Testing the Rusted Chain:
Cherokees, Carolinians, and the War for the American Southeast, 1756-1763

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of History in the Graduate School of Duke University

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Abstract

In 1760, when British victory was all but assured and hostilities in the northeastern colonies of North America came to an end, the future of the southeastern colonies was not nearly so clear. British authorities in the South still faced the possibility of a local French and Indian alliance and clashed with angry Cherokees who had complaints of their own. These tensions and events usually take a back seat to the climactic proceedings further north. I argue that in South Carolina, by destabilizing relations with African and Native Americans, the Cherokee Indians raised the social and political anxieties of coastal elites to a fever pitch during the Anglo-Cherokee War. Threatened by Indians from without and by slaves from within, and failing to find unbridled support in British policy, the planter-merchant class eventually sought to take matters into its own hands. Scholars have long understood the way the economic fallout of the French and Indian War caused Britain to press new financial levies on American colonists. But they have not understood the deeper consequences of the war on the local stage. Using extensive political and military correspondence, ethnography, and eighteenth-century newspapers, I offer a narrative-driven approach that adds geographic and ethnographic breadth and context to previous scholarship on mid-eighteenth century in North America. I expand understandings of Cherokee culture, British and colonial Indian policy, race slavery, and the southeastern frontier. At the same time, I also explain the origins of the American Revolution in the South.
# Contents

Abstract .............................................................................................................................. iv  

List of Figures ................................................................................................................... vii  

Abbreviations ...................................................................................................................... x  

Acknowledgements ........................................................................................................... xii  

Introduction ......................................................................................................................... 1  

Chapter 1: “The Chain of Friendship”: The Carolina-Cherokee Alliance ....................... 17  

Chapter 2: “A small Spark may kindle a great Fire”: Imperial Tensions Threaten the Alliance ............................................................................................................................. 45  

Chapter 3: “Would to God that these were all chimaeras and creatures of the brain”: Crown and Colony Collide in 1758 ............................................................................................................ 78  

Chapter 4: “A good Deal of Mischief done upon the Frontiers of Virginia”: The Forbes Campaign Heightens Cherokee Discontent ................................................................................. 101  

Chapter 5: “To effect an amicable accommodation with them”: Governor Lyttelton Seizes Hostages and Marches into Cherokee Country ...................................................... 131  

Chapter 6: “This awful Malignancy”: The Upheaval of the Charles Town Smallpox Epidemic of 1760 .................................................................................................................... 174  

Chapter 7: “If Not by Fair Means by Force”: The Cherokees Attempt to Rescue the Hostages ...................................................................................................................... 192  

Chapter 8: “The Tourrant hath been so Great”: The Cherokee Offensive of 1760 ............ 217  

Chapter 9: “A Peace…Cannot Be Too Soon Made”: Cherokees Defeat Montgomery and Capture Fort Loudoun ................................................................................................. 247  

Chapter 10: “The absolute necessity of suing for pardon”: The Grant Campaign Brings Destruction and Ruin to Cherokee Country ........................................................................... 289  

Chapter 11: “The Town of Lyes”: Negotiating a Peace Reveals Deep-Seated Tensions 321  

Chapter 12: “A Firm and Lasting Friendship…and…a Perfect Tranquility”: The Path to Revolution ....................................................................................................................... 347
Conclusion ...................................................................................................................... 378
Bibliography ................................................................................................................... 392
Biography........................................................................................................................ 412
List of Figures

Figure 1: Joree, 2009. Photo courtesy David Linton Waters................................. 3

Figure 2: Cherokee Villages in the Mid-Eighteenth Century ................................ 16

Figure 3: French Louisiana in the 1750’s. From Jean-Bernard Bossu’s Travels, ed. Seymour Feiler (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962), 23.......................... 29

Figure 4: George II, by Enoch Seeman, 1730. Courtesy of the Royal Collection..... 31

Figure 5: Engraving by Isaac Basire of the Cherokee Indians who visited London in 1730, ca. 1740-1760. Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution..................................... 32

Figure 6: Eastern North America during the French and Indian War Era. .............. 47

Figure 7: Austenaco, Great Warrior. From the Royal Magazine, 1762. Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution................................................................. 54

Figure 8: William Henry Lyttelton, by Sir Joshua Reynolds, 1772. Courtesy of Hagley Hall................................................................. 62

Figure 9: The Little Tennessee Valley of 1757, by Chester Martin. Courtesy of Fort Loudoun State Historic Area................................................................. 68

Figure 10: Eighteenth-century rum bottle found in the Cherokee Overhills. Courtesy of the McClung Museum................................................................. 75

Figure 11: Henry Bouquet. After Benjamin West’s 1760 painting. Courtesy of the Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library...... 82

Figure 12: The Forbes and Braddock Roads. Adapted by Kent Steinbrunner from Walter O’Meara, Guns at the Forks (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1979), 255... 117

Figure 13: “View of Fort Prince George & part of the Country about it.” Journal of Captain Christopher French, 95. Courtesy of the Library of Congress........... 147

Figure 14: The South Carolina State House, from Biographical Directory of the South Carolina House of Representatives, vol. 2 (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1977).................................................................. 159

Figure 15: South Carolina during the French and Indian War Era ..................... 165
Figure 16: Inside a model of a mid-eighteenth century Cherokee town house at Oconaluftee Indian Village, Cherokee, NC. ................................................................. 193

Figure 17: Cherokee Townhouse at Chota [mid-eighteenth century], by Thomas Whyte. Courtesy of the McClung Museum................................................................. 194

Figure 18: Archaeologist’s rendition of eighteenth-century Chota. Courtesy of Richard Thornton................................................................. 202

Figure 19: Catherine Calhoun gravestone, 2009.......................................................... 223

Figure 20: Creek villages. From John Mitchell’s 1755 Map. Courtesy of Special Collections, Hunter Library, Western Carolina University............................................. 235

Figure 21: South Carolina’s French and Indian War Backcountry Forts ...................... 242

Figure 22: Site of the August 10, 1760, skirmish at Cane Creek, 2009....................... 276

Figure 23: Louis [Billouart, Chevalier] de Kerlerec Agreement with Cherokee Chief Okana-Staote. Courtesy of the National Archives................................................. 290

Figure 24: Philip Runaway Ad. SCG, June 27-July 4, 1761, 1.................................... 302

Figure 25: Cherokee View of The Narrows from the West Bank of the Little Tennessee, 2009........................................................................................................... 310

Figure 26: Cherokee Winter and Summer Structures, by Thomas Whyte. Courtesy of the McClung Museum................................................................. 314

Figure 27: Cowee Mound, 2009. ................................................................................. 315

Figure 28: The Grant Expedition, 1761, by John Robertson, 2007. Courtesy of John Robertson................................................................. 317

Figure 29: Kittuwha, 2011.......................................................................................... 318

Figure 30: Christopher Gadsden as a young man. After Sir Joshua Reynolds, 1903. Courtesy of the Library of Congress................................................................. 331

Figure 31: The Cherokee-South Carolina Boundary, 1761 and 1766. From John Oliphant, Peace and War on the Anglo-Cherokee Frontier, 1756-1763 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001), 167. ................................................. 336

Figure 32: Cunne Shote Cherokee Chief, by Francis Parsons, 1762. Courtesy of the Gilcrease Museum................................................................. 342
Figure 33: *Mr. Peter Manigault and His Friends*, Goose Creek, SC, ca. 1760. Courtesy of the Winterthur Museum. .......................................................... 349

Figure 34: Timberlake’s Map of the Cherokee Country, 1762. From *Lieutenant Henry Timberlake’s Memoirs, 1756-1765*, ed. Samuel Cole Williams (Johnson City, TN: Watauga Press, 1927). .......................................................... 351

Figure 35: *Governor Louis Billouart, Chevalier de Kerlerec*. After an eighteenth-century painting. Courtesy of the Collections of the Louisiana State Library. ................................. 357

Figure 36: *Portrait of Scyacust Ukah, 1762*, by Sir Joshua Reynolds. Courtesy of the Gilcrease Museum. ................................................................................ 362

Figure 37: Anikituhwa Cherokee Dancers in Eighteenth-Century Dress. Courtesy of the Museum of the Cherokee Indian.............................................. 363

Figure 38: Reconstruction of Fort Toulouse, 2010. ......................................................... 368
Abbreviations

AN
Archives Nationales, Paris, France


CDFA
Cherokee Documents in Foreign Archives. Hunter Library, Special Collections, Western Carolina University. Microfilm.

CLS
Charleston Library Society, Charleston, SC

CO
Colonial Office Records, National Archives, Kew, UK

CRNC

CRG

DLAR
David Library of the American Revolution, Washington Crossing, PA

DRIA, 1:

DRIA, 2:

EJC


JCA Journals of the Commons House of Assembly of South Carolina, 1692-1775 (unprinted). South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, SC


SCCJ Journals of His Majesty’s Council, 1754-1756 (Early state Records reel E1p/7), 1757-1762 (Early State Records reel E1p/8), 1763-1767 (Early State Records reel E1p/9). South Carolina Department of Archives and History. Microfilm. Originals at the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

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

SCG *South Carolina Gazette*

SCHGH *South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*

SCHM *South Carolina Historical Magazine*

SCHS South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, SC

SCL South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

WO War Office Records, National Archives, Kew, UK
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**Introduction**

In 2011, the Macon County Airport Authority completed a runway expansion project. After more than ten years of contentious debate, the Authority paved over the site of the village of Joree, one of the historic Cherokee Middle Towns in western North Carolina.

The assault on Joree did not begin with the twentieth-century airport and its twenty-first century expansion. In 1761, a British army destroyed the village. And again in 1777, American troops did the same. Then farms reclaimed the Iotla River Valley where Joree lay.¹ But in 1970, the construction of an airport further disturbed the village site. Bulldozers plowed up artifacts with disregard. Scavengers ran off with whatever they could find. Still, parts of the Indian village lay hidden under the surface.

In 1999, a new chapter in Joree’s history began: the struggle over the airport’s expansion onto more of the village site. The Airport Authority, backed by state and local officials, area businessmen, and legal counsel, launched their efforts to lengthen and widen an airport runway. Supporters of the project cited “safety,” national standards, and “economic progress.” A preliminary archaeological investigation in 2000 identified hundreds of graves and thousands of artifacts in the path of the expansion. The archaeologist protested the expansion project. Tribal leaders from the Eastern Band of

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Cherokee Indians, nonprofit groups, and concerned citizens likewise voiced their disapproval and tried to stop the Airport Authority. They charged authorities with secrecy, dishonesty, and wanton disrespect for Native Americans and their ancestors. For years these defenders stalled the plan and garnered national attention, adding more costs to the expansion. The issue evoked deep emotions for those involved. It exposed longstanding racial tensions and rubbed raw old wounds in and beyond rural western North Carolina.  

The Airport Authority did not want to fund a full archaeological dig before completing its proposed expansion. But ultimately its members agreed to more extensive excavations than they had originally planned. When I traveled to the site of Joree in October 2009, what remained of the village was under attack. In a 4.5-acre parcel, artifacts and graves lay exposed to the elements and to looters. This tract formed part of a larger village site, with evidence of occupation for centuries. I watched in shock and horror as small bulldozers rolled over land once dotted with Cherokee homes and farms. Decades of plowing and erosion had long ago destroyed and uprooted traces of the village. A full report was never completed. Despite the fact that tribal policy and culture forbids relocation of graves, the Cherokees had come to believe by late-2009 that the

courts would be unsympathetic. The Indians had already endured ten years of economic and racial backlash. After years of struggle, they could marshal neither willpower nor resources to keep fighting. They thus agreed to a compromise: the expansion would go forward, but only after earthmovers spread a layer of fill over the site to protect it when paving commenced.³

Figure 1: Joree, 2009. Photo courtesy David Linton Waters.

³ Tasha Benyshek and Paul Webb to Miles Gregory, December 9, 2009, “Management Summary for the Archaeological Data Recovery Fieldwork for the Macon County Airport Extension Project, Site 31MA77.” Copy provided by Paul Webb.
This dissertation, researched and written as I followed the airport expansion project, likewise reveals some people’s readiness to destroy, dismiss, and forget. It shows the devastating consequences of racism magnified by economic motives. It illuminates the experiences, views, and strategies of Native Americans, and of those who left little evidence in the written record. Most significantly of all, it reveals the centrality of Cherokee experiences and Anglo-Cherokee affairs to the coming of the American Revolution.

“The Concerns of this Country are…closely connected and interwoven with Indian Affairs,” Governor James Glen informed the South Carolina Council in 1746. Years later, in a book about the colony, Glen elaborated, writing that “not only a great Branch of our Trade, but even the Safety of this Province, do so much depend upon our continuing in Friendship with the Indians.” South Carolina, he concluded, was deeply “connected in Interest” to its Indian neighbors.4

The future of the American colonies was deeply linked to the West and to the Indians that lived there. For South Carolina, those Indians were Cherokees. I argue in this dissertation that from 1758 to 1761, in a series of clashes known as the Anglo-Cherokee War, the Indians destabilized the South Carolina colony in a way that threatened the lives and livelihoods of coastal elites and raised their social and political

anxieties to a fever pitch. Challenged by Indians from without, by slaves from within, and by British policy from afar, members of the merchant-planter class eventually took matters into their own hands. Thus the Anglo-Cherokee War, to historians an insignificant sideshow to the French and Indian War – led conservative, slave-holding South Carolinians to throw in their lot with the movement for independence that emerged close on the heels of the 1763 Treaty of Paris. By examining events in South Carolina, with particular attention to Cherokee country, I add geographic and ethnographic breadth to previous scholarship on mid-eighteenth-century North America. I also provide fresh insight into the origins of the Revolutionary War in the South and beyond.

From 1754 to 1763, the major European powers clashed over the fate of their empires, with action in Europe, North America, India, Africa, and the Caribbean. The struggle marked a dubious watershed: for the first time in history, war spanned the globe. In the North American theater, the French and their native allies fought the British in a conflict termed the French and Indian War. This was the epicenter of the Seven Years’ War. When the conflict in North America ended, Canada became the crucial chip that fell to the British, removing Bourbon France as an imperial contender on the continent. Because of the scope and repercussions of these events, the Seven Years’ War has attracted considerable attention from amateur and professional historians alike. In the
brief period since 1999, several new book-length studies of the French and Indian War have appeared, including Fred Anderson’s formidable *Crucible of War.*

In 1760, when British victory was all but assured and hostilities in the northeastern colonies of North America ended, the future of the southeastern colonies was not nearly so clear. British authorities in the South still faced the possibility of a local French and Indian alliance and clashed with angry Cherokees who had complaints of their own. In historians’ accounts, these tensions and events usually take a back seat to the climactic proceedings farther north.

Scholars have long understood that the expense of fighting the French and Indian War caused Britain to press new financial levies on American colonists. Recently, historians have also begun to explore the deeper consequences of the war on the local stage. Some have written about political discord among South Carolina whites in the 1760s. But our understanding of the conditions that created this discontent remains sketchy. Other scholars have suggested links between the Anglo-Cherokee War and the

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Regulator movement that followed it, but here too our understanding remains incomplete.\(^7\)

New studies of the roots of the American Revolution demonstrate that the coming of the colonies’ struggle for independence had a southern dimension. Woody Holton, for instance, has done much in this regard. Such scholarship, however, focuses on Virginia, and it only rarely looks back to the French and Indian War era. This dissertation seeks to apply the useful model of Woody Holton’s research on Virginia from 1763 to 1776 in *Forced Founders*, to South Carolina, starting a bit earlier.\(^8\) Expanded attention to the South yields a fuller understanding not only of the French and Indian War era, but also of the genesis of the American Revolution as a struggle driven from the West.

The study of South Carolina in particular enhances our grasp of the way imperial dynamics intersected with the complexities of a tri-racial slave society. Historians have made great headway in illuminating slave life and the nature of slave societies.\(^9\) They


have written extensively on the African American experience during and after the Revolutionary War: the formative generation of black Americans who shaped the birth of the United States.\textsuperscript{10} Tension over race and slavery did more than shape the American Revolution.\textsuperscript{11} It also brought it on, I suggest. I show how Cherokee Indians shaped slavery in South Carolina, and how slavery influenced Indian affairs, a component missing in previous scholarship on enslaved South Carolinians.

Previous scholars have done much to unravel the history of Anglo-Cherokee trade, diplomacy and war. David Corkran traced and emphasized internal Cherokee divisions with a military-focused blow-by-blow account in \textit{The Cherokee Frontier, 1740-1762}. In his impressively researched book, \textit{The Dividing Paths}, M. Thomas Hatley explored the ways in which Cherokees and South Carolinians coexisted, collided, and ultimately separated, from the 1670s to the 1780s. He sees Indians as integral to South Carolina’s development. He offers extensive analysis. He believes South Carolina revolutionaries emerged because they defined themselves against the Cherokee “other.”


But some of his conclusions seem forced. At times the largely thematic, psychoanalytical approach lacks chronological clarity and fluidity. Rather fuel a desire for separation between whites and Indians, I show the Anglo-Cherokee War divided the British and the provincials. More recently, John Oliphant, in *Peace and War on the Anglo-Cherokee Frontier* focuses on British diplomatic and military policy.\(^\text{12}\) He sees British military officials as sympathetic to the Cherokees. His narrative focuses too heavily on a top-down approach. It sees British military officers as sympathetic to the Cherokees, whereas I see them as pragmatic, and opposed to the entitled views of increasingly assertive colonists. And Oliphant’s work does little to explain the coming of the Revolution. Tyler Boulware’s *Deconstructing the Cherokee Nation* informs my understanding of Cherokee regionalism and identity. I use a chronological approach in which the narrative drives the analysis. I build on the exceptional and engaging work of these previous scholars, reconceptualizing key moments in the conflict and clarifying cause and effect during the war years and beyond. I place events into a broader geographical and temporal context as well.\(^\text{13}\)

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This dissertation also delves into Cherokee cultural beliefs. Modern conceptions of the French and Indian War, and of eighteenth-century Native American history, are tainted by nineteenth-century Romanticism and misunderstanding. Wars often become expressions of gratuitous brutality by the bad actors, typically the racialized “other.” The classic novel *Last of the Mohicans* and the 1992 movie by the same name are familiar to popular audiences. But, as Wayne Lee and other scholars have shown, participants intentionally convey specific messages to an enemy through war. Rarely has that message been merely “die.” And warriors act within parameters that suit their own conceptions of appropriate behavior.\(^\text{14}\)

This dissertation expands on the work of Hatley and Oliphant, offering more insights into Cherokee women and their social, economic, and political roles in the eighteenth century. In much more detail than previous scholars, I look beyond the battlefield to explore Cherokee motivations, divisions, and decisions, particularly with regard to war and peace. The dissertation examines the ways in which those variables shaped white fears, tensions, and future plans. To do this, I rely on two sets of sources. First, I analyze voluminous newspaper accounts, military and diplomatic correspondence, and the speeches of Indian peoples, transcribed by sworn interpreters. Second, I use the

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work of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century ethnographers and modern scholars who attempt to shine light on Cherokee culture in the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{15}

Although some scholars have written about Charles Town (today Charleston) during the Anglo-Cherokee War, the internal and external pressures influencing the city’s inhabitants in these years remain only vaguely understood.\textsuperscript{16} This dissertation demonstrates how events on the frontier reverberated along the coast.

Some historians have discussed the nature of evangelicalism from a theological or genealogical perspective.\textsuperscript{17} Others have examined the influence of religion during the Southern campaigns of the Revolution. I also consider the nature of evangelicalism and show that the religious beliefs of backcountry settlers and preachers, many of them non-Anglican “dissenters,” intersected with the tribulations of the Cherokee War. Different groups mobilized their faith to help them deal with a world in flux. Some preachers stepped up their millenarian rhetoric. Others invigorated their evangelization of African


\textsuperscript{16} Walter Fraser, \textit{Charleston! Charleston! The History of a Southern City} (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1989); Robert T. Lavery, “Charleston South Carolina and the Seven Years War, 1756-1763” (M.A. thesis, Trinity College (Conn.), 2007).

slaves. Such activities heightened resentment between evangelical Piedmont farmers and Anglican merchants and planters in the war years. This resentment became critical in the Revolutionary era that followed.

In the first two chapters of this dissertation, I show how the French and Indian War and inter-colonial competition undermined the potential for a long-lasting Cherokee-British alliance. Chapter One chronicles the tentative emergence of that alliance. Chapter Two shows how French solicitations and British trade abuses soon tested the fragile accord.

The next three chapters chronicle the unraveling of the alliance. In Chapter Three, tensions on the frontier heightened fears in Charles Town, straining the relationship between the colony and the metropole across the Atlantic. The next chapter shows how cultural misunderstandings created a crisis in Anglo-Cherokee relations. Dozens of Cherokees died as a result. Finally, a fifth chapter argues that Cherokee law, custom, and family obligations required small-scale military operations to satisfy the families of the dead and posturing to attempt to reshape Cherokee-British relations. But insensitive British officials ignored Cherokee culture, and this provoked a much larger crisis. In this chaos, Cherokees stirred internal tensions in South Carolina.

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18 Peter N. Moore, “Religious Radicalism in the Colonial Southern Backcountry: Jacob Weber and the Transmission of European Radical Pietism to South Carolina’s Dutch Fork,” Journal of Backcountry Studies 1, no. 2 (Fall 2006), 1-19. Richard Clarke, The Prophetic Numbers of Daniel and John Calculated... (Charles-Town: Peter Timothy, 1759); Samuel Davies, Letters from the Rev. Samuel Davies, and Others; Shewing, the State of Religion in Virginia, South Carolina, & C. Particularly Among the Negroes (London: J. and W. Oliver, 1761).

Americans planned a revolt. In a province already in upheaval, a challenge to race
slavery threatened social stability, undermined military readiness, and exacerbated white
anxieties. This thematic threat connects my narrative.

Chapters six through eight show how the peace and the unreasonable expectations
South Carolina forced on the Cherokees created further tensions in 1760. In Chapter Six,
I demonstrate how smallpox, carried to Charles Town by returning soldiers, heightened
racial fears and political unrest in the provincial capital. The seventh chapter takes
readers into Cherokee villages and explains how a sense of unity developed as Cherokees
attempted to free their hostages. And Chapter Eight shows how Cherokees cultural
obligations and conceptions of war and justice drove them to attack the South Carolina
frontier. Poor frontiersmen blamed coastal elites. Elites in turn pointed fingers of blame
at Great Britain.

Finally, the last four chapters demonstrate the problems that resulted when British
troops and British authorities attempted to bring calm to the frontier. War continued in
1761, I argue in Chapter Nine, because some Cherokees wished to remove the British
presence altogether. Facing starvation and ruin, a small contingent of Cherokees – not
the whole – negotiated a treaty with British authorities after a destructive military
campaign destroyed fifteen villages. This is the subject of Chapter Ten. In the eleventh
and twelfth chapters, I show how the Anglo-Cherokee War and its conclusion drove a
wedge between South Carolina and Britain. South Carolina militiamen and British
regulars had viewed each other with contempt while the hostilities were underway. The
postwar settlement brought a new, centralized, Indian policy that seemed to institutionalize Britain’s disregard for her colonial subjects. To white South Carolinians, rich and poor alike, it appeared that the British had sided with the Cherokee Indians rather than their own colonists.

When the hostilities ended, the Cherokees had no place in the plans of western settlers and speculators. The British ostensibly protected Indian lands through the Proclamation Line of 1763, but the reality was different. Picking up where Oliphant left off, explain that settlers and speculators scooped up Indian lands, further jeopardizing the sovereignty, survival, and dignity of Indian peoples in Appalachian region. The stage was set for future conflict.

African Americans too found themselves worse off than before. But they turned white divisions to their own advantage. The number of maroon communities increased, adding to the panic of white elites.

The Seven Years’ War was a transformative event for African Americans, Indians and whites in mid-eighteenth-century South Carolina. The end of the Anglo-Cherokee War in 1761 and the end of the wider Seven Years’ War two years later masked deepening fissures of the colonial world. One such fissure was between colonists and the London metropole. But other fissures were among South Carolinians themselves. When the great imperial struggle ended, African Americans found themselves worse off than in previous years. So too did the Cherokee Indians, now disillusioned and divided. The colony’s backcountry farmers lived in poverty
and bitter resentment of Anglican Lowcountry elites. While the elites emerged victorious, they squabbled among themselves and directed a seething resentment toward Great Britain, as new policies seemed to favor Indians over British subjects.

Within a generation of the end of the Seven Years’ War, the elites moved, albeit reluctantly, toward full separation from England. In a land bitterly divided by geography, race, and class, the stage was set for a perfect conflagration.

