thomas Slaughter petitioned “on behalf of himself & the other inhabitants situate near Ketukke” that they were “exposed to the incursions & depredations of the Indians & from the small number are incapable of protecting themselves” against Indians “on Account of the melitia’s not being imbodyed.” There were times that so much violent activity between the Indians and white settlers that Bradford created a special section in the *Gazette* entitled “Indian News.”

Bradford’s *Notes* are a tremendous source for early settlement in Kentucky but he fails to offer the Indian perspective of white encroachment onto their traditional hunting grounds. Whether explaining the legitimacy of white infringement through Indian peace treaties, landed possession and progress, or through victory in the American Revolution, Bradford, along with many of the early settlers, virtually ignored any recognition of Indian claims. They treated the Indians as criminals for their behavior despite the fact that Anglo-Americans were conducting devastating raids on native villages, peoples, and property. Many settlers believed that George Rogers Clark’s raid on the Shawnee Chief Black Hoof’s Piqua towns in the summer of 1780 was justified because of the Indian attacks emanating from the Little Miami River basin. Clark burned down five villages and all of the corn supply, forcing Indian families on short rations for the upcoming winter. The Indians did, however, play an important role in solidifying preemptive claims early on in Kentucky. Settlers often cited the defense against Indians as a legitimate

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claim for title to the land. After all, settlers believed that they sacrificed their lives and livelihoods while providing a protective barrier to Virginians living on the eastern side of the mountains and, therefore, they believed it would be an injustice not to receive a clear title to their lands.352

Backcountry settlers had more to worry about than just Indians in their quests for property. Land speculators were also active in Kentucky and frontiersmen condemned them for their unfair influence to gain enormous grants of illegitimate land. Settlers believed that those who risked their lives and physically transformed the environment to more profitable means should be awarded actual grants. The settlers understood “that the Land System adopted would at first cause very unequal distribution…by giving enormous Quantities to those who could advance most money,” but they thought that because of “the fertility of the soil, and the former acts of assembly enforcing a Cultivation proportionate to the Quantity,” would induce the Assembly to support “the adventurer to become a settler” instead of the absentee purchaser. The petitioners exclaimed that through previous experience, the practice of awarding land to speculators never encouraged the “Engrosser” to “neither settle himself, nor dispose of it to those who will,” thereby contradicting the usefulness of westward settlement. Security was another concern that the petitioners believed the Assembly should address before granting land to speculators. They informed the Virginia legislature that “the Immediate Peopling of this Country, and such migrants to be allowed according to Ancient Custom” to “immediately cultivate such lands or become Inhabitants” in order to keep “the happiness and Safety of this Country,” but giving speculators land grants was “very injurious to the Indigent Inhabitants, and of but small advantage to the commonwealth” since it “prevented sufficient Immigration”

352 Friend, Kentucky’s Frontiers, 88-89.
resulting in “continual Demegretion, with those exterminated out of being by the Savage
Barbarians.”  

Although many settlers were able to obtain clear title to their land, others were left
disillusioned and frustrated as their land was sometimes taken right from under their feet.
Edward Mann Butler summarized it nicely: “The breaking up of family homes, improved at the
hazard of the owner’s life, and fondly looked to as a support for declining age; and a reward for
affectionate children, swept away by refinements above popular comprehension” over the
“scramble for land” that characterized Kentucky after 1779. Several petitions warned of the
consequences of speculators “acquiring property in Land in this Western Country.” It would
result “in Litigation; which will not only create discords amongst us, but ruin hundreds of poor
Families,” who did not have “the Means of defraying the Expences of a Law Suit upon the
present Establishment” and, in addition, have “additional mortification to find that not a few of
those who have been more fortunate are taking possession of our just Claims knowing that we
are not able to make Opposition.” Thus, “your Honourable House” has “no Idea of the
Distresses which many of your petitioners have suffered…by those who are endeavouring to
avail themselves of our poverty and that Ignorance of the Law which was unavoidable in our
remote Situation, will complete our Ruin.” The petitioners would have to surrender their “last
Cow and Horse” to prosecute and “if [they] decline the Contest, the Land upon which [they] had
Hopes of supporting [them]selves and Families in peace during the Remainder of our Lives will
be wrestled from us” Indeed, some estimates place the number of adult white males that did not
own land at fifty to seventy-five percent by 1800. Unable to acquire a title, many landless whites
moved to the larger towns of Louisville or Lexington to find work or offered themselves as
tenants, neither occupation one that they desired. This was unsatisfying and did not provide the