At the Macon County Airport in May and June, 2011, heavy machinery filled over the graves and the homes of Joree. Pavers spread another six hundred feet of asphalt across the village. Then, two hundred and fifty years to the month after the 1761 devastation, a ceremony was held at Joree. But it was not a ceremony of remembrance. Atop the newly completed runway, triumphant white dignitaries assembled to cut the red ribbon. “It’s good to see this is final,” one of the dignitaries commented. “This will mean a lot to Macon County’s future.”20

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Figure 2: Cherokee Villages in the Mid-Eighteenth Century
Chapter 1: “The Chain of Friendship”: The Carolina-Cherokee Alliance

In 1729, an eccentric Scottish baronet named Sir Alexander Cuming journeyed to Charles Town, the capital of the British colony of South Carolina.\(^1\) The catalyst for his journey was a dream – not his own, but his wife’s. For a few months, perhaps hoping to set up a provincial banking system, Cuming hatched a phony investment scheme and swindled the city’s elites. Then, before his victims realized what he was up to, he cajoled a coterie of Indian traders into following him up the Cherokee Path to Indian country. His motives remain elusive to this day. Scholars have suggested he was slightly unbalanced.\(^2\)

In the forty years before Cuming hatched his scheme, the French and British (and their North American allies) had clashed in two major wars. Tensions had flared again, and Cuming now inserted himself in the mix. He understood that a Franco-Cherokee alliance would devastate commercial profits and endanger British interests.\(^3\) With no

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2 Newsome, “Alexander Cuming.” Cuming “acquainted me and some of the other Traders who where going down that He had no Errand but to see the Country And that he would continue there but a few days.” “Historical Relation of Facts delivered by Ludovich Grant, Indian Trader, to his Excellency the Governour of South Carolina,” *SCHGM* 10, no. 1 (January 1909):55.

3 “Account of the Cherokee Indians, and of Sir Alexander Cuming’s Journey amongst them,” and “Some Heads of Sir Alexander Cumings’s Journey to the Cherrokee Mountains,” *Historical Register*, 1731, p. 2-3, 8; “Historical Relation of Facts,” 56.
credentials from the British government, he undertook an enterprise of incomprehensible hubris: if all went as planned, he would obtain the legendary “Crown of Tanassee,” a wig-like cap made of possum fur, dyed red. He believed it represented the authority of the Cherokee “Nation.” He would forge an enduring Anglo-Cherokee military and commercial alliance. He would escort a delegation of Cherokees to tour England and formally seal the deal. The British Crown, Cuming hoped, would appoint him the first “minister to the Cherokees.” He would secure wealth and fame. He planned to settle London Jews in the southeastern mountains. A member of the Royal Society, he would search for undiscovered medicinal roots as well as promising rocks and minerals. He might even lay the groundwork for a pharmaceutical or mining enterprise.

The three-hundred-mile journey to Cherokee country carried Cuming toward several clusters of historically, culturally, and linguistically similar villages. Though the connection had weakened, most villagers still identified strongly with their matrilineal clans. The seven Cherokee clans – Bird, Blue, Deer, Long Hair, Paint, Wild-Potato, and Wolf – corresponded at one point in time to seven “mother towns.” Beyond clans and villages, there was no Cherokee nation-state. It existed only in the imagination of Cuming and other Britons.

4 Alexander Cuming to the Duke of Newcastle, [ca. September 1730], CO 5/4, fol. 217 (CDFA, reel 197).
5 He nominated himself for a three year term as their prime minister. Ibid., fol. 222. At some point that summer, Cuming must seen his dream of becoming Cherokee minister slip away, for he ceased petitioning on that subject. Newsome, “Alexander Cuming.”
Some fifty settlements housed about two hundred inhabitants each, ten thousand Cherokees in all. Each village was autonomous. Geography, international relations, economic connections, and dialects grouped these four or five dozen villages in clusters identified by British traders as early as 1715: the Lower, Middle, Out, Valley, and Overhill Towns. Each settlement cluster was independent, and, by virtue of proximity to different outsiders, each pursued different economic and foreign policies.

The Cherokee Path headed northwest from Monck’s Corner, about twenty miles northwest of Charles Town. Along a road now beneath the waters of Lake Marion, it passed through Eutaw Springs, St. Matthews, and into present day Cayce – “The Congarees.” From there it ran along the southwest bank of the Congaree River, then parallel to the Saluda River and through Saluda Old Town. It passed through the future site of Robert Gouedy’s trading post at Ninety Six (1751) and then traversed the Oconee Mountains before entering Keowee and the Lower Towns. These villages stood in the valleys of the Keowee and Tugaloo Rivers and on the headwaters of the Savannah in present Pickens and Oconee Counties, South Carolina. Prominent villages included Toxaway, Tomassee, Keowee, and Oconee. Villagers spoke the now-extinct Elatı (Lower) dialect.

The trail then headed west, approximately along present Highway 76. In present Clayton, Georgia, it forked. A northern fork headed to the Cherokee Middle Towns.

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8 Ibid., 12.
They lay along the Tuckasegee River and on the headwaters of the Little Tennessee, nestled among the Cowee and Balsam mountains. Middle Townsmen had colonized the Lower Towns, and would later welcome their kinsmen home during the turmoil of the 1750s and 1760s. Watauga, Joree, Ellijoy, Cowee, and Echoe were among the larger Middle Towns, but political life centered around Nequassee, today Franklin, North Carolina.\(^\text{10}\)

The Out Towns, the oldest of the Cherokee settlements, sat northeast of the Middle Towns, deep in the Smoky Mountains over Leatherman Gap. They lay off the main trade routes, unapproachable from the north and difficult to reach from the south. The Out Towns included Kittuhwa, near present Bryson City, Stecoe (today Whittier), Tuckareetchee, and Tuckasegee. In time, the descendants of Out Townsmen would form the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.\(^\text{11}\) Both the Middle and Out Towns spoke the Kittuhwa dialect. The Eastern Cherokee Nation and the United Keetoowah Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma still speak it today.\(^\text{12}\)

To the west of the fork at “The Dividings” in Clayton, and to the west of the Middle Settlements, lay the Valley Towns, situated on the Hiwassee River and its

\(^{10}\) Reid, *A Law of Blood*, 12, 15.

\(^{11}\) Ibid., 12-14.

tributary, the Valley River. Hiwassee, renowned for its fierce warriors, was the chief village of the Valley. Other Valley Town settlements included Nottely and Tomatley.\textsuperscript{13}

The same trail led northwest across the Unicoi Mountains to the Overhill Towns in present Monroe County, Tennessee. From there one path headed north to the Cherokee hunting ground in present Kentucky. Another followed the Blue Ridge and Shenandoah Valleys and connected the Overhills to western Virginia. Along the way, a road split off and led to Williamsburg. The wide, verdant valleys along the Tellico River and the lower reaches of the Little Tennessee embraced villages such as Great Tellico, Chota, Tanasee, Toqua, Chatuga, Settico, and Tallassee. Both the Overhills and the Valley spoke the same A’tŭli dialect. It later blended with Kittuwah to form the Western dialect spoken by the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma.\textsuperscript{14}

The Lower dialect had an “r” sound but no “l.” The Kittuwah and Overhill dialects have an “l” but no “r.” While the origins of the word “Cherokee” remain fuzzy, the villagers called themselves “Tsalagi” or “Tsaragi,” meaning “The People.” White traders commonly rendered the double consonant “ts” to “ch”. They thus applied the term “Charakee,” or “Cherokee” to the Lower Towns as they encountered those villages first, then applied the term to the people in each of the Settlement clusters. The Spanish and French coming from the other direction – where the Creek Confederacy populated

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the area to the west – knew them as Chalaque or Chalagee. But for the English, the term “Cherokee,” sometimes spelled differently but with the same pronunciation, stuck.

On March 23, 1730, Sir Alexander burst into the Keowee townhouse with a cutlass at his side and two pistols in his hands. He told the Indians he would torch the building and kill those inside if any “endeavoured to make their Escape.” Cuming proclaimed himself an agent of King George II. At Cuming’s orders, the traders coerced the villagers to their knees in allegiance to the King. He then forced the Keowee headmen to kneel and bow to him. Finally, he demanded that they send runners to invite the headmen of each village to meet him at Nequassee on April 3.

Today, just off the busy thoroughfare of East Main Street (State Route-28) in Franklin, North Carolina, a strange conical dome with a flat top rises fifteen feet high and spans thirty feet in diameter. Well-maintained grass grows atop and around it. The mound rests between signs of modern America; a tire and service center and gas station lie across the street. East of the mound and out of view, the Little Tennessee flows serenely by. In the distance lies a small ridge of mountains. A historical marker and an interpretive display board by the roadside offer the only trace that anything significant happened here.

15 Brian Wilkes, “Cherokee Dialects Made Easy – Or at Least Easier.”
16 *Historical Register*, 1731, p. 6-8 (March 14-22, 1730), 3; Cuming ordered the traders present to sign as witnesses: Joseph Cooper (interpreter); Ludovick Grant, Joseph Barker, Gregory Haines, Daniel Jenkinson, Thomas Goodale, William Cooper (guide); W[illia]m. Hatton, and John Biles. *Historical Register*, 1731, p. 8-9; “Historical Relation of Facts,” 56-57. See also Newsome, “Alexander Cuming.”
17 Dennis Dietz’s 2003 mural in the Scottish Tartans Museum, downtown Franklin, shows how the village might have looked.
As he made his way to Nequassee, Cuming shook the hand of all the Indians he met and recorded their names, “saying that he had made a Friend” of each of them. He collected roots, stones, and minerals, and befriended villagers. He struck a deal with the Moytoy, the headman of Great Tellico, and with its spiritual leader, Jacob the Conjurer. In exchange for their support, Cuming promised political and economic power. He reached Nequassee on April 3.18

A large Cherokee town house once stood atop the strange mound. The building was the center of village life in bustling Nequassee. It was a place of legend. The Nequasseees tended the sacred fire, which tradition said had burned since the beginning of their culture. Nunnehi, “the immortals,” lived under the mound, and had come out to fight off an invading tribe, assisting Nequassee warriors. Centrally located within Cherokee country as a whole, the village of Nequassee lay in the heart of the Middle Towns. It was a “peace town,” in which no living thing could be killed. Cherokee houses, orchards, and fields formed a picturesque panorama. Here, on April 3, as Alexander Cuming ordered, Cherokees from each of the settlement clusters converged.19

18 “Historical Relation of Facts,” 56-57; “Account of the Cherokee Indians, and of Sir Alexander Cuming’s Journey amongst them,” Historical Register, 1731, p. 3-4; Sir Alexander Cuming’s Memoir, British Museum Greater London Add. MSS. 39855 (CDFA, reel 172, p. 25); Historical Register, 1731, p. 1-3, 6-8 (March 14, 22, 1730), 7 (March 16, 17), 8 (March 22), 12 (April 6); Newsome, “Alexander Cuming.”

19 Rozema, Footsteps of the Cherokees, 260; Mooney, Myths of the Cherokee and Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees, 207, 330-33, 336-37, 477. Traditionally, each clan had a “peace town.” Cherokees prohibited weapons, fighting and any kind of bloodshed in peace towns.
“Such an Appearance as this, never was seen at any one Time before in that Country,” the adventurer wrote in his journal.20

The days that followed brought with them a series of ceremonies that English and Cherokee each viewed through culturally distinct lenses. After a day of singing and dancing, Sir Alexander named Moytoy the “Emperor” of the Cherokee Nation. Moytoy then invited Cuming to celebrate with him. The Cherokees lifted the Scotsman onto Moytoy’s seat. They performed the Eagle Tail Dance for him and “stroak’d him with 13 Eagles Tails.” In a rousing speech, Sir Alexander “represented the great Power and Goodness of his Majesty King George.” He bade “all his Subjects” to “do whatever the great King ordered them.” When the Cherokees then knelt, he assumed their unflinching obedience to the Crown and to himself. Cuming later remarked “that it was easy to make them all good Subjects.” The next day, Moytoy presented Cuming with the Crown of Tanassee, “with five Eagles Tails and four Scalps of their Enemies,” imploring him to lay these items at George II’s feet.21

Sir Alexander then assembled a delegation of Cherokees to accompany him to England to prove that this had all happened. He had already booked passage on the Fox, and it would leave in just a few weeks. Cuming targeted “a young warrior of Tannassy” to join him. If George II knew “We were so poor & naked & so much Want of

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20 “Account of the Cherokee Indians, and of Sir Alexander Cuming’s Journey amongst them,” The Historical Register, 1731, p. 2.

21 “Account of the Cherokee Indians, and of Sir Alexander Cuming’s Journey amongst them,” in The Historical Register, 1731, p. 2; Newsome, “Alexander Cuming.”; Historical Register, 1731, p. 2, 3-4. Several traders witnessed Cuming’s ceremony. Ibid., 2; “Historical Relation of Facts,” 56.
everything,” Cuming reportedly told the warrior, “He would take pity on our condition &
would give us Some Cloaths.” The young Cherokee related later that his friend, the
trader Eleazar Wiggan “Pressed” him very much that night. Wiggan insisted that “the
Distance was very much magnifyed” and he should return soon. Finally, the young
warrior, Ouconecaw, a twenty year-old warrior from the Overhills, relented and agreed to
make the trip.22

Born in 1710, the young Ouconecaw, or “White Owl,” went by many names,
including the “young warrior of Tannassy” and Chuconnunta.23 By 1756, he
answered to Attakullakulla, “The Little Carpenter.” One of the most influential but
controversial Cherokees of all time, he served as Principal Chief from 1760 to 1775.
His Wolf Clan uncles trained him in the traditions of his people. He fished and fired
blow darts along the Little Tennessee and its tributaries in the Cherokee Overhills.
The child of an influential family, he was groomed for greatness.24 Young
Attakullakulla witnessed a sequence of events that set the disparate peoples of the
Southeast on a collision course.

22 “A Conversation between his Excellency the Governor of South Carolina and Chuconnunta a head man
of the Cherokees Whose name formerly was Ouconecaw,” SCGHM 10, no. 2 (January 1909):65-66.
23 “A Conversation,” 65. He was previously known as Ouconecaw (also spelled Ookoonaka, Ucounacoo,
Ukwanequa, Ouconecaw, Oukanaka, and in British newspapers Captain Owean Nakan). He later appears
in the records as Chuconnunta (also Chucunnunta, also Chucannuta, Chugnonata, Chukennanta, etc.). James
C. Kelly, “Notable Persons in Cherokee History: Attakullakulla,” Journal of Cherokee Studies 3, no. 1
24 Attakullakulla was born ca. 1708-12 to Nancy Moytoy (Connecorte’s sister) and White Raven, an
Algonquian on the Big Island of the French Broad River (today Sevier’s Island). Attakullakulla’s son
Turtle-at-Home later told Major John Norton that Cherokee warriors captured an infant Attakullakulla from
By the time of Attakullakulla’s birth, Cherokee warriors had raided their neighbors and sold slaves to Charles Town for a generation. European diseases and the Indian slave trade depopulated the coastal tribes. The Tuscarora and Yamasee Wars of 1711 and 1715 took a further toll on the native peoples of eastern Carolina. Over time, the Indian slave trade declined, and the once-ready supply of deerskins and hunters near the coast evaporated. By 1715, the position of the Cherokees in the deerskin trade – and that of the “Creek” Confederacy and other nations to their south and west – changed dramatically.  

Traders, many of them adventure-seeking Scotsmen, rushed into the Cherokee Country. South Carolina dominated the trade. Charles Town was the largest North American port below Philadelphia. But beyond this, it remained easier to transport goods and to travel to Charles Town than to any other British town in the southeast. From the Cherokee towns, traders sent their wares down the Savannah River and north by sea to Charles Town. Later they carried their trade overland as well.

London merchants credited dealers in Charles Town, who in turn credited Indian traders with their season’s stock of goods. The traders advanced supplies to the Indians, whom they expected to repay them in peltries from the years’ hunt. In the winter, after several weeks of hunting, Cherokee men returned with deer. Women then “dressed” the

skins in a time-consuming process, scraping them with a rock or cracked shell and
treating them with pulverized animal brains to make them soft and supple. Cherokees
also supplied some plants – ginseng root, snakeroot, and Indian pink – to colonial
markets. By the late spring or early summer, traders, with pack-horsemen, servants and
slaves, arrived with an ever-expanding array of British goods. They brought English
woolens in bright colors – strouds, duffels, striped shirts, coats, blankets, and match-
coats. They carried hats, shirts, stockings, and anklets. They carried hoes, hatchets,
knives, adzes, bells, kettles, scissors and mirrors. They brought vermillion paint, guns,
powder, bullets, flint, and tomahawks. The traders also delivered salt, liquor, and live
poultry. And they established a permanent and visible presence in the Cherokee villages,
marrying Indian women and introducing mixed race offspring into Indian society.26

The deerskin trade was the vortex that sucked in the Cherokees. With gardens to
tend, deer to hunt, and skins to tan, little time remained to manufacture household items
and clothing. In these changed circumstances, the Cherokees needed British goods to
replace things they no longer made themselves. But there were new items as well,
readily incorporated into daily life. The Cherokees took pride in personal appearance.
The array of available merchandise was mesmerizing. Beholden to the merchants on the

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26 Brown, Old Frontiers, 47-48. The trader lived comfortably, with a hot-house, living quarters, horses,
cattle, hogs and poultry roaming freely, smokehouse stocked with venison and bear, store-room filled with
dried fruits, nuts, wild honey and vegetables; tea, sugar, salt, and spices from Charleston, a Cherokee wife.
Once a trader had won the confidence and admiration of his Indian acquaintances, a warrior befriended him
and protected him. Mary U. Rothrock, “Carolina Traders Among the Overhill Cherokees, 1690-1760,”
East Tennessee Historical Society’s Publications 1 (1929):15-16; Eirlys Mair Barker, “Much Blood and
Treasure: South Carolina’s Indian Traders, 1670-1755,” (Ph.D. diss., College of William and Mary, 1993).
coast, traders kept the Indians in perpetual debt or close to it. Thus they became more dependent on manufactured items. By 1753, Skiagunsta of Keowee, head warrior of the Lower Towns, claimed that “every necessary of life – clothes, guns, ammunition, blankets, and more – we must have from the white people.” He continued, admitting, “My people…cannot live independent of the English.”

By the 1750s, the Cherokee were not just dependent upon European trade goods. They were embroiled in a territorial dispute with their neighbors to the south: the loose confederacy of Indian peoples known as the Creeks. They were also in the middle of the rivalry between France and Britain. The Cherokees had always refused to be pawns on the imperial chessboard. Though they played the French and British against each other, Cherokees generally favored the British. The British had superior economic resources and the Cherokee negotiated a treaty with them in 1730.

The French nevertheless posed a legitimate threat to British influence. French agents, spies, and soldiers treated the Cherokee with respect. They doled out presents from outposts at Mobile, New Orleans, and Fort Toulouse, the “Alabama Fort” near present Montgomery. French settlers lived farther away, in Canada and Acadia, and in much smaller numbers than the British. But Cherokee leaders remained receptive to French overtures, especially during times of war between France and England. Whether

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27 Rothrock, “Carolina Traders Among the Overhill Cherokees,” 13-14, 17; Brown, Old Frontiers, 47-48.  
the French could deliver on their promises, or what would happen if the British drove the
French from North America remained unknown.

Figure 3: French Louisiana in the 1750’s. From Jean-Bernard Bossu’s Travels, ed. Seymour Feiler

France and Britain needed the Cherokees, too. The eighteenth-century deerskin
trade was vital to the economy of South Carolina, for whom rice and indigo constituted
the only other significant exports. And indigo cultivation was just catching on. One
hundred and fifty Carolina traders and packhorsemen operated solely among the Cherokees by 1756. Enslaved frontiersmen, backcountry farmers, soldiers, merchants, and factors on both sides of the Atlantic—even sea captains—depended upon Cherokee deerskins. The Cherokee Indians thus wielded considerable geopolitical power. By the 1750s, they also had three thousand Cherokee warriors. White residents feared of slave rebellion to boot. Sparsely settled Georgia and North Carolina could offer little aid. Cherokees could block British or French imperial expansion—if the price was right.30

Attakullakulla’s decision to go to England was partly to satisfy his curiosity and to appease the trader Wiggan. But more importantly, it was a political calculation. In fact, all six of the Indian travelers chosen at Nequassee hailed from the Overhills, and all six belonged to the Wolf Clan. A Lower Townsman named Ounakannowie joined them on the way to Charles Town.31 Here, the seven Indians boarded the man-of-war Fox on May 4, 1730. The ship landed a month later; Cuming traveled ahead with the Crown of Tanasee.32

For three and a half months, Attakullakulla and his companions toured the greater London area and absorbed British culture.33 On June 18, the Indians attended an

30 Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, 191.
31 Kelly, “Attakullakulla,” 2; “Account of the Cherokee Indians, and of Sir Alexander Cuming’s Journey amongst them,” Historical Register, 1731, p. 5.
32 See ship logs, CDFA, reel 191; “Account of the Cherokee Indians, and of Sir Alexander Cuming’s Journey amongst them,” Historical Register, 1731, p. 5.
33 Kelly, “Attakullakulla,” 2-3. “He was shy of being stared at, and therefore always chose to go incognito to any publick place,” one British magazine said. “They are welcome,” said said, “to look upon me as a strange creature…in return they give me an opportunity to look upon thousands.” Court Magazine, August 1762, in Carolyn Foreman, Indians Abroad, 79-80, cited in Kelly, “Attakullakulla,” 4.
installation ceremony for the Knights of the Garter at St. George’s Chapel, Windsor Castle. Afterwards they met and kissed the hands of King George II, Frederick the Prince of Wales, and the Duke of Montagu.  

Figure 4: George II, by Enoch Seeman, 1730. Courtesy of the Royal Collection.

Four days later, with Sir Alexander present, they met the king again. They streaked and spotted their faces and shoulders with red, blue and green paint. They carried bows and wore feathers on their heads. Sir Alexander laid the Crown of Tanasee at his Majesty’s Feet. The Cherokees presented eagle’s tails and the scalps of four of

34 Foreman, Indians Abroad, 45-46.
their Indian enemies. Dressed in flowing court clothing, “rich Garments laced with Gold,” they posed for a group portrait to commemorate their visit.

Figure 5: Engraving by Isaac Basire of the Cherokee Indians who visited London in 1730, ca. 1740-1760. Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution.


36 To the far right, Attakullakulla appears small and slender. He holds a pebble-filled gourd in one hand and a knife in the other. Kelly, “Attakullakulla,” 4; Foreman, Indians Abroad, 47-50, 52.
The Cherokee diplomats visited popular destinations including St. James Park, Canterbury Cathedral, and the Tower of London. They observed card-tricks at “Mr. Fawke’s Booth” at the Bartholemew Fair in Smithfield. They saw “Tilts, feats of acrobats, sham-fights, and miracle plays” at the Fair. They visited the Bedlam (Bethlem) lunatic asylum, a popular tourist attraction. A theatrical performance followed: Thomas Doggett’s “Mad Tom of Bedlam; or the Distress’d Lovers, with the comical Humour of Squire Numscull.” They hobknobbed with London merchants involved in the trade with Carolina. They watched military drills and shot bows and arrows with the Society of Archers. But the rounds became stressful for the Cherokees. Thieves robbed them of a sword and two rings. They scuffled with each other at their lodgings. After a play called *The Tragedy of Oronooko* two of the Indians briefly vanished.

On September 7, under military escort, the Cherokees departed from their quarters in an undertaker’s basement on Kingstreet in Covent Garden. They arrived a short distance later at the headquarters of the Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantations (the “Board of Trade”) in Whitehall. The Lords “acquainted” them with a treaty—termed “Articles of Friendship and Commerce”—the board had drafted. The Lords then

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39 *Daily Journal*, October 3, 1730, in Norton, “Cherokee Indians visit London, 1730.” In 1696, William III appointed eight paid commissioners to promote trade in the American plantations and elsewhere. The Lords Commissioners of Trade and Foreign Plantations became known as the Board of Trade.
dazzled the Cherokees with a room full of presents and trade goods. Whether in haste or in fraud, the interpreter apparently failed to provide an accurate translation of the document to the Cherokees.40

Two days later, the Cherokees returned for the formal signing ceremony. They sang four or five songs when they entered the chamber.41 “The Chain of Friendship between him [King George II] and the Cherokee Indians is like the Sun,” the Board said. “As there are no Spots or Blackness in the Sun, so is there not any Rust or Foulness in this Chain.” The Chain extended metaphorically from His Majesty King George II. The Board ordered the Cherokee visitors to carry the chain home. It would link to Moytoy and “to the Breasts” of Cherokee leaders, “never more to be broken or made loose.” Thus, “fasten’d together by the Chain of Friendship,” King George ordered “the English in Carolina” not just to trade with the Indians and to furnish them with trade goods but also to build homesteads of their own from Charles-Town to “behind the Great Mountains.” The “Articles” insisted that “the King has given his Land on both Sides of the great Mountains to his own Children the English.” He now gave the Cherokees “the Privilege of living where they please.”42 The agreement required the Cherokees to go to


42 Historical Register, 1731, p. 14-15.
war against Britain’s enemies; to protect British traders; to trade only with the British; to
prohibit the settlement of non-British Europeans in their territory; to return runaway
slaves; and to live under British law. In return, the British sent the Cherokees home with
guns and ammunition, cloth, hatchets, knives, kettles, belts, and wampum.43

None of the Indians present had the authority to speak or to sign on behalf of the
nonexistent “Cherokee Nation,” let alone their individual villages. According to British
sources, Kettagusta replied through the translator on behalf of the Cherokee visitors. He
thanked the Board for the kind treatment they had received. He promised to carry the
“Chain of Friendship” back home. He assured the Lords of Trade that “our Hands and
Hearts are join’d together.” He promised that white settlers might “very safely build
Houses near us.” And he promised that the Cherokees would return runaway African
American slaves for free, “as well as we can.”44

According to the Cherokees, the meeting with the King was simply a military and
diplomatic alliance. Eighteenth-century deerskin trader and ethnographer James Adair
and another Cherokee trader Ludovick Grant later reported that a delegate had asked “is it
true?” when the King claimed dominion of Indian lands. The interpreter had translated
those words not as a question but as a statement – it is true” – and the deed was done.

43 Ibid., 16:14-15. Presents included striped duffels (4), guns (20), gunpowder (400 pounds), swan shot
(500 pounds), bullets (500 pounds), knives (72), belts (120), and a wampum belt.

44 Historical Register, 1731, p. 17-18. The meeting took two hours. London Journal, September 12, 1730
in Norton, “Cherokee Indians visit London, 1730.” Sir William Keith, a Pennsylvania lawyer, drafted the
Articles and wrote the Cherokee reply. Ketagusta did not speak the words attributed to him. See K. H.
Ledward, ed., ‘Journal, August 1730: Journal Book G.G’, Journals of the Board of Trade and Plantations,
Volume 6: January 1729-December 1734 (1928), p. 135-140. (August 20), http://www.british-
When the Cherokees got a full translation of the “Articles,” they nearly killed both the interpreter and Kettagusta. Cooler heads eventually prevailed. They believed that the language was figurative and not enforceable. And they resolved that their elders at home would deal with it. Since they had no authority to cede the land, they reasoned that the articles held no sway. On September 29, after twenty-two days of consideration, the Cherokee representatives assented and six of them signed their names to the treaty.

In the early morning of October 2, Attakullakulla and his colleagues, laden with gifts, set out for Portsmouth where they re-embarked aboard the Fox on October 7. Several of the Cherokees shed tears upon departing. Attakullakulla reportedly grasped the last person’s hand that met his, an old fisherwoman’s. Wringing it hard, tears welling up in his eyes, he repeated, “I tank you, I tank you, I tank you all.”

Although historian J.P. Brown argued that this treaty initiated the death-knell of Cherokee independence, his conclusion misses the mark. Attakullakulla’s visit left a lasting impression on him. The English had cemented a lifelong friendship and provided

49 J. P. Brown, Old Frontiers, 45.
him with a claim to political relevance. The Anglo-Cherokee relationship, like all relationships, rested upon reciprocity. The treaty amounted to nothing more than an expression of mutual expectations among men who had no significant authority. Looking outward from the mountains, they saw the British as coastal interlopers who could not singlehandedly set the terms of the relationship. Indeed, as the Cherokees saw it, the relationship would be fluid, shaped not just by the British but also by Cherokee diplomats, French overtures, and when necessary, Cherokee warriors.

In formalizing an alliance and an exclusive trade agreement with the British, Cuming hoped he had squelched French competition in the southeast. But the treaty did not reflect the wishes of the majority of Cherokees. And French influence remained strong. By 1734, any enthusiasm Cherokees had for an alliance with the British had turned to pessimism and doubt. A Council held at Great Tellico disavowed the treaty and rebuked its signers. The trans-Atlantic emissaries renounced the treaty they had signed. The Cherokees “say we are all slaves to the Great George,” a letter writer from South Carolina informed Georgia governor James Oglethorpe. One hundred Cherokees then plundered a trader’s store at Keowee. “The Principal actors in this Affair,” Oglethorpe’s correspondent noted, “was those Indians that Sir Alexander Cummings lately carried over to England.”

In 1736, Christian Gottlieb Priber arrived at Great Tellico. British officials firmly believed that he was an undercover French agent. A gentleman of German birth, he held

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50 Extract of a letter from South Carolina, February 1733/4, CRG, 20:49-50.
a doctorate and had practiced law in Europe. Priber ate, drank, danced and slept with the Indians. The “little ugly man,” one British report said, “trimm’d his hair in the indian manner & painted as they did going…almost naked except a shirt & a Flap.” Priber befriended Moytoy and the Tellico warriors. He married an Indian woman and fathered a child with her. After learning the Overhill dialect, he compiled a dictionary.

Proclaiming himself “His Majesty’s Principal Secretary of State,” Priber opened a correspondence with South Carolina officials. Priber laid out his plans for the “Kingdom of Paradise” in a manuscript that he intended to publish in Europe. He envisioned a community among the Cherokee, where “all things should be in common amongst them,” including their wives. The public would share child-rearing responsibilities. “All Colours and Complexions” – Indians, Europeans, Africans, all those who adhered to the principles of the Society – were welcome. He also planned a “City of Refuge for all Criminals, Debtors, and Slaves who would fly thither from Justice or their Masters.”

According to trader James Adair, Priber impressed upon the Cherokees “a very ill opinion of the English, representing them as a fraudulent, avaritious, and encroaching

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people.” The visitor convinced the Indians that the English coveted their lands and insisted that they had deliberately infected the Cherokees with smallpox in 1738. Under the visionary German’s influence, more Cherokees, including the influential Overhill war chief Oconostota, broke with Attakullakulla in support of the French.\(^54\) Priber allegedly suggested that “they should move the chief seat of Government to a place nearer the french.”\(^55\) As trader Ludovick Grant later said, British officials chafed at Priber’s presence. They attempted twice, unsuccessfully, to take him captive.\(^56\)

In 1743, Creek Indians and traders under the employ of Captain Kent, the British commander at Fort Augusta, waylaid and seized Priber near the village of Tallapoosa, on his way to Fort Toulouse. He died in British custody in a Frederica, Georgia, jail in 1744. His utopian manifesto and Cherokee dictionary disappeared.\(^57\) If the British had not interfered, the Cherokees might have established an independent state in the Southern Appalachians. Priber had opened their minds to possibilities, and he had confirmed their inclination to chart their own course.

In 1740, during Priber’s stay among the Cherokee, a band of Ottawa Indians kidnapped Attakullakulla and took him to Canada, where they detained him until 1748. Moytoy died in battle in 1741. The British appointed Moytoy’s thirteen year-old son


\(^{56}\) “Historical Relation of Facts,” 60. Adair, *History of the American Indians*, 241-42. The Cherokees ordered Colonel Fox to leave and Priber himself dismissed Ludovick Grant, a trader sent to capture him.

Ammonscossitee, to succeed his father as Emperor. His birth had given him the role; he lacked the support of other Cherokees. A power struggle erupted among Overhill Cherokee headmen. In *The Cherokee Frontier*, David Corkran argues that with British backing in the 1720s, Great Tellico and its allies in Hiwassee had unseated the more traditional, anti-British village of Chota as the political center of the Cherokee people. Cuming’s visit briefly reinforced this power shift. But during the late-1740s and early-1750s, Chota gradually reasserted itself. And South Carolina authorities desperately tried to undermine the town’s influence.59

War raged between Britain and France in the 1740s. South Carolina Governor James Glen negotiated unsuccessfully with the Cherokees and other southeastern Indians in 1746. Glen told the Board of Trade that “if we had a Fort in these Overhill Towns,” it would “bar the door against the French, & be such a Bridle in the Mouths of the Indians themselves, that would for ever keep them ours.”60 Glen sent militia officer and Commons House representative George Pawley to negotiate a treaty with the Lower Cherokees. To curry South Carolina’s favor and to prevent illegal expansion, a few Lower Towns headmen ceded a massive swath of land between Ninety Six and the east bank of Long Cane Creek in northwest South Carolina. It was a divisive move.

60 In 1752, Glen wrote that it would “render all that Country his Majesty’s property as much as any part of this Province is” and cited Fort Toulouse. The outpost, he argued, would ensure the smooth operation of trade with the Indians. James Glen to the Board of Trade, September 29, 1746, July 27, 1752, *BPRO-SC*, 22:200, 25:70-71; Stuart Stumpf, “James Glen, Cherokee Diplomacy, and the Construction of an Overhill Fort,” *East Tennessee Historical Society’s Publications* 50 (1978):23-25.
Outraged Cherokees united under Connecorte, the headman of Chota. As a young man, he had sustained a battle wound that left him permanently disabled. The British called him “Old Hop.”

In 1746, “Norward” Indians, an assortment of Six Nations, Shawnees, and Nottowegas, launched raids on South Carolina colonists and Catawbas. They enjoyed the full support of the Chota Council and the disgruntled Lower Towns faction that had not signed the treaty. The invaders carried off and eventually killed trader George Haig. Carolina rebuilt Fort Moore at the western gateway to South Carolina and established a palisaded fort at the Congarees, but the violence continued. Eventually, these Northern invaders and their Lower Towns allies turned against the Creeks, revitalizing the intermittent conflict between Creeks and Cherokees. Lower Cherokee villagers scattered to the Overhills for refuge. The Chotas cultivated their pent-up animosity over traders’ abuses, prompting the refugees to threaten traders. Some joined gangs of northern Indians in assaults on the Carolina frontier. By 1751, a serious crisis raged.

Traders abandoned the Cherokee country. Settlers scattered to private forts and to the northern colonies. All sides spread rumors and prepared for a war that never came.

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The “Panic of 1751” never evolved into large-scale violence.63 Pressed by the Commons House, Governor Glen held the Lower Towns responsible for not stopping the “Norward” invaders. Northern Indian depredations ranged from the Cloud homestead on the Saluda River to the seaside settlements in Christ Church Parish. Cherokee warriors killed just one trader (caught in the crossfire of a Creek-Cherokee skirmish) and wounded just three others. Still, in June, Glen halted the Cherokee trade and planned a military campaign.64

In the midst of this crisis, Attakullakulla, who had returned from captivity and moved from Tomatley to Chota, saw an opportunity. With several dozen companions, he ventured to Williamsburg, Virginia, arriving in August 1751. Vying for power among the Cherokees while retaining his ties to the English, he hoped to bypass South Carolina. He aimed to open trade with Virginia, undermining Glen’s diplomacy and breaking the South Carolina monopoly. Much to Glen’s chagrin, Virginia’s acting governor, Lewis Burwell, promised to encourage traders to visit the Cherokees. He sent Attakullakulla home with a generous supply of presents.65 When Glen pressed Burwell, claiming the move encroached on Carolina’s traditional sphere of influence, the Virginia official backpedaled, insisting that he had made no such promise. His about-face had little practical effect.66

66 Lewis Burwell to James Glen, October 26, 1751, *DRIA*, 1:159-61.
His hand forced, Glen invited Cherokees from every village but Chota to Charles Town. They signed a treaty on November 29, 1751, full of promises that neither side would honor. Glen reaffirmed his plans to build forts in the Lower and Overhill Towns. He also attempted to better regulate the trade by fixing prices to the goods commonly exchanged. The horrors predicted during “Panic of 1751” – forecasts of alliances dashed, of Cherokee attacks on the frontier, of a slave uprising in Charles Town, and of European and Indian warriors marching on the Cherokee settlements – had not proven true. Yet.

In New York, Governor George Clinton hosted South Carolina Councilman William Bull, and delegates from the Catawba and Six Nations for a series of conferences. The violence halted and “Norward” raids decreased. In 1753, a strange assortment of diplomats temporarily talked down the Creeks.

Cherokees had heard since 1729 of British plans to build a fort in their villages. Both sides could see many advantages. A fort offered protection from northern and French-allied Indians for South Carolina’s traders and from enemy Indian attacks. It would give the British colonists in South Carolina a foothold from which to secure and maintain Cherokee loyalty. This was increasingly important given Virginia’s attempt to enter the Cherokee trade. In theory, a fort could provide a steady stream of trade goods through a well-regulated trade. The Lower Towns would gain power among the Cherokee settlements due to their increased ability to shape foreign policy. Finally, a fort

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would encourage Lower Townspeople displaced by northern enemies and Creeks to resettle, thus increasing the influence of the Lower settlements in the southeast. 69

In autumn 1753, Glen advanced his own funds to the project, allegedly in expectation of future kick-backs. Construction began in October at a site that commanded the ford on the east bank of the Keowee River and lay opposite the Cherokee Lower Town of Keowee. Six weeks later, the project was complete. The governor left a detachment of Independent Company troops to garrison the outpost, named Fort Prince George after the fifteen year-old heir to the British throne, later George III. The Fort caused more problems than it solved. 70

But the shaky South Carolina-Cherokee alliance now faced challenges not just from the French but from Virginia as well. Virginians had already attempted to siphon off the Cherokee trade. Now, Virginia hastened a war between Britain and France. The war unwittingly drew South Carolinians – black and white, and Cherokees, into a regional referendum on the future of their relationship with Britain. The “Chain of Friendship” would be tested.


Chapter 2: “A small Spark may kindle a great Fire”: Imperial Tensions Threaten the Alliance

By 1753, the French had begun to assert their claim to the Appalachian region of North America, stirring up Indian allies and jeopardizing the plans of wealthy white investors. Virginia Governor Robert Dinwiddie sent twenty-one-year-old Major George Washington westward to Fort LeBoeuf with two companies of Virginia militiamen to the Ohio Country to investigate. The French commander Captain Jacques Legardeur de Saint-Pierre declined to withdraw. Dinwiddie then sent more militia to build a small fort at the forks of the Ohio at present-day Pittsburgh. French troops rushed in, forced the Virginians to abandon the post, and then erected Fort Duquesne at the same location.1

When Dinwiddie again dispatched Washington, now a lieutenant colonel, to the Ohio Country the next year, South Carolina Governor James Glen urged caution. But Dinwiddie ignored him.2 Under orders from the British Secretary of State, Glen reluctantly sent a third of South Carolina’s Independent Companies under Captain James Mackay, to join Washington’s force. The Independent Companies, commanded by colonial governors until the crown stipulated otherwise, consisted of British regulars


2 DRIA, 1:472-74, 477-79, 480-81, JCA, November 21, 1752-September 6, 1754 [Vol. 12]:395-96 (March 5, 1754), 410-11 (March 9, 1754). On the April 15 letter from Dinwiddie, see 489 (May 7, 1754), 490 (May 7, 1754), on the Assembly’s recommendations, 524-27 (May 10, 1754).
whose charge was to man and maintain fortifications. The departure of the Independent Companies allowed slaves to intimidate and frighten coastal elites.

By the time Mackay arrived, Washington and a detachment of his men had already clashed with a French party. To avoid conflict, the commander of the composite force graciously exercised a joint command with the Virginian. In haste, the combined forces built a small stockade, Fort Necessity, at the Great Meadows. Developments in the Ohio Country “greatly alarmed” Governor Glen. “A small Spark may kindle a great Fire,” he wrote to British Secretary of State Sir Thomas Robinson, and “if the Flame bursts out all the Water in the Ohio will not be able to extinguish it, but that it may soon spread and light up a general Conflagration.” Glen predicted an imperial war.

On July 3, 1754, nine hundred French soldiers surrounded the three hundred Virginians and South Carolina Independents at Fort Necessity. “From the numbers of the enemy and our situation we could not hope for victory,” Mackay and Washington wrote. Firing from all sides for nine hours in the pouring rain, the French drubbed the Anglo-

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4 During October militia drills, Charles Town slave owners “delivered their Fire Arms to Negroes to carry home.” A terrified letter-writer to the South Carolina Gazette explained that the bondsmen then “charged and discharged” those weapons “several times as they went along the Streets, to the great Terror of many Ladies.” The writer admonished the careless militiamen that “their Servants will soon make them hold their Trenchers.” SCG, October 17, 1754, p. 2.
6 James Glen to Robert Dinwiddie, June 1, 1754, to Sir Thomas Robinson, August 15, 1754, DRIA, 1:524-28, 531; JCA 12 (1754-1755):437 (April 23), 482-83 (May 4).
Virginian army, forcing the commanders to surrender. The battle launched the imperial war that Glen had predicted. And it drew the Cherokees into it.

Figure 6: Eastern North America during the French and Indian War Era.

Robert Dinwiddie to James Glen, *DRIA*, 1:528-32; *SCG*, August 22, 1754, p. 2. Independent Company officer Lieutenant Peter Mercier, commander of the Fort Congaree II garrison, was among the dead.
Cherokee villages pursued different foreign policies based largely on geography. Delegates from the Valley Towns of Great Tellico and Hiwassee had negotiated with the British in the past. But these were young villages, which diminished their authority. And they were situated near the Creeks. Middle Townsmen were isolated due to treacherous roads, and were buttressed by Cherokees to their south, west, and east. Lower Townsmen often visited with Governor Glen. But their proximity to Carolina made trade goods easier to acquire but left them vulnerable to British settlers’ encroachments. A power struggle further fractured the Lower Towns. The death of a prominent warrior and a land dispute and war with the Creeks only exacerbated this tussle. More unity existed in the Overhills. Chota was the Overhills’ political and diplomatic center. It was also one of the seven Cherokee “mother towns.” The Chota headman Connecorte, or Old Hop, emerged with the affirmation of all the Overhills villagers as their chief civil authority.

South Carolina, Virginia, and the French all contended for Cherokee affections. Which side would the Indians choose? That answer depended upon a variety of factors including geography and village politics. Villages that tended towards neutrality could play French and British officials against each other. Such a decision buffered the southeastern British colonies from French and Indian attacks. Villages that allied with Carolina continued Carolina’s profitable deerskin trade under the status quo. With a clear path between Virginia and the Overhills, an alliance with that colony might secure villagers a more beneficial trade. But Virginia was distracted. And French and Indian

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attacks threatened to disrupt that trade. Eventually many Cherokees favored South Carolina and sought a fort in the Overhill villages. But mired by the abuses of traders and the activities of French spies, the already precarious Cherokee-Carolina relationship teetered further towards a collapse.

Again in 1755, developments in the imperial struggle put the Cherokees at center stage. The British hatched a strategy to attack the French on three fronts. In one of the three theaters, Major General Edward Braddock marched hurriedly against Fort Duquesne with British and colonial troops. Glen and the South Carolina Assembly criticized Dinwiddie and Braddock’s aggressiveness and blocked funds for the campaign. “Mr. Glen,” Dinwiddie wrote to North Carolina governor Arthur Dobbs, “appears to do every Thing in his Power to obstruct” the expedition. Dinwiddie expected the help of southeastern Indians, but Glen blocked his efforts. “I cannot conceive his Conduct, as it appears quite contrary to the Int’t of the Nation.”10

To Dinwiddie’s chagrin, Overhills Cherokee warriors did not rush to Virginia’s aid. Instead, hoping to cultivate a military and economic alliance with the Carolinians, they accepted Glen’s invitation to a peace conference. Five-hundred Cherokee warriors traveled from the Cherokee Overhills. Some of them carried the frail Chota headman Connecorte. An equally impressive contingent of Rangers, Independent Company

troops, and militiamen from Dorchester and Charles Town made the trip. So too did several members of the Charles Town elite.  

They met on the banks of the Saluda River near Saluda Old Town in early July 1755. Enveloped by hundreds of soldiers and warriors, Glen and Tomatley headman Attakullakulla sat on chairs under a makeshift arbor. The Indians heard Glen boast of the British crown’s power and of the benefits of an economic and military partnership. He offered forts and protection against their enemies in exchange for land and loyalty. And he vowed once more that South Carolina traders would provide them with every material necessity they wanted. Speaking for the frail Consecorte, Attakullakulla laid a bag of soil, a bag of corn, and his bow and arrows at the governor’s feet. “We are brothers to the people of Carolina,” he said. He introduced Glen to a Cherokee boy, perhaps his son Dragging Canoe, “that when he grows up he may remember our agreement.”

What exchange actually took place? No deed exists. Some have argued that through Attakullakulla, the Cherokees surrendered all of their lands and became vassals of the British Crown. Attakullakulla said “we freely surrender all our Lands,” the South Carolina Gazette reported. But historian Alexander Hewatt, who knew whites present at the treaty signing, wrote in 1779 that the headman offered “part of our lands.”

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11 SCG, July 24-31, 1755, p. 1-2. Glen departed June 16 with Captain John Skene’s Dorchester militia, and Captain Thomas Law Elliott’s Craven County militia. He returned on July 9. SCG, June 5-12, 1755, p. 2.


13 Hewatt, An Historical Account, 2:203.


15 Hewatt, An Historical Account, 2:203. One historian claims that the conference set present Spartanburg and Greenville counties as the official Cherokee-Carolina border. Milling, Red Carolinians, 285.
Others believe that Attakullakulla intended only a symbolic gesture of alliance. Tom Hatley claims that Glen, in search of laurels at a time of political failure, exaggerated and subsequently misrepresented this gesture.\(^{16}\)

Indeed, Glen boasted to Governor Dinwiddie that he had secured a vast cession of all Cherokee lands. But did Glen misrepresent the Saluda Conference to revive his flagging reputation in Charles Town? Peter Timothy, printer of the *South Carolina Gazette*, wrote a private letter to Philadelphia’s Benjamin Franklin. In it, he complained that “The wretched Management of Indian Affairs” by Governor Glen “Has occasioned the imposing Silence on my Press, under Various Pretences.” And surely Connecorte would not have condoned Attakullakulla’s cession, no matter how small. It would have been political suicide.\(^{17}\)

No one can know for sure what delegates agreed to at Saluda. In a little-known document dated 1761, the Commons House reported that “There are Incorrectnesses” in the treaty, “for it was written by Doctor [Alexander] Garden upon his knee and Dictated by the Governor amidst the noise & Din of a thousand People.”\(^{18}\)

Just days after the Saluda Conference, French forces and their Indian allies clashed with another Anglo-Virginian expedition not far from the site of Washington’s defeat the year before. Washington miraculously survived this battle though bullets

\(^{16}\) Hatley, *The Dividing Paths*, 76-79. Glen was a lame duck, set to be replaced that fall anyway.


whizzed by him. But the campaign’s commander, Major General Edward Braddock, fell
wounded and died a few days later. Hastily buried under the road as his men retreated, a
third of his expedition joined Braddock among the dead. Another third fell wounded.
With “Braddock’s Defeat,” a greatly outnumbered French and Indian army defeated a
numerically superior British and provincial army. The French retained Fort Duquesne
and remained firmly entrenched in the Ohio Valley.\textsuperscript{19}

Dinwiddie informed Glen of the “fatal Stroke” to the British colonies. He
accused Glen of deliberately keeping Cherokee warriors from aiding Virginia. If Glen
had not taken a “preposterous, irregular, and inconsist’t Step” at Saluda, “we sh’d not in
all probability have been defeated.”\textsuperscript{20} The purchase of Indian land, he added, “appears to
me wrong.” Instead the British should “cherish them with Pres’ts and regulate the Price
of Goods sold to them.”\textsuperscript{21}

Connecorte’s son Cappy told Dinwiddie that the Cherokees had played Glen for a
fool. Cappy said that the Saluda Conference had been nothing more than a Cherokee
diversion to pit the French against the British, and Virginia versus South Carolina.\textsuperscript{22}

Braddock and Washington had been in for a dangerous fight in any event.

\textsuperscript{19} Fred Anderson, \textit{Crucible of War: The Seven Years’ War and the Fate of Empire in British North
\textsuperscript{20} Robert Dinwiddie to James Abercromby, August 7, 1755, to James Glen, July 28, 1755, to Arthur Dobbs,
September 18, 1755, \textit{Dinwiddie Papers}, 1:123-24, 125, 203.
\textsuperscript{22} Robert Dinwiddie to Arthur Dobbs, Williamsburg, September 18, 1755, Minutes of a Council with the
Cherokees, Williamsburg, September 4, 1755, Robert Dinwiddie to James Glen, Williamsburg, September
Ostenaco was born in Hiwassee in 1703. By his prowess in battle, he became a prominent warrior and a figure recognized as a political leader by colonial authorities. Though he helped to negotiate the 1751 treaty with South Carolina, he had lost faith in Governor Glen. Eager to restore his reputation among the Overhills and with Virginia alike, the warrior headman moved to Tomatley and courted a military and economic partnership with Virginia.

After Braddock’s defeat, “French Indians,” particularly Shawnees, reduced the Virginia frontier to “blood and violence.” It was “a land of horror and desolation,” the Pennsylvania Gazette described. Hundreds of settlers fled southward to the Carolinas. A preemptive Cherokee strike against the Shawnees, inveterate enemies of both Virginia and the Cherokees, would protect the Overhills. And it would rescue Virginia, which would no doubt respond with gratitude and a generous trading partnership with the Overhills Cherokees. Ostenaco acted quickly, though other Cherokee leaders wavered. In November 1755, he led 130 Cherokee warriors to Virginia for a winter campaign against the Shawnees along Sandy Creek.

Virginia was so eager to please Ostenaco and so admired the Indian’s skills that the warrior and Major Andrew Lewis commanded the expedition jointly. But the mission failed. Canoes ferrying supplies overturned at an icy river crossing. Provisions ran low.

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Cherokees ate their horses to survive. On the return trip, they took horses and supplies from settlers in the Virginia backcountry. A white frontiersman lured some of the starving warriors with food. Then he sent a rag-tag group of vigilantes to ambush them. Several Indians died.

Figure 7: Austenaco, Great Warrior. From the Royal Magazine, 1762. Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution.