353 Aron, How the West was Lost, 58-59; Roberson, Petitions, 62-68.
“safety valve” that they sought when coming to Kentucky. Moreover, landlessness was not only a loss of independence and inheritance, but it also meant being disenfranchised. Kentucky would be immersed in land litigation well into the early nineteenth century.354

Backcountry culture developed out of the disorder of Virginia’s attempts to administer Kentucky and then became influential in shaping the development of the Northwest Territory’s land survey system that was far more organized and less controversial. In order to define the backcountry settler’s social and political culture, we need a stronger awareness of what made up that culture. In other words, we have to search for the fundamentals of this culture outside the bounds of political institutions and, instead, focus on the backcountry settler. Expressions of backcountry culture can be found in the petitions sent during Kentucky’s formative period of development when the qualifications of land ownership were still undecided. There is a common thread in the petitions that will help us to understand what backcountry settlers considered prerequisites for gaining title to their property. Meanwhile, we will see how the frequent and violent encounters between white frontiersmen and Ohio Valley Indians justified, in the minds of the settlers, their claims to land ownership. Although Indians are present throughout this paper, they do not receive as much attention as they should. They played a critical role in shaping the development of Kentucky as well as the Northwest Territory in subsequent land treaties and finally, in their struggle to maintain their autonomy during the War of 1812.

Native Americans are gaining ground in the historiography of the Early Republic and relatively recent additions, such as Richard White’s *The Middle Ground* and Gregory Evans Dowd’s *A Spirited Resistance*, have brought much needed attention to the culture and pan-Indian movements among the Natives living in or near the Great Lakes region. White favors a

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declension model that has Indian-European relations in the Great Lakes region peaking around 1763, when the British forced France, who was instrumental in creating the middle ground, from the continent and replaced them inadequately as benefactors, or “Fathers.” White blames most of this disintegration on land-hungry Indian-haters, who, by the end of the American Revolution, coveted Indian lands and sought the destruction or removal of all Indian peoples. Attempts at Native confederations failed as the middle ground ceased to exist by the end of the War of 1812.355 Dowd argues that the colonial and revolutionary wars of the late-eighteenth century and the militant expansionism of the new republic forced Indian peoples into a life-and-death struggle to retain their lands and culture. The result was an unprecedented demonstration of multitribal unity that was shaped by a contest between nativists and accommodationists within the various Indian groups in the Trans-Appalachian West. Tecumseh and Tenskwatawa, the Shawnee Prophet, formed a confederacy that was but one of the latest in a series of religiously inspired movements that had cropped up throughout the eastern woodlands in the preceding century.356

Both authors add tremendously to the new Native American “center” of writing history, but they do not address Indians as equal combatants in the War of 1812. Indeed, instead of equating the pan-Indian confederation as a political entity that was equivalent to that of Britain or America, they perceive a decline in Indian activism (or nativism) and a war that was not popular among the various Native peoples of the Great Lakes region. The War of 1812 is still seen as a “second revolution,” a battle for sovereign rights by Americans who claimed that Great

355 White, Richard, The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). The middle ground is defined as the new social and political society created by the French and Great Lakes Indians who formed a unique social and cultural system that guided trade negotiations, defense, settling disputes, and living arrangements by intertwining the two different cultures.

356 Dowd, A Spirited Resistance; Indians who allied with the U.S. tend to be categorized as accommodationists, while those attached to France, Spain, or Great Britain were adherents of nativism or a “modified form of nativism,” using European powers to achieve their own ends.
Britain was violating their shipping rights and open trade with Europe. The same can be said for Native Americans living in the Old Northwest Territory who could relate to this cause when backwoodsmen violated Indian rights of sovereignty through raids, murders, stolen property, and settlement. Therefore, war in the Northwest theater was, indeed, about land and sovereignty when placing Native Americans in the larger context of the conflict.

As large numbers of settlers moved into the western states, the Old Northwest Territory was seeing a rise in nativist religious and cultural activity. Tecumseh and his brother, Tenskwatawa, were leaders of the nativist movement that had various periods of popularity since the Seven Years’ War. Nativists believed that whites and Indians could no longer coexist peacefully. Indian prophets preached that red and white were created by one deity, but separately and should remain that way since contact with Europeans only brought death, destruction, and displaced them from their traditional homelands. Only by resisting white technology and other trade goods could Indians return to a more “traditional” way of life and become pure once again. Nativism played an important role in spiritual ideology, economic behavior, and political activism. Indian prophets relayed a message of common cultural interest that transcended intertribal rivalries and differences, with an emphasis in not ceding anymore land and protecting what they had left through unification.357 The political wing, or the federationists, formed a legitimate governing body that had a clear agenda, which deserved equal consideration from academics when discussing the War of 1812. As allies of the British, the federationists chose what they believed to be the best possible way to establish an autonomous homeland, free from intervening Americans.

Just as the United States government had many reasons not to resist the actions of western frontiersmen, many Indian leaders also saw advantages not to resist federationists. First, 

357 Dowd, A Spirited Resistance.
Indian leaders could not prevent their young warriors from joining the federationists in their attempts to perform traditional rituals that brought them honor and respect through warfare. Secondly, the chiefs knew that the United States government feared the confederation and its offensive military capabilities. Indian alliances had proven in the past that they could cause major disruptions and terrorize the entire frontier. For example, when Ottawa, Shawnee, and Seneca warriors executed a near perfect plan in destroying almost all of Britain’s western fortifications during Pontiac’s War (1763-65), the British realized how vulnerable they were to an Indian uprising. Lord Dunmore’s War in 1774 proved costly to American settlers and farmers as a confederation of Shawnee and Mingo warriors destroyed lives and property in the Ohio Valley. And finally during the American Revolution, a confederation was able to mobilize over ten thousand warriors to assault settlers on frontier settlements ranging from New York to Georgia. The allied forces of Britain were defeated and a the Treaty of Paris was signed in 1783, but approximately thirty-five different tribal leaders gathered in Sandusky, Ohio, to recommit to their united opposition to American expansion. American independence only hardened the Indians’ resolve to achieve the same - union and independence - for themselves.358

An autonomous homeland, once again, became the focus during a series of bloody battles from 1785-1795, known generically as the Northwest Indian Wars (or Little Turtle’s War). Native Americans and frontier militias engaged in a series of raids and counter-raids along the Ohio River as Britain increasingly began to supply military arms and ammunition to the Great Lakes Indians in their efforts of establishing a secure boundary against infiltrating settlers. After several atrocities committed by both whites and Indians over several years, a treaty was signed at Fort Harmar in 1786 by Governor Arthur St Clair. His objectives were to negotiate with non-federationist Indians in an attempt to split the confederacy in half, obtain an additional land

358 Nichols, Red Gentlemen and White Savages; Dowd, A Spirited Resistance.
cession, create a new legal relationship with the Northwest Indians by turning them into American clients instead of autonomous peoples, and to secure Ohio Valley settlements against Indian raids. Although St Clair was unable to establish any of these objectives, he was able to institute new rules regarding the status of white murderers and trespassers by obliging the signers of the treaty to deliver those accused of ethnic crimes to state or federal officials. By incorporating the Great Lakes Indians into the legal structure of the Northwest Territory, St Clair was able to curtail the Indians’ effort at establishing political autonomy.359