25 Robert Dinwiddie to Henry Fox, Esqr., May 24, 1756, Dinwiddie Papers, 2:413. William Preston, Diary of Sandy Creek Expedition, February 9-March 13, 1756, Draper Manuscripts, 1QQ96-123.

26 Brown, Old Frontiers, 58.
While most of the survivors returned to the Overhills, Ostenaco went on to Williamsburg with a smaller delegation to confirm the alliance. To show their commitment to Virginia, they scalped a French military officer and captured three Acadians (whom the British had forcibly evicted from Nova Scotia earlier in 1755 and who had fled overland from exile in South Carolina or Georgia). Governor Dinwiddie made Ostenaco his guest of honor. The Cherokee and his wife toured the Virginia capitol at Williamsburg and rode in Dinwiddie’s coach. Flanked by local militiamen, the Cherokee led a parade. He dined with the family of thirteen-year-old Thomas Jefferson. He may have watched as the College of William and Mary conferred an honorary degree to publisher and inventor Benjamin Franklin for his experiments with electricity. The visit flattered Ostenaco and reassured many Cherokees that Virginia might be a worthwhile partner, preferable to South Carolina.

In December 1755, Dinwiddie dispatched Virginia Councilmen Peter Randolph and William Byrd on a diplomatic mission. They first concluded a treaty at Catawba Town, North Carolina, on February 20. In a surprising show of humility, they asked for help and promised to fully equip Catawba warriors. In turn, the Catawba leader King Hagler agreed to send forty warriors to the Virginia frontier within forty days.

27 *Maryland Gazette*, May 6, 1756, p. 3.


29 *A Treaty Held with the Catawba and Cherokee Indians...in the Months of February and March 1756* (Williamsburg: W. Hunter, 1756), iii, v-ix, xiii-xiv. The two men carried the Governor’s letter, commission, instructions, speeches for Attakullakulla and Haglar, and a generous assortment of gifts.

30 *A Treaty Held with the Catawba and Cherokee Indians*, xi-xii, 1-8.
A few weeks later, on the Broad River of North Carolina, Byrd, Randolph and some North Carolinians met with Overhill leaders and asked for their military aid. The Indians demurred. “Unless we have a Fort built for the Protection of our Wives and Children” Attakullakulla said, “it will not be safe for us to leave them.” Despite Glen’s “frequent promises” to build a fort (in May of 1755 in Charles Town and at Saluda in July), the Governor had not “made the least Preparations towards performing his Engagement,” the headman complained. “I must again repeat it,” he said; Glen “has forfeited his Word.”

Attakullakulla presented a bundle of deerskins to the Virginians as a goodwill offering as he again called for trade with the colony. Dinwiddie’s emissaries asked the Cherokees to pledge two hundred warriors to serve in another Virginia campaign against the Shawnees. Nothing came from those proposals. But as they had for generations, young Cherokee warriors welcomed war to prove themselves as men. Many Cherokees hoped that a military alliance with Virginia would lead to an economic one when peace returned to the Appalachian frontier. On March 17, the two sides finalized a treaty. The Cherokees would send four hundred warriors against the French and their Indian allies within forty days. But they would only do so after Virginia built a fort at the site the Cherokees chose. The Cherokees would also reveal French activities among them and do

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32 *A Treaty Held with the Catawba and Cherokee Indians*, 15-17.
their best to keep the French from building forts of their own. Byrd and Randolph
showered the Cherokees with presents and vowed to keep the warriors well-supplied.\textsuperscript{33}

The scramble between Virginia and South Carolina was on again. While Byrd and
Randolph negotiated with the Indians, the South Carolina Council planned that colony’s
rival fort-construction project.\textsuperscript{34} Cash-poor and sparsely settled North Carolina had no
traders among the Cherokee. They built a fort not to trade with the Cherokees or to curry
diplomatic favor. Rather, North Carolina constructed its frontier outpost far from the
Cherokee towns, to protect settlers from French and Indian raids. Fort Dobbs, erected in
1755, was nestled in the North Carolina piedmont at present-day Statesville. It sat on a
tributary of the Yadkin River. The “Oblong Square” fifty-three by forty feet, was a three-
story oak building. It had small holes for muskets interspersed at regular intervals in the
wall. Captain Hugh Waddell, a friend of Governor Dobbs’ family, subsequently
garrisoned the post with North Carolina militiamen and at times, North Carolina
Provincials.\textsuperscript{35}

For many years, Governor Glen had viewed the construction of a fort in the
Overhills as a way to ensure Cherokee loyalty to the British. A British presence in their
homeland might curb French expansion and covert activity among the southeastern

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{33} \textit{A Treaty Held with the Catawba and Cherokee Indians}, 20-22. The commissioners urged Cherokees to
send their children to the Indian school at the College of William and Mary. Attakullakulla ignored the
proposal. \textit{Ibid.}, 13-14. Several Cherokee children did attend, for Dinwiddie later wrote that they “did not
like Confinement, and in Course, had no Inclination to Learning.” They went off without permission, as
they “co’d not be reconc’ld to their Books.” He asked Old Hop to send younger children, preferably under
eight. Governor Dinwiddie’s Message to the Emperor Old Hop and Other Sachems of the Great Nation of

\textsuperscript{34} \textit{SCG}, March 11, 1756, p. 1.

\textsuperscript{35} Alfred Moore Waddell, \textit{A Colonial Officer and His Times. 1754-1773: A Biographical Sketch of Gen.
\end{footnotes}
Indians. A fort could serve as a base to recruit Cherokee warriors for British military campaigns as well. Finally, as a central location for the exchange of goods and information, it served the interests of British traders.

For the Cherokees, a fort was crucial. Though it brought more outsiders, they believed the benefits outweighed the costs. As allies of the British, warriors could affirm their manhood on the imperial battlefield. They could do so without worrying about their families, since the fort would offer refuge for women and children. Cherokee women stood to benefit, by selling their crops, produce, and craftwork to the men stationed among them. At the same time, a fort would bring a ready supply of trade goods and access to a blacksmith.

Above all, a fort promised to give the Cherokee leverage to ensure that British traders treated them respectfully. Located deep in familiar territory, a fort would give Cherokees a bargaining chip. If worse came to worse, they could seize it or deliver it to the French. The mere threat of a siege might be enough to secure trade and diplomatic concessions. The fort might help them to persuade the British to live up to decades of empty promises.\(^{36}\)

Governor Glen had proposed a fort as early as 1746. He did so again in 1748. But lack of money and other distractions derailed the project.\(^{37}\)

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\(^{36}\) Wayne E. Lee, “Fortify, Fight, or Flee: Tuscarora and Cherokee Defensive Warfare and Military Culture Adaptation,” *Journal of Military History* 55, no. 3 (July 2004): 758-760; Fabel, *Colonial Challenges*, 27-28; The Cherokees, Lewis wrote, “want only a few men to live at the forts, that they may command them and keep them in subjection if not well used by the English i.e. supplied with ammunition and other things at no cost.” Andrew Lewis to Raymond Demere, September 11, 1756, *DRIA*, 2:204.

\(^{37}\) James Glen to the Duke of Newcastle?, December, 1748, Letterbook of James Glen, John Forbes Papers in the Dalhousie Muniments, 1758-1759, 45/2/1, p. 65-71 (SCDAH microfilm, P900097); James Glen to
If Glen did not move quickly, he might lose his Cherokee allies. These Indians now had another option: the French. A detachment of thirty-one French soldiers had traveled up the Tennessee River to within 150 miles of the Cherokee Overhills. “After viewing the Country,” Glen learned, they “marked some of the trees and nailed a plate of lead upon them to take possession for the King of France.” The Frenchmen promised that “they would return very soon in order to build a Fort there.”

This would leave South Carolina’s frontier exposed to the French, to French-allied Indians, and to disgruntled Cherokees. The deerskin trade and plans for westward expansion were at stake. Glen tried to start his own fort-construction project in early 1756. In February, Attakullakulla and 120 followers visited Charles Town. Glen offered them a tour and some presents. And he sent a surveyor and a skilled engineer to plan a fort in the Overhills.

With a Virginia post among the Indians and with the French knocking at the door, private citizens now rallied their resources. By May, local citizens, hoping to profit, pooled enough money for a fort. Glen set out for the Cherokee Country on May 19,

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38 James Glen to the Board of Trade, April 14, 1756, BPRO-SC, 26:50. Glen heard that the French were fortifying “a Tower” lower down on the Tennessee, where they reportedly had 4,000 men.

39 SCCJ, February 16, 1756, in BPRO-SC, 26:147.
1756. With him were eighty men from the Independent Companies. South Carolina had also raised two provincial companies of sixty men to build the fort.  

As Glen and the troops marched to the Cherokee Overhills, William Henry Lyttelton arrived in Charles Town to replace him as governor. Lyttelton initially pleased crown and colonist alike, but within four years, he created a mess and slipped out of town. Lyttelton’s fall from grace marked the beginning of a serious questioning of royal leadership by provincials. 

Lyttelton, a thirty year-old bachelor, was an Oxford-educated lawyer and Member of Parliament. Family connections propelled his rise to prominence. His grandfather had been governor of Jamaica. His brother George, a prominent poet, sat on the Privy Council. His friend Lord Halifax was President of the Board of Trade. By the end of the 1756, William Pitt, another family friend, was Secretary of State.

In 1755 he set out for South Carolina aboard the HMS Blandford. But a French squadron captured the ship and took Lyttelton prisoner. Authorities soon released him. Fearing for his life, he traveled under an assumed name to Brussels and then embarked

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for England. While recovering from his ordeal and awaiting a new set of instructions, Lyttelton impregnated his brother’s housekeeper. Leaving the noticeably pregnant woman behind without making any arrangements for her and the child, and leaving some people to wonder if his brother was the father, Lyttelton sailed once again for Charles Town.43

Charles Town lay on a small, mile-wide peninsula, bordered by the Ashley River to the west and the Cooper River to the east. It was hardly a city by most Britons’ standards. It enjoyed a reputation as a place of refinement, fashion, elegance, and hospitality. But slave labor made the town run. It was, in 1756, a bustling seaport of 4,000 whites and 4,000 slaves. South Carolina as a whole had about 30,000 whites and 70,000 slaves. By comparison, in 1750, London had 700,000 inhabitants.44

Lyttelton reached Charles Town aboard the Winchelsea, a twenty-four gun naval vessel. As the ship navigated the shallow bar in Charles Town harbor, he saw Fort Johnson on a high bluff jutting into the harbor on James Island. Its cannons sat at water-level. It had barracks and ramparts above.45 He may have looked out to the starboard,
several miles distant, to see shackled and emaciated Africans disembarking from squalid ships for two weeks of quarantine on Sullivan’s Island and a lifetime of misery in a land far from home. Enslaved South Carolinians toiled as craftsmen and laborers, and as pilots and oarsmen. More frequently, they suffered on the South Carolina plantations in the brutal work of Lowcountry rice and indigo cultivation.46

Figure 8: William Henry Lyttelton, by Sir Joshua Reynolds, 1772. Courtesy of Hagley Hall.

If Lyttelton looked toward the city itself, he might have seen that the hurricane of 1752 had left the city’s fortifications in a dilapidated state. But several bastions dotted

46 Milligen-Johnston, A Short Description, 32.
the waterfront, connected by a high wall. As the *Winchelsea* drew nearer, the skyline of the seaport town came clearer into view. Two-story, stucco-covered brick buildings, with storefronts below and residences above, dazzled in a palette of bright colors. Most had balconies and verandas. The steeple of the city’s several churches rose high above the skyline. One of these, St. Michael’s, was under construction. The ship docked at one of the several large wharves lining the Cooper River. William Henry Lyttelton had at last arrived safely in his new home.

Charlestonians received their new governor with “Respect and unfeigned Joy,” the *South Carolina Gazette* reported. Private and public readings of his commission followed. That evening, Charles Town elites attended an elegant ball at John Gordon’s inn and tavern at the corner of Broad and Church Streets. Candles placed in upper-floor balconies lit up the night sky along Bay Street. Like many inhabitants, Peter Timothy, editor and publisher of the *Gazette*, expected much of the new governor. After all, much had “been mentioned of him in numberless Letters,” Timothy said.

When he arrived to assume the governorship of South Carolina in June 1756, Lyttelton inherited a political system in shambles and wracked by debate over Crown prerogative versus the rights of elected Provincial representatives. Lyttelton hoped to

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47 The western third of the peninsula was farmland. The northern border, though expanding, lay at present Calhoun Street. Milligen-Johnston, *A Short Description*, 36; *The London Magazine, Or, Gentleman’s Monthly Intelligencer*, June 1762, 296.


reverse the gridlock that had characterized Glen’s final year in office. He soon learned how contentious the colony’s politics could be. The governor and his Council clashed repeatedly with the Commons House. They feuded over the transparency of Council proceedings and the right to appoint government officials. They also disagreed over the fate of the Acadians. Twelve-hundred of these disadvantaged and despised French-speaking refugees, forcibly deported from their homes in Nova Scotia in late 1755, had landed in South Carolina’s capital city.\(^50\) The Commons House stalled on funding for fortifications, particularly the new project in the Cherokee Overhills, until just before Lyttelton’s arrival. At every step of the way, a fierce rivalry had emerged between Glen, the Assembly, and the governor’s unofficial spokesman, the blunt and divisive British patriot Councilman William Wragg.\(^51\)

The new chief executive set to work right away. In June he halted Glen’s Fort Loudoun expedition.\(^52\) By this point, the Virginia commissioners had returned. The House of Burgesses granted Dinwiddie’s request to apply Crown funds to a fort. Dinwiddie immediately sent Major Andrew Lewis to Chota with sixty men, tools, and


\(^51\) *The Journal of the Commons House of Assembly, November 20, 1755-July 6, 1757* [Vol. 14], ed. Terry W. Lipscomb (Columbia: Published for the South Carolina Department of Archives and History, by the University of South Carolina Press, 1989), xxx-xxxvi; James Glen to the Board of Trade, April 14, 1756, *BPRO-SC*, 27:57-61.

\(^52\) Lyttelton delayed the expedition while he reviewed the entire project. *SCCJ*, 1754-1756, Unit 3, p. 271-73 (June 2, 1756); Raymond Demere to Lyttelton, June 9, 1756, *DRIA*, 2:118; William Henry Lyttelton to the Board of Trade, June 19, 1756, *BPRO-SC*, 27:105-14; *SCG*, June 5, 1756, p. 15.
provisions. On June 28, 1756, Lewis’s party and some Cherokee Indians selected a site across the river from the “Capital” of Chota. In just six weeks, the Virginians completed “a meer bubble constructed to humour the Indians…a square of 30 Paces,” 105 feet on a side. A ditch and an earthen wall two feet high and four feet wide surrounded the fort. Palisade logs marked by “two little bastions” rose seven feet above it. To the Cherokees’ dismay, however, Dinwiddie did not garrison the fort. The empty edifice thus failed to provide the leverage that the Indians anticipated. Misled if not betrayed, the Cherokees immediately “excus’d themselves” from sending a large number of warriors to Virginia with Lewis. The irritated Virginian wrote: “They are like the Devill’s Pigg they will neither lead nor drive.” Invited to stay for the Green Corn Dance, he declined, and departed in a huff.

Lyttelton carried out his orders to “put a stop” to the shipment of more Acadians to England and to solve the Acadian “problem” in Charles Town. He secured more funding and constructed the fort on a new plan. He accomplished other, lesser-known

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53 A Treaty Held with the Catawba and Cherokee Indians, 23-25; Robert Dinwiddie to Andrew Lewis, April 14, 1756, Dinwiddie Papers, 2: 389-390; Byrd and Randolph went to Charles Town before returning to Williamsburg. SCG, April 1, 1756, p. 2.

54 SCG, July 29, 1756, p. 3; Lewis to Raymond Demere, July 7, 1756, DRIA, 2:138; Robert Dinwiddie to William Henry Lyttelton, September 18, 1756, Dinwiddie Papers, 2:510; Henry Bouquet to the Earl of Loudoun, August 25, 1757, in The Papers of Col. Henry Bouquet, Series 21631 and Series 21632, ed. Sylvester K. Stevens and Donald H. Kent (Harrisburg: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Public Instruction, Pennsylvania Historical Commission, 1941), Series 21631:66; Alden, John Stuart, 59; Andrew Lewis to Dinwiddie, July 24, 1756, and Old Hop [Connecorte] to Governor Dinwiddie, July 23, 1756, in Louis K. Koontz, Robert Dinwiddie: Correspondence Illustrative of His Career in American Colonial Government and Western Expansion (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1951), 1029, 1031; Demere to Lyttelton, July 10 and July 30, 1756, DRIA, 2:132, 151; William Henry Lyttelton to the Board of Trade, August 11, 1756, BPRO-SC, 27:133.

55 William Henry Lyttelton to the Board of Trade, October 17, 1756, BPRO-SC, 27:158.

56 Andrew Lewis to Raymond Demere, August 13, 1756, DRIA, 2:167.
things. By the end of 1756, to placate the Assembly, he suspended William Wragg from the Council and ultimately secured his dismissal. He launched the ambitious renovation and expansion of the fortification system in Charles Town and along the coast. He oversaw militia reorganization and retraining.57

On June 22, the Governor appeared before a new session of the Assembly. Over the objections of Wragg, Lyttelton asked the Assembly to redistribute the Acadians in order to “prevent their being burthensome or dangerous” to South Carolina.58 Just days earlier, a fire – allegedly set by an Acadian arsonist – had broken out on Beale’s wharf.59 By July 16, the Assembly passed an “Act for disposing of the ACADIANS now in Charles Town.” The legislation subsidized landlords willing to take in the Acadians for three months. It banned the Acadians from carrying firearms. And finally, it mandated that the church-wardens enumerate and redistribute the controversial refugees. At gunpoint, militia and Independent Company troops removed 645 Acadians from Charles Town, some of them shackled, and dispersed them throughout South Carolina’s parishes. Another 139 remained in Charles Town. Many orphans became indentured servants.60 With their familial ties weakened, the exiles struggled in their new communities. By 1759 many Acadians returned to Charleston in search of work, exacerbating wartime tensions

57 SCG, November 27-December 4, 1755, p. 2.; Instructions for the King to Gov. Lyttelton (draft), November 4, 1755, CO 5/403, fols. 20-151 (CDFA, reel 366.2); Henry Fox to William Henry Lyttelton, March 10, 1756, William Henry Lyttelton to Henry Fox, March 13, 1756, to the Board of Trade, June 3, 1756, to Fox, June 16, 1756, BPRO-SC, 27:24-25, 31, 100-1, 102-4.
58 SCG, June 24, 1756, p. 1.
59 Lyttelton arrived first on the scene and was the last to leave. SCG, June 17, 1756, p. 2.
in the city. The Assembly’s treatment of the Acadians previewed the neglect that awaited poor frontiersmen.61

With a fresh plan and money from the Assembly, Lyttelton finally sent two new companies of Carolina Provincials to the Overhills to build a fort in July 1756. He also sent an engineer. Captain Paul Demere and the eighty troops from the Independent Company would garrison the fort and defend the surrounding territory against French plots.62 By late August, an expedition left Fort Prince George. At Tomatley on September 21, all of the leading chiefs in the Overhills and two hundred warriors, painted and finely dressed, greeted Demere, the Provincial officers, and the engineer. The British and Carolinians and their slave laborers set up the “English Camp Tennecy River.”63 Construction began on October 4.64

On July 30, 1757, Raymond Demere reported that “our fort is entirely completed and in a posture of defense.” The captain had completed his task. Their work done, the Provincials declined his offer to enlist in the Independent Company and departed “in a

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61 Milling, *Exile Without an End*, 20. Some men worked on fortifications, some children were apprenticed, but their earnings went to offset government-incurred costs of their inadequate maintenance.


great hurry.” Thereafter, British regulars of the South Carolina Independent Companies manned the fort, joined two years later by Provincial reinforcements.65

Lyttelton named the new outpost Fort Loudoun after John Campbell, fourth Earl of Loudoun. Loudoun had arrived in New York in July 1756 to oversee British military operations in North America.66 The elaborate, European-style fort on the banks of the Little Tennessee River stood on a rocky ledge that sloped upward from south to north. A

65 Raymond Demere to Lyttelton, July 30, 1757, DRIA, 2:396; Lyttelton to the Board of Trade, July 12, 1757; SCCJ (Early State Records, reel E1p/8):1757-1762, Unit 1, p. 69 (July 12, 1757).

low-lying meadow rolled away to the southeast, with the village of Tuskegee within it. Palisaded walls about three hundred feet on a side enclosed the fort. Bastions projected from each corner. Gun ports perforated each one. The fort commanded the river, but with an unnavigable stretch of the Little Tennessee a few miles downstream, that proved immaterial.67

A dry moat and a dense hedge of honey locusts surrounded the entire fort. The shrubs had three- to four-inch thorns and in engineer William DeBrahm’s view, rendered “the fort impregnable at least against Indians who always engage naked.” Dirt from the ditch built an upward sloping earthen breastwork. Heavy square logs, sharpened at the top, protruded from the parapet at an angle, forming a treacherous abatis around the fort. Inside, a row of barracks lined the western wall. The fort included a powder magazine. A large blacksmith shop doubled as a chapel, council house, and a temporary guardhouse. Soldiers dug a well and built several additional storehouses and structures.68

A replacement for the “sick and infirm” Captain Raymond Demere arrived on August 6. Eight days later, Demere ordered the garrison to arms and formally turned over command to Captain Paul Demere, his brother. Raymond left the fort on August 19 and returned to his post at Georgia’s Fort Frederica. He never saw his brother again.69

68 Kelly, “Fort Loudoun,” 78; DeBrahm, Report, 102; John Hibbett Dewitt, “Old Fort Loudoun,” Tennessee Historical Magazine 3, no. 4 (December 1917):252; Raymond Demere to Lyttelton, January 31, March 1, 1757, Paul Demere to Lyttelton, August 18, 1757, DRIA, 2:327, 345, 403. Two corn houses, a permanent guardroom, and a house for the commander were added later. Kelly, “Fort Loudoun,” 83.
69 Demere to Lyttelton, July 30, August 10, August 18, 1757, DRIA, 2:396, 399, 404; Brown, Old Frontiers, 76. Paul Demere fought with the British at Gibraltar, in Oglethorpe’s 42nd Regiment of Foot in Georgia, in the South Carolina Independents, and at Braddock’s Defeat. Raymond Demere returned to
Paul Demere reported from Fort Loudoun for the first time on August 18, 1757. He noted that it rained, portentously, for four weeks of the five week journey to the Overhills. At Cane Creek, eleven miles from the fort, twenty-five Tellico warriors, painted black as if ready for battle, accosted Demere’s party and requested rum. Demere ordered the Tellico headman “to go back with the rest of his People and if they should follow us any more, I should look upon them as Enemies and use them as Such.” Shortly after, led by a southern Shawnee Indian and a Canadian-born French agent, “French John,” the Tellicos killed and scalped the mentally-ill wife of a Fort Loudoun soldier as she followed Demere’s column. The captain had walked into an unenviable position.70

As Demere soon found out, the construction of Fort Loudoun planted the seeds for further conflict between the Overhill Cherokee and South Carolina. As the western- and southernmost British fortification in North America, Fort Loudoun lay, depending upon the path taken, 450 or 500 miles from Charles Town and nearly an equal distance from Williamsburg, Virginia. It was two hundred miles from Fort Prince George and 320 from the Congarees. DeBrahm noted that the Cherokees might easily hold the garrison hostage. He cited “the Difficulty in sending Ammunition, Stores, Relief, and Reinforcement to a Fort at so great a Distance through impregnable Defilee’s and a savage People, easily offended and revengeful.” Indeed, in late-1756, the construction

70 Paul Demere to William Henry Lyttleton, August 18, 1757, DRIA, 2:375; Stone, Jr., “Paul Demere,” 19, 20-21.
crew had run out of supplies and nearly starved. Why Lyttelton built no fort in the Middle Settlements remains unclear. Lacking both money and foresight, perhaps he simply did not realize that such a supply base would be helpful.

Ensconced at the fort, French agents, enemy Indians, and disgruntled Cherokees threatened Captain Paul Demere’s success. For over a year, French provocateurs had circulated in the Cherokee villages. The principal French operative was Antoine de Lantagnac, a former British trader in Great Tellico, with extensive connections with Overhill Cherokees. The Frenchman returned furtively to Fort Toulouse in 1755. Louisiana Governor Louis Billouart, Chevalier de Kerlérec forgave Lantagnac’s long absence and restored his rank. Lantagnac frequented the Overhills in the French service until war ended in 1763.  

By 1756, Lantagnac distributed presents and spouted anti-British rhetoric, stirring up Cherokees, Savannas, and Creeks. He attempted to turn the Overhills in particular against the English. He apparently had some success. A war party, reportedly Cherokee villagers, attacked British settlements along the North Carolina frontier that

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71 DeVorsey, DeBrahm’s Report, 101. If Stuart had not purchased corn from the Cherokees, the Provincials would have had to eat horse flesh. Orders of Capt. Rayd. Demere, November 28, 1756, and Raymond Demere to Lyttelton, November 28, December 8, 1756, DRIA, 2:258-59, 264.


summer. Along the Broad River and the South Catawba River, settlers reported “Several abuses and Robberies.”