The Treaty of Fort Harmar failed because it was repudiated by the federationist Indians who did not attend the negotiations, and by spring, a confederation of Shawnee and Miami Indians resumed their raids along the Ohio River, while Kentucky militia retaliated by attacking settlements below the Wabash River. Although the federal government conceded that Kentucky frontiersmen needed protection, diplomacy still was preferred since it was hard to mount an offensive under the consideration that Kentuckians had just as frequently committed atrocities against the Wabash Indians. Indeed, St Clair advised that if the United States army did not go immediately on the offensive, irritated Kentuckians would oblige, and direct their murderous wrath against “all bearing the name of Indians,” including those under protection of the Fort Harmar Treaty. St Clair continued, “they are in the habit of retaliation,” as they had attacked several neutral villages and hunters over the last couple of years, “perhaps without attending precisely the nations from which the injuries are received.” Kentucky judge, Henry Innes, concurred, “voluntary expeditions will be carried on into the Indian countries upon the principle of revenge, protection, and self-preservation,” after he had concluded that Indian raids had cost the frontiersmen 1,500 killed and over 2,000 horses stolen between the years 1783-1790.

Moreover, continued federal inaction would persuade neutral Indians to join the raids against westerners in the search for easy booty and those who survived militia attacks would be encouraged to join the confederacy in an act of revenge. Blue Jacket, a Shawnee war leader, told a peace missionary that his people would never accept American settlers north of the Ohio River and that the Shawnees hated white people who had “destroyed their lands [and] put out their fire,” and that if Americans “don’t keep this side clear,” they would never have “a proper reconciliation with the [Indian] nations.”

The federal government lost patience with peace overtures and sent several military offensives into the Ohio Valley in the early 1790s. The first expedition was led by General Josiah Harmar and was handily defeated in 1790. Unsuccessful, a larger army under St Clair was assembled in the late fall of 1791, marching his men deep into the Ohio country to the Wabash River near the Indiana border. There, he built Fort Recovery to supply and protect his men while he prepared to attack. Little Turtle, leader of the Miami Indians, conducted a surprise attack on November 4, 1791, routing the inexperienced men under St Clair in what has been deemed as the worst defeat an American army ever suffered from an Indian attack. In total, St Clair lost 632 soldiers out of 920 and all 200 camp followers were massacred, for a casualty rate of 832 deaths and approximately 264 wounded. In addition, Colonel John Hardin and Major Alexander Truman were murdered on separate peace missions in 1792, while trying to end the bloodshed. Not until August 1794, was an American army under General Anthony Wayne able to soundly defeat a confederation army at Fallen Timbers, resulting in the Treaty of Greenville (1795) and ending the Northwest Indian Wars.

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360 Quotes found in: Nichols, Red Gentlemen and White Savages.
A series of successful treaties in 1795 and the victory against the confederation at Fallen Timbers, resolved many of the issues that were antagonizing Americans living in Kentucky and Ohio. After decades of frustration, frontiersmen only began to believe that the national government was trying to protect their rights – lives, property, and access to markets – which they believed the government should have secured for them years earlier. For Native Americans, many who did not support the recent treaties and the cessation of land began to seek a British alliance to address their concerns. New issues arose, however, with the passing of a permanent Indian Trade and Intercourse Act in 1802. This piece of legislation was created to mandate claims to Indian lands; required a passport to travel through Indian territory; and fined and imprisoned white Americans for crimes against Native Americans. Federal courts were given jurisdiction over violations on Indian lands. This law was largely unsuccessful because the United States army could not enforce it due to the limited amount of soldiers trying to protect the vastness of the frontier. Therefore, the inability to enforce the Intercourse Act, the powerlessness of the army to keep both sides of the Ohio River safe, and the War Department’s incompetence to fulfill its obligations to supply the treaty goods for 1799 and 1800, encouraged many neutral Indians to join the nativist movement, which was becoming more militant under Tecumseh. Moreover, St. Clair was an unwilling participant in enforcing the laws to protect Native Americans from white atrocities.\(^{362}\)

Kentucky, however, remained a bastion of hostility towards the federal government and towards the Northwest Indians by infringing on the peace terms of 1795. Frontiersmen from Kentucky claimed Indian real estate, sold and then squatted on illegal land, and poached Indian game. These backwoodsmen wanted to enjoy the rights they believed they earned from winning the revolutionary war – “the right to claim land through settlement and cultivation, the right to

self-government, and the right to personal security, which to them included the right to kill an Indian in (purported) self-defense.” Indeed, a Federalist delegate to the first Northwest territorial legislature described Kentuckians as an “unmixed mass of insurrectionary Antifederalism [and] Jacobinism.”