Lantagnac hoped that one by one, the British-leaning villages closest to French Louisiana would switch their allegiance to the French. Those the farthest from South Carolina were most easily swayed, since they were poorly supplied by English traders. Rumors swirled that the French might build a fort at Hiwassee. Lantagnac brought the Mankiller of Tellico and two dozen other Cherokees to Fort Toulouse on October 18, 1756. They continued to New Orleans, where they signed a treaty. Would others follow? Tellico’s influence over other Cherokee towns had declined, but Lantagnac’s efforts were persuasive. The Governor feared “the French have practis’d upon them but too long with success.” What would it take for all the Cherokees to turn against the British?

In many ways, Fort Loudoun functioned just as the Cherokees hoped it would. Indian visitors frequented the post regularly. Indian men brought broken guns and tools to the blacksmith shop. Indeed, they kept him so busy that he could do no other work. Women exchanged fish, wild fruit and berries, and vegetables for trade goods. They felt “pleased and satisfied with their sisters the White women.” European contact had incrementally marginalized female participation in Cherokee politics, since white men

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76 William Henry Lyttelton to the Board of Trade, December 31, 1756, BPRO-SC, 27:225.
preferred to deal with male leaders. Though the political prominence of Cherokee women declined, Fort Loudoun gave them ways to exercise new economic and social power.

The fort nevertheless came with frustrations. It had not, as the Cherokees hoped, guaranteed a fair or abundant trade with South Carolina. In fact, Cherokee grievances against Carolina traders grew more frequent. The 1751 regulations on the trade remained largely unenforced, and Glen had never addressed his 1753 promise to reduce trader fraud. Neither Glen nor Lyttelton addressed Cherokee dissatisfaction though white observers agreed that the Indian complaints had merit. The longstanding lack of a British response fueled Cherokee resentment and made French overtures all the more appealing in 1757.

Raymond Demere concurred with the Cherokees. The traders “will be the ruin of this Nation if proper Measures are not taken by your Excellency and the Council,” he wrote. He referred to the traders as “for the most Part a Sett of Villains who studdy Nothing but their own narrow Views and private Emoluments without having the least Regard to Justice or to the public Weel.” Without decisive action on the Governor’s part, there would “always be a Discord” among the Cherokees.

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77 They may have had a sympathetic ear with the white women at the fort. Paul Demere to Lyttelton, August 18, 1757, DRIA, 2:403; Kelly, “Fort Loudoun,” 84, 84n; SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 1, p. 56 (February 12, 1757).
78 Milling, Red Carolinians, 283-84.
In a lengthy letter to Governor Glen in 1755, trader Ludovick Grant outlined “many and grievous Complaints” of the Indians. His contemporaries, he stated confidently, were “cheating the Indians in the Prices of Goods, especially of light Goods,” such as linens and flannels. And the traders used “of fals Stilliards [scales], short Yards, and little Measures.” The yardsticks the Governor promised the Indians two years earlier to ensure accurate measurements, “were never brought up.” Many Cherokees carried “a seeming Hatred and Grudge” against the Carolina traders. They also despised the trade “on account of the Debts they owe.” The traders extended “extravagant” credit. This, Grant believed, explained “why the Indians covet and are fond of a Trade from other Places.” The problem was pressing, Grant said: “It really deserves to be speedily looked into and by some Means prevented.” The Indians might, he believed, murder the traders and defect to the French.81

The following year, another trader reported that the Cherokee “are much corrupted and imposed upon” by “lawless and contemning” traders. A man named Williams from Augusta’s Rae and Baxdale firm brought “considerable Quantities of Rum and Spirits.” Williams allegedly sold it in the Lower Towns at exorbitant prices in containers not filled to the top, according to the Estatoe trader James Beamer. This “always...and now does breed great Disturbances, Quarrels and even Murders between the White People and Indians,” Beamer argued.82

81 Ludovick Grant to James Glen, March 27, 1755, DRIA, 2:41-45.
82 James Beamer to James Glen, February 21, 1756, DRIA, 2:104.
On more than a half dozen occasions, Cherokee leaders complained to Raymond Demere. Attakullakulla urged Lyttelton to replace the traders among the Overhills with men “that will use them with Justice.” The Mankiller of Tellico visited Fort Loudoun on several occasions, each time to gripe about the trade. He brought his wife with him, but the officers ignored her. “He sayd that he had met with a great Deal of ill Usage” by the white traders, Demere reported. They had taken his horses and insulted him and thrown things at him “as if he had been a Dog out of Doors.” The Mankiller had a “great

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83 The Little Carpenter’s Speech to Captain Raymond Demere, July 13, 1756, *DRIA*, 2:137.
many more Complaints.” Prices were too high. And Tellicos had no regular licensed resident trader. The abuses, he added, led him to turn to the French.84

All of the complaints had merit. Robert Gouedy, licensed to trade at Tellico and Chatuga, instead sold goods on the South Carolina frontier to subcontractors “at so much per cent Profit,” Demere wrote to Lyttelton. Then, “those Fellows comes with few Goods to those Towns and imposes so much on the Indians and will not trust them a pound Weight of Leather,” the Captain added. The Indians sometimes took matters into their own hands and seized the trade goods they believed should belong to them.85

Chotas came to the fort to complain about trader John Elliott. The Indians produced paint that Elliott had sold them and griped about its inferior quality. Elliott confessed to Demere that he had sold them “Shirts, Linnings, &c.” at “a most exorbitant Price.” He admitted that he and others had scammed the Indians with faulty scales. Conncorte produced a paper Glen had signed at Saluda regulating the prices of several articles. The traders “had no regard to that Paper.” His anger building, the headman said that the Indians now “looked upon that paper to be Nothing but Lies as they did all the rest of the Papers that came from Carolina.” Charles Town, he seethed, “was a Place where Nothing but Lies came from.”86


At the same time, another delegation led by Attakullakulla took Indian complaints directly to the governor. Lyttelton gave the visitors presents and promised to deal with the fraud in the deerskin trade. 87 Attakullakulla had remained strongly tied to the British. But Connecorte drifted further away, carrying a growing group of followers with him.

Trade grievances remained the primary, though not the only, Cherokee complaint. They remained unresolved despite Lyttelton’s promises. No one incident had yet provided a spark for a violent and united break from South Carolina. In fact, as Demere observed on August 8, 1757, many Cherokees remained in the British fold. Though he looked on the Tellicos and Chota’s Connecorte as “the greatest Enemies we have,” the Captain continued, “[I] sincerely believe that the Little Carpenter [Attakullakulla] and a great many other Head Men are as good Friends and Wellwishers as we can expect.” 88

The Cherokees had no viable alternatives. Virginia was distracted by war on its own frontier. The French had yet to demonstrate that they could provide a reliable supply of trade goods, weapons and ammunition. And Governor Lyttelton had treated them graciously. 89 Circumstances had not yet pushed the Cherokees to break with South Carolina. But Indian anger simmered as the war between France and England escalated. And while the South Carolina-Cherokee relationship deteriorated, Cherokee warriors would answer Virginia’s call to serve in another British attempt on the French Fort Duquesne on the Forks of the Ohio. The American southeast inched closer to open war.

88 Paul Demere to William Henry Lyttelton, August 8, 1757, DRIA, 2:402.
89 Lyttelton to the Board of Trade, October 17, 1756, December 25, 1756, BPRO-SC, 27:158, 254-59. On the first visit, 160 warriors came to Charles Town.
Chapter 3: “Would to God that these were all chimaeras and creatures of the brain”: Crown and Colony Collide in 1758

France formally declared war on Great Britain on May 17, 1756. Eight months later, on January 11, 1757, thirty-five of “the Merchants Traders Planters and others interested in the Trade and Prosperity of South Carolina and Georgia” petitioned King George II. Despite Charles Town’s economic significance, only one British naval ship protected the busy seaport. The Provincial capital’s fortifications lay in ruins. Charles Town lacked cannon and trained personnel to fire them. Slaves outnumbered free men four to one. As tensions rose on the frontier, planters struggled to keep their bondsmen “in proper subjection.” The Independent Companies divided their manpower among eight fortifications. Thus, few soldiers remained in Charles Town to guard against slave revolts. The merchants begged the Crown for better protection.1 Just a few weeks after the petitioners’ plea, French privateers captured nineteen of twenty-three ships laden with South Carolina’s outgoing indigo crop, the colony’s second-largest export. British ships retook some of the vessels, but “a great quantity of indigo was lost,” according to the London Magazine.2 Charles Town was vulnerable to economic upheaval, slave revolts, and French attack.

With the soldiers of the Independent Company occupied on the frontier, and with the South Carolina Provincials busy building Fort Loudoun, white Charlestonians


2 The London Magazine; Or, Gentleman’s Monthly Intelligencer, April 1757, 202.
scrambled anxiously to prepare a defense for their city. “Such a military spirit at present prevails in this Town,” the Gazette reported on February 24, 1757, “that several Parties of Gentlemen now associate and meet two or three Times a Week, to be instructed by experienced Persons, in all the Parts of military Discipline.” It was “An Example worthy of Imitation,” editor Peter Timothy suggested. In fact, sixty gentlemen from the Charles Town Regiment of Militia organized an artillery unit. They drilled nearly twice as often as the ordinary militia did. The South Carolina Regiment of Horse acquired new uniforms and likewise trained more.

Governor William Henry Lyttelton visited several settlements and reviewed militia musters. Some companies had not mustered for more than three years. In May 1757, South Carolina had just 6,594 men fit for service in seven militia regiments and three troops of horse. Lyttelton and the Council took action to fill the gaps. They added an eighth and a ninth regiment to reflect the geographical expansion of the Province. They filled vacancies in the officer corps. They designated gathering places in case of an 

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3 SCG, February 24, 1757, p. 2.
5 McMaster, Soldiers and Uniforms, 31-32.
6 William Henry Lyttelton to the Board of Trade, August 14, 1756, BPRO-SC, 27:140; Cole, “The Organization and Administration of the South Carolina Militia System,” 77-78.
7 A Return of the Muster Rolls from the Colonels of the Regts. of the Militia, May 4, 1757, BPRO-SC, 27:305. Of these 6,594 (a fourth of the able bodied male slave population), 235 were officers and sergeants, 5985 privates; 376 “alarm men.” For a September 15, 1757 list regiments and commanders, see Records, 27:305 and McMaster, Soldiers and Uniforms, 19.
alarm. They appointed an adjutant general to review each regiment. The assembly also stepped up. It purchased a thousand muskets and bayonets from England. It passed a tax granting money to repair South Carolina’s coastal fortifications. Construction began on new coastal defenses at South Carolina’s second-, third-, and fourth-largest towns: Port Royal (Beaufort), Winyaw (Georgetown), and Dorchester.8

The Board of Trade approved of Lyttelton’s measures, lauding them as “well calculated for His Majesty’s Service and the public Good.” Lyttelton “established,” the Board wrote to the king, “a confidence and Harmony in the Minds of the people.”9 Constant bickering had characterized politics during Glen’s last years in office. But Lyttelton’s regime was different. “The Governor and the Assembly are upon very good terms,” Lyttelton’s secretary John Murray noted. Lyttelton granted the assembly its wish to determine the volume and cost of Indian presents. Joint council-assembly committees had formerly done that. The assembly in turn acquiesced when Lyttelton insisted that they pay the clerk of the council a fixed salary. This surreptitious move by the governor in effect kept the assembly from viewing the council journals.10 As Murray explained, defense now trumped all. His constituents recognized “that now when we are Engaged in War with an Enterprising Enemy is not the time to contend about matters of form or

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8 William Henry Lyttelton to the Board of Trade, May 24, 1757, BPRO-SC, 27:262-65.
9 Board of Trade to William Henry Lyttelton, November 9, 1757, to His Majesty, November 9, 1757, Ibid., 27:323-25, 327.
10 William Henry Lyttelton to the Board of Trade, May 24, 1757, Ibid., 27:266-68.
suffer Publick business to be impeded”\textsuperscript{11} In the end, Lyttelton’s measures proved only partially successful.

In March 1757, Loudoun deployed over five hundred men from the 1\textsuperscript{st} Battallion of the Royal American Regiment from Philadelphia to Charles Town. They arrived on June 15.\textsuperscript{12} Lieutenant Colonel Henry Bouquet commanded the detachment. Two companies of Virginia Provincials joined them.\textsuperscript{13} Loudoun sent the troops “for the Security and Defence of His Majesty’s Dominions,” in the interior and from the sea, “and the Annoyance of the Enemy.”\textsuperscript{14} He ordered Bouquet to protect the coast and the interiors of South Carolina in particular; to review existing fortifications and to help build new ones; and to recruit Royal Americans as time allowed. Bouquet also commanded the South Carolina Independents during his stint in Charles Town.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{13} The Royal Americans were recently renumbered from the 62\textsuperscript{nd} to the 60\textsuperscript{th} Regiment. Alexander V. Campbell, \textit{The Royal American Regiment: An Atlantic Microcosm, 1755-1762} (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010). Bouquet was “a genteel well bred man” who “seems to know his Business.” James Grant to Alexander Brodie, September 22, 1757, SCL, Manuscripts Pob⁺; Ian M. McCulloch, \textit{Sons of the Mountains: The Highland Regiments in the French and Indian War}, 2 vols. (Toronto: Robin Brass Studio, 2006), 150.


Figure 11: Henry Bouquet. After Benjamin West’s 1760 painting. Courtesy of the Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Loudoun expected white South Carolinians to respond favorably. They always objected “to raising any considerable Number of Men...on Account of the great Number of Blacks; that they are afraid of their Rising, if they shoud move many of their White Men to the Frontiers.” Loudoun hoped the “Additional Force” would “keep them in Awe.”\textsuperscript{16} The assembly instead thwarted the demands of these troops. Tensions between

\textsuperscript{16} The Earl of Loudoun to William Henry Lyttelton, April 24, 1757, \textit{Bouquet Papers, Series 21632:86-88} (quote on 87).
the colony and the metropole across the Atlantic heightened once more, laying the groundwork for a more severe future rupture.

Bouquet needed more than the “Refreshing Punch” that his friend Benjamin Franklin recommended to get him through the hot summer. Some historians have argued that the lieutenant colonel exaggerated his struggles in South Carolina. But Bouquet’s stay in Charles Town was tumultuous, with long-term consequences for South Carolinians both black and white. It also had consequences for their Indian neighbors.

Meanwhile, Colonel Archibald Montgomery raised a regiment of Scottish Highlanders. Montgomery sailed for Charles Town from Cork, Ireland on June 27 with 1,113 men and arrived on September 3.

Bouquet posted the Royal Americans just north of town. Heat and stagnant water led to illness among the troops. Thirty one were sick within a week. Bouquet faced other struggles too. His men, paid in British pounds, despised the currency’s unfavorable local exchange rate. Slave owners thwarted Bouquet’s efforts to employ their slaves on

17 Benjamin Franklin to Henry Bouquet, April 14, 1757, in The Papers of Benjamin Franklin, Vol. 7: October 1, 1756 through March 31, 1758, ed. Leonard W. Labaree, et. al. eds., (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), 182-83. Franklin mentioned Bouquet in letters to Dr. Alexander Garden (p. 183) and Dr. John Lining (p. 184).


19 SCG, June 23, 1757, p. 1; William Pitt to Archibald Montgomery, March 31, 1757, Pitt Correspondence, 1:27-28. This was 113 men above quota.

Charles Town fortifications.\textsuperscript{21} Discipline also became a problem, as many men discovered the “sad Effects of Rum.” Finally, the Royal Americans and Virginia Provincials alike showed a propensity for establishing unseemly sexual liaisons. “That mighty Conqueror Love has made havock in the Corps,” a frustrated Virginia Provincial commander, Lieutenant Colonel Adam Stephen wrote.\textsuperscript{22} Luckily, the regulars and provincials got along superbly.\textsuperscript{23}

Bouquet inspected the South Carolina militia and the Independent Companies. Up and down the South Carolina coast, he toured fortifications. Troops repaired them, and one company of Virginians went to Georgia for the same purpose. The colonel developed more grandiose plans for additional defenses. Though they enjoyed little success, British recruiters visited Georgetown, South Carolina, and the North Carolina piedmont and coast.\textsuperscript{24} Bouquet’s army made white South Carolina safer.

But the South Carolina assemblymen unwittingly drove away the very army that had come to protect them. Bouquet loathed the assembly’s “unwillingness” to assist his

\textsuperscript{21} Henry Bouquet to the Earl of Loudoun, June 23, 1757, \textit{Bouquet Papers, Series 21631}:17. “It has never been possible to get a Sufficient Number of Negroes upon the Works…Private Interest is always the first point here, and public Spirit is no more the Second.” Henry Bouquet to the Earl of Loudoun, October 16, 1757, \textit{Bouquet Papers, Series 21632}:113.

\textsuperscript{22} Henry Bouquet to John Stanwix, August 25, 1757, \textit{Bouquet Papers, Series 21631}:59. Stephen liked the women of Carolina. But George Mercer disagreed. He disliked “the bad Shape of the Ladies, many of Them are crooked & have a very bad Air & not those enticing heaving throbbing alluring plump Breasts comon with our Northern Belles.” Adam Stephen to George Washington, August 20, 1757, Mercer to George Washington, August 17, 1757, \textit{Letters to Washington}, 2:180, 174-75 (quote on 175).


troops. On June 23, he “found nothing done. No provincials raised” and “but a very little prospect” of it. His men had no quarters, “no beds, nor Straw, nor any thing to lie upon.”25

Prodded by the governor, the members of the assembly responded on July 6, 1757. They disbanded the Fort Loudoun construction crew that labored under the two Provincial commanders – Lieutenants John Stuart and John Postell – and they created a new Provincial Regiment of seven companies. Fearing slave revolts and shunning military service in general, few men enlisted.26 The same day, the assembly voted £4,000 in Carolina currency to repair the old barracks in Charles Town and build new ones of pine to accommodate Bouquet’s troops. Construction took eight months to complete.27

Bouquet’s frustration mounted. He cited the “incontestable right of the King’s troops to be billeted in the village where they are quartered.” The Mutiny Act, a series of

25 On May 5, 1757, the assembly voted to provide temporary quarters in old empty barracks, the building formerly used as a free school, and such “Other suitable houses.” It ordered Commissary General William Pinckney to supply firewood, candles, pepper, salt, and two quarts of small beer per day at the public expense. JCA, 1757-1761, 431 (May 5, 1757); Greene, “SC Quartering Crisis,” 195; Henry Bouquet to the Earl of Loudoun, June 23, 1757, Bouquet Papers, Series 21631:15; Henry Bouquet to John Stanwix, June 23, 1757, Ibid., Series 21632:23-25. In response to Lyttelton’s June 23 speech before them to raise provincials “over and above what you shall judge necessary for the immediate Defence of your own Province, to act in such Parts as the Earl of Loudoun...shall judge most conducive to the Service in general,” the Assembly did just that. SCG, June 23, 1757, p. 2.

26 Lieutenant Colonel Probert Howarth held joint commissions as lieutenant in the Independent Company and colonel in the Colleton County militia. McMaster, Soldiers and Uniforms, 38. “I fear they will be a long Time raising.” After two months, the Virginia Provincial commander observed, “not one Man recruited, or a Comission given out.” George Mercer to George Washington, August 17, 1757, Letters to Washington, 2:178. “The carolina regiment will never be raised, as they have not got yet upwards of 200 men, most of them the worste Kind.” Their uniforms had not yet arrived from England. Henry Bouquet to John Forbes, February 1, 1758, Bouquet Papers, Series 21632:140.

laws renewed annually by Parliament since 1689, mandated that colonies quarter and supply British troops with adequate shelter, beds, mattresses, bedding, pillows, and basic household items such as salt, beer, fire tongs, and candlesticks. In three separate letters to Governor Lyttelton in late July, Bouquet demanded more.28 The Lieutenant Colonel moved his men from their rain-soaked camp on August 2. His officers moved into rented rooms. South Carolina authorities provided just four empty houses for the enlisted men. They “were obliged to ly upon the Floor” until September 21. Eventually 160 men received lodging in alehouses and taverns. “The Lawyers, Justices of the Peace, & in general the whole people are eternally against us,” Bouquet wrote on August 25. Feeling disrespected and insulted, he opined: “They’re extremely pleased to have soldiers to protect their Plantations, but will feel no inconveniences from them, making no great difference between a soldier & a Negro.”29

When the Highland Battalion arrived on September 3, it faced much the same struggle. They lost only seven men in their passage and landed in good health.30 The colony quartered them “in a Half finished Church [St. Michael’s] without Windows,” “in

29 Henry Bouquet to Daniel Webb, August 25, 1757, Bouquet Papers, Series 21631:63; Representation of Field Officers Regarding Troops, December 2, 1757, Ibid., Series 21643:16; McCulloch, Sons of the Mountains, 151; Henry Bouquet to John Stanwix, August 25, 1757, Bouquet Papers, Series 21631:59; Henry Bouquet to the Earl of Loudoun, August 25, 1757, Ibid., 64. One hundred of the Virginians left for Georgia on August 27, which relieved the quartering situation slightly, but it soon became more difficult than ever. Greene, “SC Quartering Crisis,” 196.
Damp Store-houses upon the Quay” on East Bay Street, “and in empty Houses where most of the Men were obliged to ly upon the Ground without any Straw or any sort of Covering.” Montgomery’s men rapidly sickened.\(^{31}\) Five hundred fell ill of yellow fever in one month. On October 18, the battalion, which arrived with 106 extra men, had just one extra man left.\(^{32}\)

On October 21, after two weeks of debate, the South Carolina Assembly agreed to build an additional thousand-man barrack for the British Regulars. Then they adjourned until November 14 without providing bedding and barrack necessities.\(^{33}\) “There is no Danger that We shall fall in Love with South Carolina,” Bouquet promised. Montgomery asked Loudoun to send his troops elsewhere.\(^{34}\) On November 2, Captain George Mercer of the Virginia Provincials wrote Colonel George Washington: “were I safe at Home S° Carolina woud be the last Place I ever woud come to.”\(^{35}\)

On December 1, the assembly finally granted firewood, candles, lanterns, brooms, axes, beds, and bedding to the enlisted men. But they gave only “a Blanket for two Men in a country where the most covetous Planter” allowed “One to the most despicable

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\(^{31}\) Representation of Field Officers Regarding Troops, December 2, 1757, in Bouquet Papers, Series 21643:16-17; Henry Bouquet to Daniel Webb, September 10, 1757, Ibid., Series 21632:94-95. The commissary assigned 375 of the private men to fifteen houses. At least 125 occupied St. Michael’s Church. Five hundred more lived in warehouses and elsewhere. SCCJ (Early State Records reel E1p/8):1757-1762, Unit 1, p. 39 (September 1, 1757). Some lived in taverns and alehouses. Ibid., 40 (September 2, 1757).

\(^{32}\) The Highlanders’ difficult conditions and the sickness it created set back their training. “A Return of the First Highland Battalion” dated 18 October 1757, cited in McCulloch, Sons of the Mountains, 152; Peter McCandless, Slavery, Disease, and Suffering in the Southern Lowcountry (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 73-74.

\(^{33}\) JCA, 1757-1761, 24-25 (October 21, 22, 1757).

\(^{34}\) Henry Bouquet to John Stanwix, October 27, 1757, to John Hunter, October 16, 1757, to the Earl of Loudoun, to John Stanwix, October 18, 1757, Bouquet Papers, Series 21632:118-19 (quote on 119); 106, 112, 115.

\(^{35}\) George Mercer to George Washington, November 2, 1757, Letters to Washington, 2:228.
slave.” The assembly voted two cords of firewood per hundred men per week. The officers requested three times this amount. The assembly still withheld barracks necessities from the officers. It voted one shilling per day to each subaltern officer to pay their landlords. Bouquet insisted that the assembly pay landlords directly. The assembly did not plan to do so. The impasse continued, and sixty more Highlanders died by December 2. The British officers implied that sympathetic Charles Town citizens “out of Compassion” broke with the ruling elites. Good Samaritans received “near 200 of them into their Houses,” saving many lives.36

On December 2, the British field officers lay their grievances before the South Carolina Assembly. Bouquet met with House Speaker Benjamin Smith. The colonel’s initiative prompted Governor Lyttelton to write an angry letter to Lord Loudoun. In it, he asked his superior to recall Bouquet for meeting Smith without his consent.37 Lyttelton unknowingly undermined his own scheme-in-the-making – of using the Royal Americans in a western invasion of French Louisiana. But Bouquet’s meeting paid off. On December 7, the assembly added one cord of wood for every hundred privates and added a blanket for each enlisted man. It left unresolved the issue of officers’ quarters. It provided nothing for the hospitals, guard rooms, or officers’ quarters beyond what it had already allotted.38 The assembly passed a bill on December 8 declaring “That it is

36 JCA, 1757-1761, 41-44 (November 30, December 1, 1757); Representation of Field Officers Regarding Troops, December 2, 1757, Bouquet Papers, Series 2164:17; McCulloch, Sons of the Mountains, 152. The identity of the good Samaritans remains unknown.


impracticable to quarter or Billet Soldiers in this province for want of Inns Taverns Victualling Houses.” The next day it adjourned until January 16. 39 Eight days later, Bouquet grumbled to Governor Henry Ellis of Georgia: “I am heartily tired of North America & if I can once get rid of it, no Consideration in the World would make me come again.” 40

As winter set in, the troops stationed near Broughton’s Bastion took matters into their own hands. They destroyed the fortification and its supplies, torching the fascines, wheelbarrows, and cedar posts. They “partly Stripp’d the Shedd” and promised to burn it and the surrounding storehouse “if Wood is deny’d or not found them.” Outraged at the soldiers’ “contine’d destruction,” the Commissioners of Fortifications begged Bouquet to “stop the process of such daring Insolence & abuse.” Bouquet sympathized with his soldiers. He reluctantly investigated civilians’ claims. He held two courts martial. Witness testimony “could not prove the fact,” and the accused walked free. 41 Miraculously, tensions did not escalate into further violence. Construction on the barracks proceeded.

are no Quarters till provided with every requisite, and that must be done.” He ordered Bouquet “that in Case the Barracks are not provided with Bedding” and necessaries, “that he do immediately demand Quarters.” He could “quarter the King’s Troops by his own Authority” if the South Carolina Assembly continued in its current path. Earl of Loudoun to William Henry Lyttelton, December 6, 1757, Lyttelton Papers, reel 1.