Native Americans also were not satisfied with the federal government’s performance on the frontier. The inability to enforce the Intercourse Act, the powerlessness of the army to keep both sides of the Ohio River safe, and the War Department’s incompetence to fulfill its obligations to supply the treaty goods for 1799 and 1800, encouraged many neutral Indians to join the nativist movement, which was becoming more militant under Tecumseh. Moreover, St Clair was an unwilling participant in enforcing the laws to protect Native Americans from white atrocities.

Nativist sentiment was towards uniting all of the Great Lakes Indians into a confederation that would purge their society of unwanted influences, but this did not mean that nativists wanted to create a world devoid of Euro-Americans. This vision was not a regressive progression into an idealized past, rather, it was envisioned to be a place where exchange between the two races would be more fair and equal so that Indian autonomy could be achieved. Most Natives who formed the core of the confederacy, however, were those who blamed their demise upon their relationship with whites, who allied themselves with other nativists who composed the “central premise of the militant, pan-Indian religious movement of the late 18th and early 19th century.” These nativists forged a new concept of Indian identity that stressed the common origin of all Indians and the spiritual impurity of white Americans and those Indians who preferred acculturation. This racial ideology turned political and militant when interpreted as the

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continued loss of land and autonomy to be a sign of spiritual failing and were determined to oppose any further American expansion.366

General William Henry Harrison secured more land sessions during the Treaty of Fort Wayne (1809), antagonizing nativist Indians even further. Upon the concern that Harrison had for the growth and strength of the confederation, Harrison decided to show a force of strength while Tecumseh was in the South recruiting more Indians into his alliance. Harrison was instructed by the government to remain peaceful, but took an overwhelming force to Prophetstown located on the Tippecanoe River where a large number of the nativists had assembled. The Prophet, in charge of the warriors during Tecumseh’s absence, was ordered by Harrison to disperse his men but agreed to wait the next morning for peace negotiations. Instead, the Indians attacked the encamped army the next morning, but were repulsed with losses. Public opinion blamed the Indian uprising on British interference from Canada (Fort Malden), which would then serve as a catalyst to the War of 1812.367 The Battle of Tippecanoe influenced the confederation greatly, so when General William Hull led his men across the Detroit River in the summer of 1812, Tecumseh and his followers were already on the Canadian side of the river, preparing to defend their autonomy for the final time. The violence experienced in the Seven Years’ War, Pontiac’s War, the American Revolution, and onto the War of 1812. Not much changed on the frontier.

Penn’s colony had a dark side too. In contrast to the popular imagery of William Penn signing the legendary treaty with the Delaware Indians is the 1841 etching of The Paxton Boys

murdering men, women and children of the Conestoga Indian tribe. Pennsylvania’s violent
eritage is often only anecdotally demonstrated and requires deeper exploration. Ultimately, the
bonds between whites and Indians that prevented war failed as more frequent contact between
them forced them to redefine themselves and each other as “Indians” and as “whites,” forgoing
Frontier*, describes the typical narrative regarding the Paxton Boys as: “Made up the poorer
elements of colonial society, these down-and-outs with few opportunities and trapped between
two worlds – one white, the other Indian – lashed out at the most vulnerable,” and now
represents for America, “a critical aspect of a broader process of ‘ethnic cleansing’ on the
frontier,” is shrouded in myth. It is also a myth, according to Griffin, of Benjamin Franklin’s
claim that “the frontier settlers had crossed some racist Rubicon.” Importantly, Griffin clarifies
that although the Paxton Boys used language such as “white people,” they did not recognize
Indians as being from some different planet and neither did they refer to Indians’ physical
features as causes for attacking them.