39 Lyttelton eventually vetoed the bill. JCA, 1757-1761, 54, 55, 55n (December 8, 9, 1757).

40 JCA, 1757-1761, 52 (December 7, 1757); Henry Bouquet to Henry Ellis, December 10, 1757, Bouquet Papers, Series 21632:128.

41 Commissioners’ Complaint Regarding the Troops, December 22, 1757, Bouquet Papers, Series 21643:19; McCulloch, Sons of the Mountains, 152.
Charleston’s elites viewed British troops and their officers with distrust and disdain. Such feelings probably were amplified by the fact that many of the Royal Americans were actually Swiss and German. And most of the Highlanders were Highland Scots. The assembly provided generous sums for barracks and necessities, raising taxes to absorb the costs. Before adjourning the next day, the assembly granted another £3,750 for an addition to the barracks for the subaltern officers. But they provided no necessities for the subaltern officers and did nothing to address the significant lodging and provisioning costs already accrued. On January 28, the assembly finally agreed to lower a duty on imported flour and bread to reduce the cost of provisioning the troops. The assemblymen felt they had done enough. And they believed that British law protected them from further obligations.42

By February 19 the last of the British enlisted men moved into the barracks.43 Bouquet pressed Lyttelton about funding for the officers’ lodging.44 Lyttelton forwarded the letter to the Commons House. The assemblymen had no plans to comply. On March 18, a Commons House committee that included future patriots Christopher Gadsden and Henry Laurens insisted that the colony quartered the subalterns only as a “Favor.” The committee again refused to furnish quarters, declaring “that Officers and Soldiers cannot, legally or constitutionally, be quarter’d in private Houses, without the special Consent of

42 JCA, 1757-1761, 63, 65, 76 (January 24, 26, 28, 1758). Greene, “SC Quartering Crisis,” 201; 102-5 (February 9, 1758), 107 (February 10, 1758); Henry Bouquet: Petition to the Assembly, Jan. 19, 1758, Bouquet Papers, Series 21632:137.
43 Henry Bouquet to John Stanwix, February 21, 1758, Bouquet Papers, Series 21632:149.
the Owners or Possessors of such Houses.” The possibility that their cause might set a precedent was not lost on the astute committeemen.\textsuperscript{45}

The crisis never came to a head. The Virginia Provincials left in February 1758. Bouquet made his exit without acting on Loudon’s orders to use force if necessary.\textsuperscript{46} The Royal Americans left on March 20. The officers left without paying the housekeepers for their quarters, though they gave them certificates for the amount due from November 30 to March 20.\textsuperscript{47} Montgomery made similar arrangements when the Highlanders headed north on May 21. During the next few years the assembly gradually reimbursed landlords for some of the costs of accommodating officers and enlisted men. Both the Highlanders and the Royal Americans would return again.\textsuperscript{48}

The officer corps departed with bitterness towards South Carolina’s merchant-planters. Ungrateful South Carolina elites seemed to expect protection without paying for it. But South Carolina’s assemblymen felt otherwise. As they saw it, the British government did not appreciate the sacrifices they made and the high taxes they endured. “The present confusion of war, low price of our commodity, and heavy taxes, dishearten the planters,” Dr. Alexander Garden wrote. And many of the assemblymen were

\textsuperscript{46} Henry Bouquet to John Hunter, March 10, 1758, \textit{Bouquet Papers, Series 21632}:159.
\textsuperscript{48} John Forbes to William Henry Lyttelton, April 24, 1758; Lyttelton to Forbes, May 20, 1758, Lyttelton Papers, reel 2.
planters.⁴⁹ A committee of assemblymen still irked by the whole quartering struggle informed the governor that the quartering demands infringed on their rights as Englishmen, and advised him that any concessions they had made, they had made by “Favor,” not by obligation or duty.⁵⁰

On December 2, 1756, South Carolina’s colonial agent to the Governor and Council, Charles Pinckney, called for a British invasion of French Louisiana. In a memorandum to the Board of Trade, Pinckney called for a naval campaign “to alarm and amuse the French at home in the Gulph of Mexico” with a “Squadron of the smaller men of war at the West Indies.” If it succeeded, the preemptive strike could stymie the French emissaries among the Upper and Lower Creeks who were “endeavouring to make them turn their arms against the English.” French reinforcements and supplies would no longer reach Louisiana strongholds.⁵¹

Daniel Pepper, spying on the Upper Creeks at the same time, viewed Fort Toulouse. He believed that “it might be easily surprised and taken” by land if the Creeks consented. The pro-British Creek headman the Wolf of Mucolossus wondered “how the English never attempt making themselves the Masters of Mobile.” In doing so, “they would intirely secure the Chactaws,” a populous Indian people living in present


⁵⁰ The Commons acquainted Lyttelton that its grant to the subalterns was only one “of Favor” and declined to furnish quarters for the officers. More significantly, however, it declared “that Officers and Soldiers cannot, legally or constitutionally, be quarter’d in private Houses, without the special Consent of the Owners or Possessors of such Houses.” JCA, 1757-1761, 131, 135-36 (March 16, 18, 1758).

Mississippi, “and all the Indians on this part of the Main and reduce of course the Alabama and Tonbegbee Fort.” The Chickasaws, staunch military and economic allies of the British, located along the Mississippi River near present Memphis, could also deter the Choctaws from joining the French. This would, the Wolf thought, “be attended with no great Difficulty.” Pepper believed “if any Method could be fallen on to make” French Louisiana, “it would be a Means of securing the Peace of Carolina intirely.”

Lyttelton took the lead in gathering information for a potential British campaign against the French in the South.

“My paper prevents me from giving you an account” of Governor Lyttelton’s scheme, Dr. Garden wrote on April 27, 1757, “and we are in hopes of some stroke being given by Lord Loudoun.” Curiously, Dr. Garden, Colonel Bouquet, and Governor Lyttelton all thought that the Royal Americans could have played a central part in any overland invasion of French Louisiana. Instead, the assembly alienated Bouquet, withheld funds, and failed to support the troops. Had it undermined the “Southern Strategy” before it materialized?

Throughout 1757, Daniel Pepper and William Bonar scouted the Upper Creek country. In Charles Town, Colonel Bouquet had collected information from Captain Paul Demere, Fort Loudoun’s commander, about “the Cherokee country and all in between them and the French settlements.” At Bouquet’s request, Demere sent loyal

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Cherokees “to reconnoiter their forts and learn the approximate strength of their garrisons.”

British interest in the plan grew. And British ineffectiveness in the Ohio Valley, New York, and Canada made the potential expedition more intriguing to the masterminds of the British war effort.

On January 27, 1758, Pitt notified his commanders in North America, General James Abercromby and General John Forbes, of his plans for a campaign in the South. Major John Tulleken of the Royal Americans traveled to New York. In a private meeting, Tulleken told Amherst “all I new,” including “what I new of the Southward, Alabama, Mobile, &c. &c.” Forbes laid out a southern campaign in his “Plan of Operations.” He planned a wave of Chickasaw and Cherokee attacks upon “the Ennemy on the Mississippi.” Then “a body of troops” would embark at Charles Town. There “by a Sudden descent, they might easily make themselves masters of New Orleans, and that gained, the Mobile would fall likewise.” Forbes believed “the Defence of those two places would be diverted by the attack of their Settlements up the Country by our Indians.” The Virginia Regiment could march overland to reinforce the troops. Lyttelton

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57 William Pitt to James Abercromby or James Delancey, January 27, 1758, Pitt Correspondence, 1:170; William Pitt to John Forbes, January 27, 1758, John Forbes Papers in the Dalhousie Muniments, file 20/40/1b (SCDAH microfilm, P90097).

favored an overland march against Fort Toulouse, rendezvousing with the naval campaign at Mobile.\textsuperscript{59}

Some signs pointed to success. For one thing, French manpower in the region was minimal. British intelligence estimated French troop strength at 1,750 men, organized in thirty-five companies. French returns showed a smaller number, scattered “over a widely extended Country.” Most French forts were “small stockad Forts of no” significance. Louisiana’s non-Indian civilian population was small. One thousand white and black settlers lived in and around New Orleans, and no more than a few hundred settled near each French outpost.\textsuperscript{60} Secondly, the French were poorly supplied and “greatly distressed” in Louisiana. British warships and privateers blockaded the Gulf of Mexico. French men and supplies dwindled as a consequence. Louisiana Governor Louis Billouart, Chevalier de Kerlérec begged for assistance but received little. “The People were much dispirited, & much afraid of a Visit from the English,” the British privateer said, “and he believed six hundred men” would take New Orleans.\textsuperscript{61}


\textsuperscript{60} “The Examination of John Frene, Henry Bosquet, & Christian Past, Deserters from French Service, now enlisted in the South Carolina Regiment of Foot, taken at Port Royal, the 24th of June 1758.” Lyttelton Letterbooks, 6ii, p. 63-68 (SCDAH microfilm, S504001); Kerlérec to De Machault d’Arnouville, March 13, 1757, in Rowland, Sanders, and Galloway, eds, \textit{Mississippi Provincial Archives}, 5:182; Statement by Kerérec by companies of the number of troops in La. On August 29, 1758, Colonial Troops, Series D2c, Vol. 52, fol. 32, AN; Account of La. In 1755 and in 1758, December 5, 1758, Colonial Accounts, Archives Nationales de France, Paris, France, Series F, Vol. 24, fol. 482; Census of the Farmers Living around Fort Toulouse, C13A, Vol. 40, fol. 157, AN.

\textsuperscript{61} William Henry Lyttelton to Admiral Boscawen, May 21, 1758, Lyttelton Letterbooks, 6ii, p. 7-9; William Henry Lyttelton to Admiral Boscawen, July 6, 1758 (secret), Lyttelton Letterbooks, 6ii, p. 16-17; James Glen to John Forbes, Admiral Boscawen to William Henry Lyttelton, July 5, 1758, Lyttelton Letterbooks, 6ii, p. 51. A dozen French and five Swiss guarded the fort at La Balise. Twenty-five men
The stakes were high. If they succeeded, the English, according to one knowledgeable observer, “wou’d prove an over-balance against all the northern nations of Indians, beget a very great extent of territory, enough for several fine provinces, the greater part as fit for hemp, wine, Indicoe, &c. as any such climate under the sun; wou’d enable us to supply those nations by water-carriage; bring great profits to our Mother Country; secure quiet possession of our own; beget a profitable trade with Old Spain, or make New Spain tremble.”

Tremendous difficulties awaited any expeditionary force. First, there was no good time for the expedition. Prodigious spring floods threatened to slow the ships as they went upriver and the troops as they marched overland. Mosquitoes and excessive heat posed health risks in the summer. Hurricane season posed yet another concern. Glen suggested an invasion in “the Fall or Winter.” But strong northwest winds from November to March “made it unsafe for any vessel,” according to a captain from Jamaica. With so many seasonable variables in play, coordinating the two campaigns might well be impossible.

Second, the British navy faced navigational obstacles. Navigating the strong currents of the Gulf of Mexico took skill. The Mobile River was narrow and shallow. An invasion of Mobile required a fleet of flat-bottomed boats. Landing at Spanish


Lachlan McGillivray to William Henry Lyttelton, July 14, 1758, Lyttelton Papers, reel 2.

Account of the Mississippi (given by Vice Admiral Coles to Henry Moore), Account of the Town of New Orleans (given by Mr. Lafitte to Henry Moore), Lyttelton Letterbooks, 6ii, p. 89-90, 91.
Pensacola and marching overland was an option. But would the Spanish approve?\textsuperscript{64} Trader Lachlan McGillivray suggested that Bourbon authorities had ordered officials in St. Augustine and Pensacola “to keep the English off new Spain.” Landing at Pensacola to go overland to Mobile was thus out of the question.\textsuperscript{65} If successful, it took one month for a sloop to travel the estimated 110 miles against the powerful current from the river’s mouth to New Orleans. One route was shallow and narrow. The other was deep but even narrower.\textsuperscript{66} Lyttelton confidently stated that the British naval assault “wou’d draw down a great part of their Indians,” clearing the way for his army. But McGillivray and Adair offered a more pessimistic outlook. They worried that the French would “gather great Swarms together from up the Mississippi” to defend Mobile and New Orleans.\textsuperscript{67}

If Lyttelton was to succeed, he needed a large quantity of presents to ply not only the Chickasaws and Catawbas but also some Cherokees, whom he expected to help him. He also planned to bribe the Creeks and the Choctaws, “without which you will never


\textsuperscript{65} Lachlan McGillivray to William Henry Lyttelton, July 14, 1758, Lyttelton Papers, reel 2.


gain a single man.” He worried about keeping any Indian allies with his army: “so great is their impatience of the least delay that they will probably quit me & return home.”

The overland march presented numerous logistical obstacles. It required a tremendous outlay of men, equipment and supplies. Lyttelton suggested that two thousand men would suffice. Adair and McGillivray proposed six thousand, with tents, muskets, bayonets, accoutrements, and ammunition. The force would have to include carpenters, boatmen, engineers and packhorsemen as well as the “Pioneers” – African-American slave laborers – whose assorted roles included logging, widening paths, and building pontoon bridges across swollen, leech and alligator-infested streams. Fort Toulouse was well fortified, and Lyttelton and his men needed ladders to scale its walls. The governor naively dismissed the challenge of provisioning an army far from any British settlement. He argued that his backcountry militiamen knew the woods and could travel light. But McGillivray and Adair understood the risks. Over the vast distance, the horses might collapse from fatigue. The soldiers might desert in droves. “What if they fail by Sickness, Sword or Famine, in an Enemy’s barren wilderness?” they asked.

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70 Lachlan McGillivray and James Adair to William Henry Lyttelton, July 14, 1758, Lyttelton Letterbooks, 6ii, p. 71.
The Creek Indians and their neighbors posed another problem. Lyttelton thought the Creeks were “indifferently supplied with ammunition.” He offered to “invite them to join me and take up the Hatchet against the French.” If they refused, his next steps would surely alienate them. He would order the English traders to leave. He “wou’d instantly march into their Towns, burn their Houses, & put their Women and Children to the Sword.” Glen believed the Choctaws would “murder and skalp their father for a pound or two of powder and a few bullets.” The hawkish and overzealous Lyttelton, however, had no idea what the Choctaws might do.71

If they found themselves under attack, the Indians of the southeast would no doubt unite against the English invaders. French, Creeks, Choctaws, and others, as McGillivray and Adair put it, would mow down British troops just as the French and their Indian allies had at Braddock’s Field three years earlier. The traders envisioned Creek towns “swarming with multitudes” of French, Creeks, Choctaws and others, “grown such desperate Veterans, as to outbrave Death in the open Field, with bare Tomahawks, when their Powder, Bullets, & Arrows were expended.”72 Adair warned that once the naval and overland forces met in Mobile, their work was not done. They would have to destroy the colorfully named “Tumbigbee hog pen,” France’s other nearby fort. Lyttelton

71 William Henry Lyttelton to Admiral Boscawen, August 22, 1758, Lyttelton Letterbooks, 6ii, p. 25, to William Pitt, November 4, 1758, Pitt Correspondence, 1:387-92 (quote on 389).

dismissed the traders’ informed opinions. He told Pitt that they acted out of self-interest to preserve their livelihood: the Creek deerskin trade.  

The southern strategy failed to materialize. Amherst and Boscawen wanted to win the war in the North, where they had unfinished business. The commanders also lacked confidence in the expedition’s success. Creek Indian traders and Georgia Governor Henry Ellis envisioned a repeat of Braddock’s defeat. Lyttelton held out hope for an expedition. Though it never took place, the mere possibility loomed large. By December 1758, Louisiana Governor Louis Billouart, Chevalier de Kerlérec heard of the plans and notified authorities throughout the French Empire. Across the southeast, Indians discussed the implications of a British invasion with concern and anger. 

The southern frontier of the British Empire remained vulnerable to the French. South Carolina and Georgia both needed protection in early 1757. But by late 1758, British measures had sown division in America. South Carolina bickered over its quartering crisis. French claims that the British designed to enslave the Indians and take their land seemed not so far from reality. And Cherokees responded to Virginia’s call and headed to the Ohio Country.

74 Boscawen sent Colcock back to Charles Town in the Scarborough. The captain arrived on November 2. Admiral Boscawen to William Henry Lyttelton, August 28, 1758, Lyttelton Letterbooks, 6ii, p. 53.
76 William Henry Lyttelton to William Pitt, November 4, 1758, Pitt Correspondence, 1:389-90.
77 William Henry Lyttelton to Admiral Boscawen, August 22, 1758, Lyttelton Letterbooks, 6ii, p. 244; Kerlérec to Berryer, December 1, 1758, Mississippi Provincial Archives, 5:199-202.
Chapter 4: “A good Deal of Mischief done upon the Frontiers of Virginia”: The Forbes Campaign Heightens Cherokee Discontent

By Indian custom, springtime was wartime. The spring of 1758 was no exception. Early in the year, 180 warriors from the Overhill Cherokee towns set out to attack French forts and French-allied Indians in the Mississippi Valley. From his station in the Cherokee heartland, Captain Paul Demere encouraged them in this venture. But other Cherokees turned their eyes to Virginia and Pennsylvania, hearkening to the appeals of British agents and to the invitation of Captain Abraham Bosomworth, an officer in the 2nd Battalion of the Royal Americans. Bosomworth sought allies to attack Fort Duquesne, the French post that guarded the headwaters of the Ohio River on the Pennsylvania frontier. The proposal seemed straightforward. But as it unraveled, it had unforeseen consequences for everyone involved.

By April 21, 1758, fifty-seven Catawbas and fewer than six hundred Cherokees had made the five-hundred-mile trek to Virginia’s Fort Loudoun, strategically located in the broad swale of the Shenandoah Valley near the site of Winchester today. As they

78 Paul Demere to William Henry Lyttelton, April 2, 1758, DRIA, 2:455; Paul Demere to William Henry Lyttelton, July 30, 1758, Lyttelton Papers, reel 2.
79 “Captn. Bosomworth’s Proceedings with the Indians at Fort Loudoun in Virginia,” April 21, 1758, John Forbes Headquarters Papers [hereafter Forbes HQ Papers], (DLAR microfilm, Film 434), File #132.
awaited their April 23 conference with Captain Bosomworth, British and provincial agents continued their efforts to drum up Indian troops in the Cherokee towns. The South Carolina Assembly allotted £20,000 in trade goods and sent Colonel Probart Howarth, who held a joint commission in the Independent Companies and the South Carolina Provincials, to the villages. Virginia sent Colonel William Byrd III and his deputy, George Turner.

Their task was not easy, as the warriors who remained at home had reason to be reluctant. Deerskin traders with their own interests at heart reminded the Indians of what they already knew: if the fighting extended through the summer of 1758 and into the fall and winter hunting season, the result would be hardship and indebtedness for Indians and traders alike. The Estatoe trader James Beamer warned the Cherokees that untrustworthy Virginians would “give them no Presents to cloath their Wives and Children.” In the village of Joree, the trader James May told local warriors that the journey was “so far that you will dye or be killed.” He also issued a vague but ominous admonition. “There was a great many White People coming from Virginia and likewise from Carolina” he said,

“and what they were after he could not tell.” With menacing uncertainty in the offing, he “desired them all to stay at Home, and guard their Towns.”

South Carolina’s Colonel Howarth returned to Charles Town without gaining a single recruit from the Middle Settlements or the Overhills. The Overhill warriors had been deceived before. They therefore agreed to join the army only after trade goods arrived. Byrd struggled as well. Not until he bribed the trader James Beamer and paid his half-Cherokee son to serve as an interpreter did a party of sixty Lower Townsmen agree to make the trip to Virginia. They left on March 1. Seven more men traveled separately.

What of James May’s enigmatic warnings? Behind them lay a kernel of truth. A string of French victories in the North had put a deep-seated fear into British officials, especially those in the South. The Southern colonies might be the next Bourbon

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82 Byrd distributed goods funded by the South Carolina Assembly and supplied by merchant John McQueen. Each warrior received a match coat, flap, pair of boots, pound of powder, two pounds of bullets, and a gun. Upon their return, warriors were to receive forty pounds of leather, and bounty for scalps. SCCJ (Early State Records reel E1p/8):1757-1762, Unit 1, p. 136-38, 139, 141 (March 13, 14, 15, 1758); The Journal of the Commons House of Assembly, October 6, 1757-January 24, 1761 [Vol. 15], ed. Terry W. Lipscomb (Columbia: Published for the South Carolina Department of Archives and History, by the University of South Carolina Press, 1996), p. 132-33, 135-36 (March 17, 18, 1758); William Henry Lyttelton to the Earl of Loudoun, March 21, 1758, Amherst Papers, WO 34/35, fol. 81-83; William Henry Lyttelton to James Abercromby, May 15, 1758, Amherst Papers, WO 34/35, fol. 91-92; “Mr [Edmond] Atkins Letter [to John Forbes,] Charlestown May 20th.” Forbes HQ Papers, File #235; William Henry Lyttelton to John Forbes, May 21, 1758, John Forbes Papers in the Dalhousie Muniments, 2/49/3.

83 Many Cherokees respected Byrd’s leadership (he commanded the 2nd Virginia Regiment), and the economic power that he represented. They remained with him even as they learned of the skirmishes. Thomas H. Beemer [sic], et al, “To the Head men and Warriors of the Cherokee Nation at Winchester,” and “Letter Col: Byrds Indians to the Cherokees at Winchester,” May 21, 1758, and “Letter Colo. Byrd Bedford in Virginia 21st May,” Forbes HQ Papers, File #238, 239; William Byrd III to Lachlan McIntosh, May 12, 1758, Lyttelton Papers, reel 2.
objective. With this in mind, South Carolina’s Governor Lyttelton proposed a preemptive strike. Perhaps a British campaign against France’s southern strongholds could stave off the looming threat. His proposed targets included the coastal settlements of New Orleans and Mobile and the inland outposts at Fort Toulouse and Tombigbee Fort. The plan hinged on Native American help. One option involved a British-provincial invasion starting at Chota and striking down the Tennessee River. What might this mean for the Cherokee Towns? The hazy details of Charles Town’s worst-kept secret gave some warriors good reason to opt out of the Fort Duquesne enterprise.84 News from the north soon confirmed their decision.

The Cherokees and Catawbas who gathered at Virginia’s Fort Loudoun probably had doubts from the start. The Virginians had never garrisoned the fort near Chota they had built in 1757. Nor had they delivered the trade goods the Virginia House of Burgesses promised the previous summer. South Carolina traders continued to cheat them as well. Captain Bosomworth, moreover, did not inspire confidence when the conference convened on April 23. The Cherokees valued stoic, sincere, ad lib oratory. Bosomworth instead delivered an impassioned, rambling speech from a prepared script. In it, he appealed to the Cherokees to defend their families and “property” from French encroachment. Given the reality of English, not French, usurpation, this probably did not

make sense to them.85 But the Cherokees had their own agenda and their own reasons for taking up the hatchet. In their formal response two days later, the headmen approved of Bosomworth’s address. For young men, war promised the attributes of manhood, especially accolades and respect at home. Cherokees and Virginians shared the same Indian enemies, among them the Shawnees and Ottawas, both French allies. For the Cherokees more broadly, helping the Virginians meant not just immediate compensation in the form of trade goods but also the long-term promise of a permanent economic partnership with Virginia.86 With all this in mind, the headmen and warriors at Fort Loudoun agreed to Bosomworth’s proposals. But they also issued a caution. “The great Warriors Troops” should “be assembled” as quickly as possible, they said, so “that our young men may not be tired with waiting.”87

Timing was everything. The fighting men who journeyed to Virginia for the Fort Duquesne campaign hoped to return to their villages for the Green Corn Festival, the


87 Citing firsthand knowledge, a Scottish merchant in Carolina noted that Cherokees were “grave and judicious…on all publick occasions.” He added, “They laugh at the Europeans for being so ready to talk & tell their minds & interrupt one another.” William Fyffe to John Fyffe, February 1, 1761, quoted in Grace Steele Woodward, The Cherokees, 38, 41; “Captn. Bosomworth’s Proceedings with the Indians at Fort Loudoun in Virginia,” April 21, 1758, Forbes HQ Papers, #132. On April 9, four hundred Indians had already arrived. George Washington wrote, “I wish we may be able to detain those People still: but I fear it will be a difficult matter, without an early campaign, of which I am sorry to see so little prospect…” George Washington to John Blair, April 9, 1758, Writings of Washington, 2:172.
yearly celebration of the fall harvest. They also intended to be home in time to undertake their winter hunts. The well-being of their families depended on it. Without deerskins to trade, the clothing and other trade goods that had supplanted traditional handicrafts were out of reach. The hunt was especially crucial for the several war parties that had served continuously since spring 1757.

From the outset, the signs were not good. The Cherokee recruits streaming northward in the spring of 1758 soon observed that except for a handful of Pennsylvania and Virginia provincials, there was no army to speak of. The warriors themselves were naked and hungry. Many were unarmed. With a few exceptions, the supplies they required to carry out their end of the Bosomworth bargain were nowhere to be found.88

To make matters worse, Brigadier General John Forbes, the commander of the expedition, did not arrive on the Pennsylvania frontier until early July. He needed to assemble over six thousand British regulars and colonial troops, all from his sickbed, all while suffering from terminal stomach cancer. Once Forbes provisioned and armed his men, he had to carve a path over the undulating ridges of the Alleghenies, creating a chain of fortifications on the way, in order to safely reach Fort Duquesne. Thousands of

French soldiers and their Indian allies stood between the British and their goal. Forbes’s army did not reach full strength, with sufficient supplies, until early July.

The white men did the best they could to allay the warriors’ anxieties, but Indian angst was cumulative as delay compounded delay. Lieutenant Colonel Henry Bouquet did lead an advance detachment with many Indians to scout the prospects ahead in June. But Forbes’s army did not begin its final march on Fort Duquesne until early November.89 By then, nearly all of the Cherokee warriors had given up in disgust. Incrementally, they set out for home, a journey that soon gave them more reason to turn away from their British allies.90

Small clashes between Indians and white settlers happened regularly along the Virginia frontier, and the summer of 1758 was no exception. Home invasions, horse thefts, and armed robberies happened daily. Impatience and language barriers contributed to other altercations in a pattern of conflict that dated back to 1756 if not earlier. But with the Fort Duquesne campaign in the offing, the stream of Cherokees coming and going along Great Indian Warpath did little to cultivate amity. By the end of May 1758, at least six Indians and one white man were dead, and several white men and women were badly beaten.91

The party of Cherokees with William Byrd’s hired escort observed the situation firsthand. They noted that the warriors traveling to and from the Winchester rendezvous


90 Cubbison, The British Defeat of the French in Pennsylvania, 1758, 29, 82-84.

point were destitute. They needed to protect themselves from their Shawnee enemy. They needed to guard against the overzealous frontiersmen. And they also needed horses. To make matters worse, they spoke little English and often had no translators. The Cherokees thus did not understand the words of the frontiersmen they encountered.

The frontiersmen, for their part, coveted Virginia’s generous bounty on Shawnee scalps. As a consequence, numbers of Cherokee warriors became unwitting “Shawnee” victims that spring and summer. Virginia’s frontiersmen did not know whom to trust. Were the Indians they saw passing through Cherokees? Or were they Shawnees, the steadfast allies of the French? Some of the Indian parties involved in the confrontations called themselves Shawnees. Others identified themselves as Cherokees. Prominent Cherokee headmen admitted that some Cherokees might have instigated thefts and acts of aggression. But from the warriors’ perspective they were only defending themselves after reclaiming the horses that had strayed from them while in the British service, horses for which they received no reimbursement from Forbes.

In one instance, the Cherokees may have solicited the aid of a frontier militia unit against the Shawnees. The frontiersmen reported that they encountered some Cherokee warriors, “proposed peace and Friendship, and called them Brothers.”

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92 “Depositions Concerning Indian Disturbances in Virginia,” *DRIA*, 2:463-470. In April 1757 the Virginia House of Burgesses authorized the payment of fifteen pounds for each enemy Indian prisoner and ten pounds for every enemy Indian killed within the colony. “An Act for the more effectual preventing and repelling the hostile incursions of the Indians at enmity with the inhabitants of this colony,” William Waller Hening, *The Statutes at Large, being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia* (Richmond: Samuel Pleasants, 1810-1823), 7:121-23.

“surlily answered, no, no, no Brothers, English damned Rogues.” In this incident and many others, confusion led to chaos and tragedy. The Indians continued, “clapping their Hands, on their Breasts, and making signs,” and “signifyed to them, there was a great many Shawanees all about them, that the wood and Mountains were full of them.” Then, according to the militiamen, the Cherokees purportedly robbed the leader of the militia party, stripped him naked, and beat him with their tomahawks, cutting him “thro the upper Lip.” Cherokees often stripped naked in preparation for battle. What the militiamen saw as an assault may actually have been an invitation to joint enterprise, steeped in long-established Indian ritual. In the end, the parties separated. The Cherokees, who could rarely recover their clothes and horses, went on to plunder several homesteads.94

The most controversial incident involved a party of thirty Cherokees led by the Raven of Settico. By some accounts the slow pace of the campaign and the lack of supplies disenchanted the Overhill headman.95 By other reports, he left Winchester in shame. British authorities and warriors from a rival village alleged that he had attempted to collect two bounties on one scalp.96 It was Cherokee custom for returning victors to cut up scalps obtained and distribute them throughout the community to assuage the grief of those who had lost kin in battle with the enemy. The Raven was simply adhering to

established custom. But jealous Cherokee rivals used the misunderstanding to distance themselves from him.\textsuperscript{97}

Frontiersmen, unaware of these allegations, killed five of the Raven’s thirty warriors on the path in Halifax County. Some of the warriors had not yet healed from wounds they had sustained on a dangerous British scouting mission. But the frontiersmen “scalp’d them & left them on the Road” for the other Cherokees to see. When news of the atrocities reached Winchester, Quartermaster General Sir John St. Clair feared that the Cherokees might “revenge themselves.”\textsuperscript{98}

Forbes’s subordinates doled out trade goods and supplies on May 10, but did little else to appease the Indians. The General observed on May 19 that the Cherokees “begin to weary and languish after their own homes, complaining that they see no appearance of our Army” and that they had been out “many months” – time enough.\textsuperscript{99} The Cherokee warriors received more goods on May 28. They consistently drew more rations than the non-Indian soldiers. But they “are now no longer to be kept with us neither by promises nor presents,” Forbes wrote the next day. Then Cherokees learned of the frontier skirmishes in Halifax and Bedford counties. Some “have gone so farr as to seize the


\textsuperscript{98} Abraham Bosomworth, “A Return of the Southern Indians Winchester 21st April 1758,” Forbes HQ Papers, File #133; Allan MacLean to John Forbes, May 2, 1758, John Forbes Papers in the Dalhousie Muniments, 2/51/1; “Copy of St. John St Clairs Letter to Mr. Prest. Blair the 31st of May 1758,” Forbes HQ Papers, File #277; William Byrd III to Lachlan McIntosh, May 12, 1758, Lyttelton Papers, reel 2.

presents design’d for them, and divide it among themselves according to their own Caprice,” Forbes said. A few parties continued to scout around Fort Duquesne. But, as Sir John reported on May 31, “all the Cherokees are gone or a going home.” Somehow Byrd retained his warriors though they too knew of the clashes along the War Path.

The situation became tense. Forbes remained in Philadelphia. Though he and his top officers grumbled in frustration, the general knew that the Cherokees were important to his campaign’s success. But his army was still not ready, and neither of the crown-appointed Indian superintendents, Sir William Johnson and Edmond Atkin, had arrived to help. Fortunately, Bosomworth ordered extensive shipments of goods for the Indians from merchants in Philadelphia. Those items arrived in mid-June. Forbes’s subordinates handed them out over the next several weeks.

This did little to stem the tide of Cherokee departures. “I think it would be easier to make Indians of our White men, than to cox that damned Tanny Race,” Colonel

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Bouquet wrote. But Bouquet was an effective advocate. Bouquet’s Cherokees likely felt less impatient than the others since they were posted to Rays Town, the British station closest to the French stronghold, still ninety six miles away. When Cherokee and Catawba headmen heard the Swiss mercenary’s flowery metaphors describing the idealized friendship between Cherokees and Englishmen, some decided to stay. One Indian party gained vital intelligence from a hill overlooking Fort Duquesne in June.105

Those at a distance were less enthusiastic. Captain Bosomworth swayed few minds at Winchester despite holding “Council after Council’ and using “every Artifice.” He complained on June 9 that “after an Infinity of Labour, Slavery and unwearied Importunity,” the Indians departed regardless. Colonel Byrd noted two weeks later that the Cherokees had “all grown very impatient,” and “behave[d] with the greatest Insolence.”106 From Pennsylvania’s Fort Loudoun, George Washington similarly griped that the Cherokees grew “tired of waiting.” He predicted “destructive consequences to the british Affairs in America” and “the ruin of our Southern Settlements.” In vain, he begged Forbes to send an officer to the Cherokee villages to resolve all grievances.107

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Cherokees soon spotted former South Carolina governor James Glen. In what may have been an effort to restore his damaged reputation, Glen had sailed with Montgomery’s Highlanders from Charles Town to Philadelphia at his own expense. Meeting with Forbes, he touted the merits of Lyttelton’s proposed southern campaign against Louisiana. Then Glen traveled westward along the chain of forts. He tried to help Forbes manage the Cherokees. But the warriors took little notice of Glen’s efforts. By July 10, only two hundred Cherokees remained with the expedition. “No method was left untried to detain them,” Forbes said; “but they are like Sheep, where one leaps, all the rest follow.” Glen and Bosomworth left Fort Cumberland for Rays Town on July 17.  

Additional skirmishes along the Virginia frontier took place, with frontiersmen leaving yet another dead Cherokee on the road for others to see. “By all Accounts,” wrote Fort Prince George commander Lachlan McIntosh, “there is a good Deal of Mischief done upon the Frontiers of Virginia betwixt white People and Indians.”

Attakullakulla had gone to war earlier in the year against the French in the Mississippi Valley. He delivered two scalps to Charles Town in April, and he promised

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109 On July 15, Bosomworth reported that frontiersmen “very lately killed & Scalped” a Cherokee, “& left him upon the Road to incense the rest.” “Letter Capt. Bosomworth [to John Forbes] Fort Cumberland 15th July 1758” Forbes HQ Papers, File #375. McIntosh blamed the frontier clashes to “small Partys of Indians going to War as they pretend, but in Reallty only goes to steal Horses and plunder every where they come to.” Interpreters must accompany Cherokee warriors. “By all I can learn [there] is People killed on [both] Sides as the Carpenter observes they are dayly [bringing] Horses from those Parts.” Lachlan McIntosh to William Henry Lyttelton, June 5, 1758, *DRIA*, 2:462.
Governor Lyttelton and Colonel Byrd he would lead a large war party to help Forbes. But then he stalled. The Overhills still refused to take up the hatchet before the promised supplies arrived. The most eager warriors, supplied from South Carolina’s Fort Loudoun, had taken part in the Louisiana campaign. Others had assisted Virginia the previous year. Ostenaco, now second only to Oconostota as a warrior, resented superintendent Atkin for detaining several Cherokee braves in a case of mistaken identity the summer before. He had no truck for the Virginians, who had not delivered the trade goods they had promised after the warriors had served with them the previous year. All awaited the latest news from the Virginia and Pennsylvania frontier.

In an atmosphere of disgruntled uncertainty, Attakullakulla struggled to recruit. He and Byrd’s deputy, George Turner, set June 21 as the departure date. By that time, Attakullakulla, Turner, and a Presbyterian missionary from Virginia named John Martin had escorted a caravan of trade goods to South Carolina’s Fort Loudoun. The headman distributed them to potential Cherokee recruits. Martin then undermined the mission by proselytizing in the Overhill villages. Sources suggest he alienated Cherokees with his lack of respect for their culture. He left a few months later.

113 Lachlan McIntosh to William Henry Lyttelton, June 5, 1758, DRIA, 2:462.
At Fort Loudoun, on June 21, Turner loaded his horses to head north at the appointed departure time. But Attakullakulla approached at the eleventh hour with an announcement. Chota’s conjurer had warned the warriors that if they went to war “after Two moons there wou’d be a Great Sickness amongst them.” As a result, “they should lose a great many of their Men.” The remainder, “so much fatigued with sickness & Travelling,” would get home only “with Difficulty.” Plus, Attakullakulla added, “it was very hot weather.” And no one had sent them wampum belts. He wondered aloud if Turner legitimately represented Virginia. Despite Turner’s protestations, “in Short [they] positively refused to stir.” Attakullakulla offered to depart in the fall with three hundred men. For once, longstanding roles were reversed as Attakullakulla now made promises to the white men that he could not keep.114

The Cherokees held their conjurers in high esteem. Their counsel could profoundly influence decisions made by groups and individuals alike. If the spirits did not sanction an attack, it was because the warriors might fail. Going anyway would subject the community to affliction. It was not uncommon for a war effort to be delayed or thwarted by bad omens. As one white observer put it, “They’re strongly affected with dreams and run to their conjurers for an explanation.” He continued, “They likewise

depend on their conjurers to foretell to them what success they’ll have in Hunting and all their concerns.”

Attakullakulla was no exception. But he was also playing many cards at once, keeping the British in his orbit, appeasing reluctant fighting men at home, and chastening the disgruntled warriors who gave up and returned from Virginia. The headman told the British that the returning men “were Rogues who under the Pretence of Assisting their Brethren the English went in to Rob the Out Settlers and murder them.” He “wishd They had all been cut off.” He offered to order the killing of the Raven of Toxaway, whom he accused of improprieties along the Path. Moreover, Attakullakulla couldn’t possibly raise enough recruits. Waiting for news from Virginia seemed prudent. If he put off his march to Virginia by promising to add more recruits at some indeterminate time, he might secure more compensation and trade goods. Thus he could gain the affection of his Cherokee followers.

Back on the Pennsylvania frontier, Lieutenant Colonel Henry Bouquet and his detachment had advanced from Ray Town toward Fort Duquesne in mid-June. As the soldiers carved a new road through the forest and built fortified posts along the way, their Indian allies – including Cherokees, Catawbas, Tuscaroras, and Nottoways – scouted French positions and guarded the expedition’s encampments. The ailing brigadier


116 “Fort Loudoun, Upper Cherokees, George Turner [to John Forbes?],” [June 23, 1758], Forbes HQ Papers, File #326. The next day, Turner sent several prominent Overhill headmen to Fort Loudoun to document their decision and to swear that they would go in the fall. “Fort Loudon June 22 1758 Upper Cherokees,” Draper MSS. 4 ZZ 52, in *EJC*, 6:263-64. On Attakullakulla’s condemnation of the warriors, see also The Little Carpenter to William Henry Lyttelton, July 29, 1758, *BPRO-SC*, 28:90-93.
general, however, did not reach Carlisle until early July. He traveled in a hammock slung between two horses. The sight was disconcerting to the Indians. Cherokee warriors led by example, on the front lines. And they led until they no longer delivered results. To see the “Great Warrior” in such a feeble state did not inspire confidence.117

Figure 12: The Forbes and Braddock Roads. Adapted by Kent Steinbrunner from Walter O’Meara, Guns at the Forks (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1979), 255.

More departures followed. Many Catawbas returned home in July. Accompanied by white translators, the Catawbas reached their settlements safely by a route through the Virginia Piedmont.118 The Cherokees soon left too; they would not be so lucky.


By August 3, Colonel Byrd reported that “every one of my cursed Indians has left me, their Excuse was they were tired of waiting.” He continued, “I make no doubt but that they will shortly revolt from our Interest.” Another fifty Cherokees stationed at Rays Town left Colonel Bouquet on August 10. They demanded the goods stored for them and took to the trail. Forbes detached Major James Grant and two hundred Highlanders after them “to represent to them in moderate terms how Grosly they had abused and imposed upon us for so many months.” The major obeyed Forbes’s orders and averted the frontier bloodshed that some officers initially feared. At Shippensburg on the sixteenth, he asked the Indians to stay, but they declined. The Indians, Grant noted, “committed no Disorder, did not even ask for Rum.” They merely claimed the “Bundles” of “Goods” they had amassed thus far. “They were so anxious to get home,” Grant reported, that “They went of[f] very quietly without waiting either for Talk or Dinner, and took a few horses with them.”

In great frustration, Forbes wrote to the governors of Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina. He never acknowledged that the expedition’s slow pace caused the departure of the Cherokees. Instead he accused Edmond Atkin, the absent Indian superintendent for the southern district, of dereliction of duty. Atkin had gone back to Charles Town. Forbes blamed the Cherokees for trying to extract more “presents” from


120 Francis Halkett to Henry Bouquet, [August 10, 1758], John Forbes to James Abercromby, [August 11, 1758], Forbes Writings, 172, 174-75; “Letter Major Grant [to John Forbes,] Fort Loudoun [PA], 16th August 1758,” Forbes HQ Papers, File #476.
him. He did not understand that they were demanding compensation for services rendered and for the hunts they had missed. He called the Cherokees “Scoundrels.” But Forbes was also fair. He ensured that the Indians received their goods. He demanded (unsuccessfully) that the governors provide “safe passage for the Indians” and prepare the backsettlers. 121 Short on manpower, Forbes ignored the warnings of Virginia’s new commander in chief, Lieutenant Governor Francis Fauquier, who had taken over in June. Forbes declined to send white interpreters with most of the warriors. But events showed that even an escort of white men could not guarantee the safety of the Cherokees. 122

Frontiersman-Cherokee conflicts intensified as these warriors traveled home. Only one war party that returned earlier in the summer of 1758 had done so without people killed or robbed on the way. The situation got worse as the season progressed. James Beamer alleged that attacks on the returning warriors had the tacit approval of Virginia’s acting governor, John Campbell. “The Governor of Virginia knows of it,” Beamer said, “and has Given these people orders to kill them, and take away what Presents they Got there Back.” 123

On September 2, the remaining warriors from Estatoe, accompanied by messenger James Holmes and the Beamers, set out from Winchester. They woke the morning after


122 “I beg the Favour of you to let none return at the End of the campaign without proper Escorts.” Francis Fauquier to John Forbes, July 20, 1758, *Fauquier Papers*, 1:52; John Forbes to Edmond Atkin, August 16, 1758, Lyttelton Papers, reel 2.

123 James Beamer to William Henry Lyttelton, September 16, 1758, Lyttelton Papers, reel 2.
their first encampment to find six horses stolen. The Indians “all talk’d very hard.” As they proceeded southward, they made several attempts to take horses, all of which Thomas Beamer prevented. Finally, “at last I perswaded them to drop it,” and they “travelled along very peaceable & Quiet.” At Bedford Court House, some Virginia settlers warned Beamer “if I did not take Care I should have some Indians killed.” Beamer sent word ahead that there were three white men in the party, and that they would keep the Indians under control. Nonetheless, the next morning, near Goose Creek in Bedford County, eighty white men “rose up” suddenly, without provocation, on both sides of the road. They ordered the Indians to ground their firearms, which they did. The frontiersmen then opened fire, killing three Indians and wounding one. A three-hour standoff ensued. The Beamers convinced the Cherokees, who lacked numbers and ammunition, not to take immediate revenge. The warriors continued to Estatoe, arriving on September 8.\(^\text{124}\)

On the tenth, a warrior from the Valley returned home, “very much wounded and not a Rag on him.” Frontiersmen had fired on his companions, three Valley Town headmen, at the very same place, killing them all.\(^\text{125}\) Villagers in the Middle Towns soon learned that an ambush by Virginia militiamen under Captain Robert Wade had left four of their warriors dead and one wounded. Afterward, the captain instructed his men “not to tell that we Ever heard them say that they were Cherokees.” They then tried to claim

\(^{124}\) Thomas Beamer to Edmond Atkin, [September 1758], James Beamer to William Henry Lyttelton, September 16, 1758, Lyttelton Papers, reel 2. The Estatoes also told McIntosh “they stole no horses nor molested no white people.” Lachlan McIntosh to William Henry Lyttelton, September 18, 1758, *Ibid.*

\(^{125}\) Thomas Beamer to Edmond Atkin, [September 1758], James Beamer to William Henry Lyttelton, September 16, 1758, Lyttelton Papers, reel 2.
the Virginia bounty on Shawnee scalps. On September 15, in dramatic fashion, wounded warriors reached Qualatchee and announced that white people had killed six of their townsmen on the path. And on September 17, the Lower Towns learned of yet another skirmish in Bedford County. White assailants killed six Cherokees and wounded seven more. Then they allegedly pursued and killed the wounded.

Cherokee blood law called for reciprocity. Because Cherokee society was a matrilineal society, women called on their male relatives to take revenge. To appease the “crying blood” of clan members captured or killed, male relatives of the fallen had to go to war. If the avengers failed, the relative’s ghost would loom nearby, subjecting the community to illness or bad luck. Therefore, an equivalent number of white men, members of the offending clan, had to die. As one white observer remarked, “such is their Custom, that they will have Man for man, if not the guilty, another.” But this was a decision that no Cherokee family, clan, or village took lightly. The Indians carefully considered the timing, logistics, and potential consequences of retribution. Some prominent headmen from the Overhills and the Lower Towns had proposed an alternate

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127 Thomas Beamer to Edmond Atkin, [September 1758], Lytelton Papers, reel 2.
implementation of the law to Governor Lyttelton: to atone for the deaths of both the Virginians with a blood gift of sorts – a strike “without delay” against the French. Lyttelton never responded. Meanwhile, more Cherokee warriors died on the path from Virginia.129

For the first time, a pan-Cherokee unity began to emerge. Village leaders from Valley, Middle, and Out Towns gathered to discuss retribution. The Round O of Stecoe in the Out Towns, previously a steadfast British ally, “Jump’d on a Corn-house Scaffild and Beat up for men.” This was Cherokee custom for raising a war party. The war leader collected forty volunteers. And “I make noe Doubt,” James Beamer wrote, “But he will, Be Joyn’d By three times that Number.”130 From Fort Prince George, Ensign Lachlan McIntosh wrote: “Every thing is turned the Indians Quite Mad and they talk Nothing Now but of Revenge and of setting off in Parties to Virginia to kill the white People.” Lower Townsmen plotted an attack on his post, and McIntosh prepared the garrison.131

“All the warriors of the lower Towns” converged on Fort Prince George on September 17. According to Wawhatchee and Seroweh (the Young Warrior of Estatoe), the Virginians had slain thirty-seven Cherokees that spring and summer. The Indians

130 Thomas Beamer to Edmond Atkin, [September 1758]; James Beamer to William Henry Lyttelton, September 16, 1758, Lyttelton Papers, reel 2.
could bear it no longer. “Now they had taken up the Hatchet in Revenge of them,” Ensign McIntosh observed. He tried to dissuade the arrayed warriors, but his efforts only heightened their anger. The Fort Prince George commander “had no Interpreter but an Indian how [who] speaks a Little English.” The visitors demanded a response from Governor Lyttelton in fourteen days. On September 21, thirty warriors from Qualatchee and Toxaway reportedly departed in search of revenge. Indian trader John Elliot “is bringing up a fresh Cargo of rum,” McIntosh added. He predicted bleakly: “I make no Question but we shall have still more Trouble than Ever.”

James Beamer reported that in his thirty years as a Cherokee trader “I Never In my Life Beheld the Indains [sic] Look upon white men as they Doe or talk Soe hard of them.” They say, he reported “there will, Be a Great many white people kill’d Before they are all Gone.” Likewise, his son Thomas worried, “I am afraid many hundred poor Souls in the back Inhabitants will be massacred, which I pray God may not come to pass.”

When he received the letters from McIntosh and the Beamers on September 26, Lyttelton sent a threatening dispatch to the headmen and warriors of the Lower and Middle Towns. On the basis of reports from Virginia’s lieutenant governor, Francis

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132 Lachlan McIntosh to William Henry Lyttelton, September 18, 1758, The Talk of Ohatchie, and the Young Warrior of Estatoe, September 18, 1758, Lyttelton Papers, reel 2. Wawhatchee’s warriors clashed with frontiersmen the previous year. Matthew C. Ward, Breaking the Backcountry: The Seven Years’ War in Virginia and Pennsylvania (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003), 145. “The Indains in Generall, Is Grown Quiett Desperate that I Really am afraid they will fall on the Traders and their Hirelings.” James Beamer to William Henry Lyttelton, September 19, 1758, Lyttelton Papers, reel 2. “Seroweh” is the Lower Dialect spelling of the warrior’s name. Saloue and Saluy are also used in the historical record.