Backcountry settlers, despite hating Indians, viewed them in the same light as the urban
elite, as savages. They understood cultural differences, therefore, but unlike the urban elite, they
were no longer patient for the Indians to become civilized. Although it may still be difficult to
determine if this was an attack by racist, genocidal maniacs or impatience for the cultural model
of understanding to come to fruition, one thing is certain, the attacks on the Indians at Conestoga
and Lancaster unified the backcountry with spectacular violence, violence that was both practical
and symbolic. When backcountry farmers murder unarmed men, women, and children, rather
than Indian warriors, the message was clear – all Indians were hated and their removal was
necessary to protect freehold farms. The Paxtonites recognized that their violence on and
slaughter of Indians, unified them. Massacre, then, was crucial in mobilizing the backcountry and uniting them because if they did not remain united, they would be accused for murder, tried, and executed. In this unity, according to Ed White, “a nationalism takes shape.” White frames his perspective on how the Paxton Boys see Indian inferiority culturally, but superior in “the Native Americans’ fusion to overcome serial isolation,” and their solution, according to White, was “to become their enemy even as they annihilate them...they will become “white Indians” by fusing.” For Pennsylvanians, then, national violence “symbolically and literally massacring the other nation, is the new order of things.”

In memory, the history of indigenous Pennsylvania and William Penn’s peaceable kingdom is often considered exceptional to the standard violence, dispossession, and conquest in the broader account of British North America. The absolute “extinction” of Indians within Pennsylvania’s borders and accounts of those who vanished into the “west” served the national ideology of manifest destiny. Paradoxically, another interest lay in fixing a unique place in this master narrative for Pennsylvania as the “peaceable kingdom,” a benevolent colonial enterprise under which this extinction was somehow more benign than elsewhere claims Dawn Marsh in her article “Penn’s Peaceable Kingdom.” Marsh uses the story of Hannah Freeman, a Lenape woman who lived in Pennsylvania, to counter the myth of the peaceable kingdom despite many attempts by historians to offer her as an artifact of Penn’s benevolent conquest.

The dedication of Freeman’s grave was intended to fix the memories of local residents to allay any guilt of Quaker involvement in Indian land dispossession and to congratulate themselves for their kind and generous treatment of all but the “vanquished race.” Three

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assumptions regarding dispossession helped to solidify the peaceable kingdom: first, social Darwinism claimed that Indians were going extinct due to their inferiority; second, positive (noble savage) and negative (bloodthirsty savage) constructions of the historical Indians; and third, is the flawed image based on the previous two. The monolithic Indian was unable to adapt to the modern world introduced by colonialism. Hostile resistance was not part of this realization because of the benevolence of Penn’s colonial policies. The only alternative available to the Lenape was to retreat to the western frontier, another imagined landscape.

   The public dedication to Freeman was meant to mark her grave as not only her final resting place, but also the final resting place of Pennsylvania’s indigenous past. Freeman’s death represented the “extinction” of their Lenape neighbors. Pennsylvania no longer had an “Indian problem” and was self-righteously assured that if they did, it would not have been handled so inhumanely as the Indian Removal Act of 1830. Freeman did not live in a “peaceable kingdom,” but she was an instrumental participant in Pennsylvania’s colonial past.

   In conclusion, the backcountry of Pennsylvanian and Kentuckian settlement were reflective of the societies and landscapes of the American frontier. Much of the region beyond the trans-Appalachia owes their origins and developments from what took place first in Pennsylvania and then Kentucky during the eighteenth century as both provinces quickly expanded from their centers. The people who shaped the “best poor man’s country” in Pennsylvania were drawn further west by population pressure, white-Indian conflict, and imperial struggles and strategies. The turmoil of settling Kentucky’s frontier provided a blueprint for the federal government’s management of the Northwest Territory. Kentucky’s transition into statehood demonstrated the government’s need to secure its claims of sovereignty by removing the British, Spanish, and Indian menace surrounding its borders and to create stronger links to
political and cultural institutions to reduce the opportunities for rebellion, conspiracy, and secession. Most importantly, the Northwest Ordinance provided organized settlement that would avoid the endless litigation and instability that plagued Kentucky. Mass emigration into the region, however, pressured the central government to obtain these goals sooner than expected and ultimately thrust the United States into war.

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