133 James Beamer to William Henry Lyttelton, September 16, 1758, Thomas Beamer to Edmond Atkin, [September 1758], Lyttelton Papers, reel 2.
Fauquier, Lyttelton concluded that “the Cherokees were the first aggressors.”\textsuperscript{134} In his message to the Indians, he couched dubious statements in a metaphorical language that resonated with the tones of Indian oratory. “The Fire that was kindled many Years ago” by our forefathers, he wrote, “has long burnt bright between us and the Chain of Friendship which the great King George has fixed, is unsullied and free from Stain.” He hoped it would remain so. The frontiersmen had acted without official sanction. He promised the Cherokees that Fauquier would compensate them for their losses. He offered to send presents for “the Relations of your People that have been slain, sufficient to hide the Bones of the dead Men and wipe away the Tears from the Eyes of their Friends.” But, he threatened, “if you do not prevent them” [the warriors] from shedding the blood of frontiersmen in revenge, “you will remember my Words and repent your Rashness when it is too late.” As historian Wayne Lee points out, relatives could accept a blood gift to the family of the dead person. Then revenge would be taken. But if a non-Cherokee had taken a Cherokee life, family members were less likely to accept blood gifts. Lyttelton did not acknowledge, and perhaps did not care, that only the clan council and the relatives of the deceased could determine whether or not they took revenge. The decision was not based on a broad consensus.\textsuperscript{135}

\textsuperscript{134} Francis Fauquier to William Henry Lyttelton, June 16, 1758, \textit{Fauquier Papers}, 1:28-29; Governor Lyttelton to the Lower and Middle Cherokee Headmen and Warriors, September 26, 1758, \textit{DRIA}, 2:481; William Henry Lyttelton to Francis Fauquier, September 26, 1758, Lyttelton Letterbooks, 6i, p. 220.

\textsuperscript{135} Governor Lyttelton to the Lower and Middle Cherokee Headmen and Warriors, September 26, 1758, \textit{DRIA}, 2:481; William Henry Lyttelton to Francis Fauquier, September 26, 1758, Lyttelton Letterbooks, 6i, p. 220; Lee, “Peace Chiefs and Blood Revenge,” 714; Reid, \textit{Law of Blood}, 171-72.
The Virginia House of Burgesses repealed the scalp bounty on enemy Indians on September 28, and Fauquier signed its bill on October 12. Fauquier ordered the militia captains to “act on the defensive only, and to avoid as possible doing any Injury to the Cherokees.” But it was too little, too late. The Virginia governor insisted that the Cherokee deaths “ought to be imputed to the Rashness of a few disorderly” Virginians. He urged the Cherokees to “call back their Parties already gone out, and to prevent the Effusion of more Blood.” He vowed, vaguely, that Virginia would “do every Thing to recover and preserve a mutual good understanding an inviolable Friendship.” With some skepticism the Virginia Council hoped that he could “effect a Reconciliation.”

Though the details remain sketchy, some of the Lower or Middle Towns sent runners to the Savannah River Chickasaws and the Upper Creeks, begging them to send warriors for a wave of retaliatory attacks. The Savannah River Chickasaws gave the Cherokees “a very cold reception.” But the Upper Creeks did not. Upper Creek diplomats visited Estatoe. But the Creeks declined to participate, at least for now. In the absence of Creek and Chickasaw support, the Cherokees soon recalled their revenge-seeking war parties, likely anticipating “blood gifts” from Fauquier in the form of trade

136 \textit{JHB, 1758-1761}, 30 (September 28, 1758), 45 (October 12, 1758); Virginia compensated the settlers, repealed the scalp bounty, and ordered militia captains to “take great Care they are not the Aggressors.” Fauquier planned to provide the Cherokees “all reasonable Satisfaction and Compensation.” He collected some of the goods they lost or had stolen from them. “But if nothing but Blood will satisfy them, they must take the Consequence,” Fauquier insisted. He called for a messenger to visit the Cherokee villages and for a conference with leading chiefs, including Attakullakulla, in Williamsburg. Francis Fauquier to William Henry Lyttelton, Virginia Council Journal, [October 12, 1758], Lyttelton Papers, reel 2; Francis Fauquier to John Buchanan, November 14, 1758, \textit{Fauquier Papers}, 1:105, 105n.

137 Some Cherokees and Upper Creeks from Oakfuskee clashed at a “rum frolick.” A trader reported that “This unexpected blow threw the” Cherokees “into so great a consternation that it gave an immediate turn to all their designs.” It “seemed at most entirely to quash their resentment against Virginia.” Henry Ellis to the Board of Trade, November 9, 1758, \textit{CRG}, 28, pt. 1:171; James Beamer to William Henry Lyttelton, October 20, 1758, Lyttelton Papers, reel 2.
goods. Cherokees agreed to send delegates to meet with Lyttelton in Charles Town. By October 20, the elder Beamer reported that the Estatoes “Seems Soe altered for the Better That I Never know’d the Like alteration,” but, he cautioned, “God knows how Long It may Last.”

From his station at South Carolina’s Fort Loudoun, Captain Paul Demere somehow prevailed upon Ostenaco and Oconostota and a few dozen warriors to set out against Fort L’Assomption on the Mississippi River near present-day Memphis in mid-September 1758. They left just days before news of the frontier violence reached the Overhills. French agents continued to circulate through the Overhill Towns. Runners from the grief-stricken and enraged Cherokee Towns brought word of the carnage on the Virginia frontier. The Overhills had lost no warriors in the most recent conflicts, but some of their kinfolk had died. And clan ties were as strong as village ones. Connecorte urged calm as families called for revenge. Tensions rose nonetheless, Captain Demere informed Governor Lyttelton on September 30. Two weeks later, he sent Lyttelton a despairing plea: “if we had any good Success to the North you would let me know it, for I begin to think that I am now in another world.”

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138 William Henry Lyttelton to Edmond Atkin, October 14, 1758, Lyttelton Letterbooks, 61, p. 246.
139 James Beamer to William Henry Lyttelton, October 20, 1758, Lyttelton Papers, reel 2; Cherokee Headmen [Seroweh and Dickitchee of Estatoe] to William Henry Lyttelton, October 20, 1758, Lyttelton Papers, reel 2.
140 Conncorte sent wampum to the Lower and Middle Towns and frequently visited the Captain. Paul Demere to William Henry Lyttelton, September 30, 1758, October 15, 1758, Lyttelton Papers, reel 2.
In early September, Attakullakulla had departed for Virginia with just thirty warriors. He now saw the trip as a diplomatic mission rather than a military campaign. He stopped in Williamsburg to meet with Governor Fauquier. Then he proceeded northwest to Winchester. And he continued westward to Rays Town, ninety miles shy of Fort Duquesne. There, Forbes and his army had just arrived. Attakullakulla met them on October 14. Fewer than one hundred Indians, perhaps no more than eighty, remained with the expedition.

Forbes expected Attakullakulla to use his influence to halt Cherokee departures for the final push to the French fort. Instead, the headman and others upped what the British saw as their “avaricious” and “extravagant” demands for more goods. Forbes was incensed. He failed to understand three things. First, as the season progressed, the Indians lost more and more of their hunting time. Second, as they performed dangerous—and fruitful—scouting missions, they expected compensation for services rendered. Third, they had lost relatives and townsmen on the Virginia frontier and naturally sought atonement. Oblivious to these considerations and fearful of a large-scale departure of Indians, Forbes dubbed the Cherokee leader “as great a Rascal to the full as any of his companions.” Attakullakulla later recalled that he “was prevailed on to go out to Warr & accordingly proceeded” forty more miles to the post at Loyalhanna (later Fort

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Ligonier), just fifty miles from Fort Duquesne. There Bouquet and two thousand troops manned the expedition’s most advanced post. “I took one Scalp, & should have been longer out had not my Young Men deserted me which prevented my going any farther,” Attakullakulla said. When Forbes began his final advance on October 30, he had “not now left with me above fifty” Indians, many of them Catawbas.144

With anti-British fervor rising in the Cherokee villages to the south, Governors Lyttelton and Fauquier wanted Attakullakulla to visit Williamsburg to broker an end to the crisis. Without telling Forbes, the Cherokee headman rounded up an escort of nine men and set out for the Virginia capital. In his mind, he was continuing his diplomatic mission. But as Forbes saw it, a high ranking officer had absented himself without leave.145 “To prevent him from harming any of the settlers,” Forbes sent provincials from Pennsylvania to disarm the Indians. Attakullakulla and his followers, humiliated though treated delicately, then proceeded to Williamsburg, allowed to carry provisions only.146

Governor Lyttelton still held out hope for a British-provincial invasion against French Louisiana. But by late 1758, disaffected Cherokees courted Creek support too. As Cherokee-British relations unraveled in September, the Indian Superintendent Edmond Atkin had slowly wandered southward to Charles Town from a gout-induced

144 Attakullakulla to William Henry Lyttelton, March 20, 1759, Lyttelton Papers, reel 2; John Forbes to William Pitt, October 30, 1758, *Pitt Correspondence*, 1:373.


convalescence on the North Carolina coast. In October he headed west to begin a mission to the Creek Indians. Atkin sought to ensure Creek loyalty. He hoped to better regulate the Creek deerskin trade. He also wished to lay the groundwork for Creek cooperation in the proposed invasion of Louisiana.

Atkin arrived in Augusta on October 24. Few had confidence in his abilities. Georgia Governor Henry Ellis found him arrogant and egotistical. He feared the agent might unravel his two years of skillful diplomacy. Charles Town elites also expressed skepticism. “How far the design and import” of His Majesty’s “appointment will be answered, by a man whose sole business is to cook good dinners for himself in Charlestown, time, and probably the defection of some or other of these nations, will shew,” Dr. Alexander Garden wrote. Atkin’s activities among the Indians of the southeast and the fate of Lyttelton’s grandiose Louisiana expedition deeply and immediately affected any decisions that Cherokees would make. But as 1758 came to a close, Atkin remained in Augusta.

Back in Charles Town, twenty-three pro-English Cherokee visitors from the Valley and Lower towns arrived on November 8 to meet with the Governor. Lyttelton read his September 26 letter aloud and warned them again not to seek retribution. The

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visitors promised that runners had recalled all the warriors that had set out on the vengeful path. Among the Indians in the delegation were Conjurer Jamie and Tiftoe of Keowee. Jamie had lost his nephew, and Tiftoe had lost two cousins in the frontier violence. But in a traditional sign of peace and friendship, Tiftoe presented a string of white wampum to the governor. Tiftoe disputed Attakullakulla’s 1756 claim that no other Cherokees who went to see the King in 1730 still survived. Perhaps challenging the Overhill headman’s claims to authority, Tiftoe insisted that he had journeyed to England alongside the others in 1730. He offered his friendship. He promised to describe the conference to other Cherokees, including Connecorte, upon his return. Lyttelton assured the visitors that he planned to send goods and presents, including ammunition, to their villages. The diplomats shook hands and parted ways. The proceedings had been amicable. But it was not clear that the peace would last or that the Cherokee representatives spoke for all the villages.149

On November 25, Forbes’s army entered the abandoned and charred ruins of Fort Duquesne. The British had captured the fort at last. They avenged the disastrous British loss at Braddock’s Field, where an attempt on Duquesne had failed three years earlier. In this regard, the British and Cherokees shared a cultural common ground. But the 1758 Fort Duquesne campaign had wreaked havoc on British-Cherokee relations. Cheated, maligned, and unappreciated, the Cherokees were more disaffected than ever. In the year to follow, coastal elites learned that the Indians were not alone in their disaffection.

149 The visitors included Tiftoe of Hiwassee, the Wolf and the Mankiller of Keowee (Tiftoe), Conjurer Jamie, two headmen from Toxaway, and eleven warriors, four women and two children, with Robert Bunion, interpreter. SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 2, p. 34-37 (November 14), 39-40 (November 15, 1758).
Chapter 5: “To effect an amicable accommodation with them”: Governor Lyttelton Seizes Hostages and Marches into Cherokee Country

British officials liked to view the pliable Attakullakulla as a political figure with great influence over other Cherokees. In general, Indian governance was decentralized. Coercive power was weak. As the Fort Loudoun engineer, William DeBrahm, explained, they did not “pay any Obedience unto their head-Men, unless when they go out upon a warlike Expedition.” Attakullakulla hoped to improve the trade or to negotiate an effective peace. If he did so, he thought he could win his people’s respect, and perhaps increase his influence. By 1759, however, most Cherokees rejected Attakullakulla’s accommodationist policies. The ineffectual headman could not assuage Cherokee dissatisfaction.¹

After Virginia Provincials had detained his party at Winchester for a few weeks, Attakullakulla and a few dozen supporters visited Williamsburg in late January and early February. Attakullakulla hoped to secure the elusive trade alliance with Virginia, swinging the pendulum of power among the Overhills his way. But when he returned to Fort Prince George on March 15, he carried only Lieutenant Governor Francis Fauquier’s

promise that Virginia would send trade goods in the spring. Worse, white frontiersmen in North Carolina “insulted and pursued” his entourage on the way home.²

When he then rushed off to Charles Town, pent-up frustration exploded. Cherokees launched small-scale operations and threats out of cultural necessity. They also pressured the British to mend the Anglo-Cherokee relationship. But British officials did not take into account Cherokee culture and circumstances. As James Adair, the eighteenth-century deerskin trader and ethnographer put it, “Tyrants are obstinately deaf, and blind; they will see and hear only through the false medium of self-interested court-flatterers.” And, he continued, they “instead of redressing the grievances of the people, have sometimes openly despised and insulted them,” for modestly seeking “a restoration of their rights and privileges.” Thus, the crisis escalated between South Carolina and the Indians. And tensions rose within South Carolina as a result.³

Cherokees remained mindful of their obligation to avenge the “crying blood” of the kin killed or kidnapped. Thus far they had paused to mourn and to discuss how to proceed. Warriors were out on the winter hunt. And some clan mothers had accepted blood gifts. But “kindred duty” of retaliation could be ignored no longer.⁴

³ Adair, History of the American Indians, 281.
⁴ Ibid., 376, 186; Reid, Law of Blood, 168; Susan Marie Abram, “‘Souls in the Treetops:’ Cherokee War, Masculinity, and Community, 1760-1820,” (Ph.D. diss., Auburn University, 2009), 21.
Most young men anticipated, if not embraced, the call to war. Men saw war not merely as a sign of duty, but as an opportunity to win status and respect. Indeed, “it is by scalps they get all their war-titles,” Adair explained. War was a man’s rite of passage and provided a path to status within the community. War had a similar function for women. Women occasionally accompanied men into war. Usually they carried water and prepared food. Sometimes they helped to load weapons in battle. But sometimes women also saw combat. Nanye’hi, Attakullakulla’s niece, replaced her husband when he was killed in a battle with the Creek Indians in 1755. Cherokee women, like men, gained social and political status through war.5

But this is only part of the story. The Cherokees had other reasons to act. From December to February, villagers urged visiting missionary William Richardson to consider their plight. “The English have encroached very much upon them of late,” Richardson observed. In direct violation of the 1746 Treaty of Ninety Six, the interlopers threatened Cherokee survival, killing deer thirty or forty miles west of South Carolina’s Long Cane Creek. “We steal their Land, their Bear, Elk, Dear, Beaver,” the evangelist wrote. As a result, “they are now naked.” The preacher had failed to impress the Indians with his teachings, but their plight nevertheless moved him. The Cherokees suffered under “great Injustice,” he wrote. Richardson wished that “the government would take it into their Consideration & remedy this Evil, & make these People remove as I am afraid

it will occasion a War.” His analysis was prophetic. Though his journal reached Williamsburg, Lieutenant Governor Fauquier never took action.⁶

Complaints about the trade constituted the main source of Cherokee bitterness. Most Cherokees expected the commanders at Fort Loudoun and Fort Prince George to ensure a more abundant supply of trade goods. They expected the redcoats to hold traders accountable. But they were disappointed. The ongoing skirmishes in Virginia exacerbated an already depleted supply of clothing. Many had also lost hunting time during the Forbes campaign. With no skins to trade, they could not buy the few garments that traders had available. Indebtedness rose. Some Cherokees dressed in rags. Others were naked.⁷

The problem was widespread. On March 5, Keowee headmen urged Lyttelton to send a trader. John Elliot and his employees served the town and nearby hamlet Little Keowee, but their supplies were scant. James Beamer, stationed in the adjacent town of Estatoe, offered only the scraps that remained from his local trade. Fraud was still common too. Elliot “not only steals our Horses and Bells, but also our Skins by his false Stilyards [scales],” the Keowees reported.⁸

In the face of such complaints, traffic in one item still boomed. Opportunistic, unlicensed traders and frontiersmen from Georgia, Virginia, and South Carolina peddled

rum to the Indians. The colonial governments failed to stop the illicit trade. Once consumed, rum frequently led to violence spurred by frustration or bravado. “It is a Pity there is not a stop put to the carrying so much Rum among them who when sober in general behave well,” Richardson noted.9

George Milligen, a surgeon in the Independent Company, summed up the situation. He called the traders “a Shame to Humanity, and the Disgrace of Christianity; by their iniquitous and foolish Conduct.” They undermined Indian respect for the English, turning it “into a general Contempt and Dislike.” He continued: “The Savages daily saw themselves cheated in Weight and Measure; their Women debauched, and their young Men corrupted.” As a result, “French Emissaries among them…took much Pains, with Success enough, to alienate their Affections from the English.”10

French and Creek agents indeed emboldened disgruntled Cherokees. In late March, The Mortar – war chief of the Upper Creek town of Oakchoy – circulated in the Overhill towns. Connecorte “holds private Correspondence with the French,” Captain Demere noted. While the visitors floated the idea of military alliance, they also aimed to prevent the Cherokees from joining with the British. The Mortar established three Creek settlements along the southeastern Cherokee border. These villages served as bases for

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9 Raymond Demere to William Henry Lytelton, March 26, 1757, DRIA, 2:348-49; James Beamer to William Henry Lyttelton, February 25, 1759, Lyttelton Papers, reel 2; Richardson Diary, p. 12 (December 25). Richardson Diary, p. 30 (February 5, 1759).

10 George Milligen-Johnston, A Short Description of the Province of South-Carolina (London: John Hinton, 1763), 77-78.
French, Creek, and Cherokee diplomacy. Demere sent men to investigate. Would The Mortar and others drive a wedge deeper between the Cherokees and the English?\textsuperscript{11} 

In early April, reports of Cherokee unrest reached Charles Town. Attakullakulla, with fifty men, women, and children, journeyed to meet with the governor and council. A series of three conferences took place.\textsuperscript{12} Lyttelton believed everything Attakullakulla said. In the first meeting, the headman defended his actions in the Forbes campaign, changing his story in the process.\textsuperscript{13} In the second meeting, the Cherokee promised to keep French agents out of Cherokee towns, something he could not guarantee. He vowed to convince others to see the English as he did: “as their brothers.” He promised to control the warriors “of my Nation.” Finally, though he lacked authority to do so, he offered the English the right to “plant Corn any where in the Nation they please.” Lyttelton responded approvingly. It was a stunning concession on the part of the chief. And it was everything the governor wanted to hear.\textsuperscript{14} 

On April 21, at the third conference, the governor spoke metaphorically. He warned that the French wanted to extinguish the fire lit “many years ago…between the English and the Cherokees.” Then, “like Thives [sic] in the night,” he believed, “if they

\textsuperscript{11} Paul Demere to William Henry Lyttelton, March 26, April 6, 1759, Lachlan McIntosh to William Henry Lyttelton, March 31, 1759, John Bogges to William Henry Lyttelton, April 10, 1759, Lyttelton Papers, reel 2; William Henry Lyttelton to the Board of Trade, April 14, 1759, \textit{BPRO-SC}, 28:177, 180-82. The Mortar was also cultivating friendship between the Creeks and Cherokees more generally. Such settlements were common. On “resident aliens,” see Lee, “Peace Chiefs and Blood Revenge,” 737.

\textsuperscript{12} William Henry Lyttelton to James Wright, September 1, 1759, Lyttelton Letterbooks, 6i, p. 410; \textit{SCG}, April 21-28, 1759, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{13} Attakullakulla claimed that Forbes, who died March 11 in Philadelphia, “told things that are false of me,” and never gave “so much as a little paint.” Attakullakulla’s story changed yet again. SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 2, p. 77-80 (April 7, 1759); William Henry Lyttelton to the Board of Trade, May 8, 1759, \textit{BPRO-SC}, 28:190-91.

\textsuperscript{14} SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 2, p. 81-82 (April 11, 1759).
are able [they] will cut you off.” He urged the headman to go home “In order to keep
every thing straight.” To further coerce the Cherokee to produce results, Lyttelton
presented a string of wampum with three black beads. The governor made his point
clearer by giving the Cherokee and his associates only a paltry amount of trade goods to
carry home. The Governor did not send another trader to Keowee.15 The Gazette said
Attakullakulla and his followers left on April 28, “thoroughly satisfied.”16 Whether or
not this was true, many other Cherokees were far from content.

On April 25 and 26, while Attakullakulla was in Charles Town, three parties of
warriors from the Overhill town of Settico set out in search of white scalps. They wished
to avenge the massacre of the Raven’s warriors in 1758. And young men thirsted for
glory on the battlefield. They marched to the sparsely settled North Carolina frontier,
“where they could do it safely,” North Carolina governor Arthur Dobbs reported.17
Striking homesteads in the North Carolina Piedmont between the Yadkin and Catawba
Rivers, the Setticos “put all our Frontiers in sad Confusion,” according to the North
Carolina ranger Nathaniel Alexander. Letters and newspapers reported nineteen killed.
Despite Catawba protection, white inhabitants fled their farms. Some retreated into
private forts.18 Others dashed for refuge to the Moravian villages of Bethabara and
Bethania. “There is great fear all through the land,” the Bethabara Diary reads.19

15 Ibid., p. 83-86 (April 21, 1759).
16 SCG, April 21-28, 1759, p. 2.
18 Nathaniel Alexander to William Henry Lyttelton, May 4, 1759, Samuel Wyly to William Henry
The death toll ranged from thirteen to nineteen. SCG, May 5-12, 1759, p. 1. Demere reported fifteen.
North Carolina had given the Cherokees no cause for concern. In fact, North Carolina Moravians had hospitably hosted warriors traveling to and from Virginia the previous year. Cherokee blood law did not distinguish between colonies. By Cherokee definition, this was not “murder.” It was obligatory justice. Violence might also pressure the British to reform the Anglo-Cherokee relationship and the deerskin trade. Governor Lyttelton intervened. In a speech to the South Carolina Council, he reasoned that the Cherokees were “more immediately connected and dependent upon this government.” The killings were the act of a few, but Lyttelton held all prominent Cherokees responsible and demanded “satisfaction.” He wrote to Connecorte and Attakullakulla and demanded that the Cherokees hand over those responsible for the “murders,” in equal proportion to the white settlers killed. He never backed down from this stance. Colonial officials saw any act of violence as a declaration of war. They wished to hold individuals accountable. To the Cherokees, “murderers” were family members fighting for the honor, and the soul, of the fallen. But Lyttelton did not respect Cherokee cultural obligations. He did not let the killings pass. He attempted to force a “national” response by Cherokees who made


their decisions on a village, or family-by-family level. And he did not address other Cherokee grievances. The governor escalated the conflict.20

Lyttelton also alerted his Native American allies: the Catawbas, led by King Hagler, and Pyamingo’s Savannah River Chickasaws. Now Cherokees faced enemy attacks.21 The Round O of Stecoe and Cherokee leaders in the Middle, Out, and some of the Lower Towns disavowed the actions of the incensed Cherokee minority. Most were not involved in the revenge killings. The Round O reportedly informed trader James Adair that the peaceful majority opposed the warlike faction “on account of some family disputes.” All thirteen Middle and Out Town chiefs, to show their loyalty, placed their hands on a medallion, then sent it to the Governor as a token that “the Chain [of Friendship] always as usual be kept clear and bright as the day.”22 But the other towns were not so complacent. Overhill runners journeyed northward and to the French, inviting


interested parties to a conference at Tanassee. The question at hand was whether to kill more white people.\textsuperscript{23}

When Attakullakulla returned from Charles Town in late May, the discussion among the Overhills was still underway. Delivering the accused “murderers” was problematic. First, it would undermine the avengers’ intent – to uphold their obligation to the Cherokee dead. The community would have suffered if they failed to do so. And if they acquiesced now, Lyttelton would surely not address Cherokee concerns more generally. Plus, Settico’s young warriors had experienced the worst of the violence in western Virginia in 1758. Connecorte stayed out of the fray. Ostensibly, the violence would cease when those warriors who sought revenge took it. Given the opportunity to assert their manhood and their competence on the battlefield, they might take a little more than retribution. But such a scenario was not acceptable to South Carolina. Attakullakulla somehow collected eight of the scalps the Setticos had taken, probably advancing gifts to satisfy the families who had requested the scalps in the first place. The soldiers at Fort Loudoun buried them inside the fort.\textsuperscript{24}

Many Cherokees embraced the French and the Creeks. Coytmore and Demere urged warriors to attack the fledgling Creek villages “to nip them in the bud.” But to do so would risk starting a war with other Creek towns.\textsuperscript{25} And it would endanger the safety

\textsuperscript{23} William Henry Lyttelton to Edmond Atkin, May 21, 1759, Lyttelton Letterbooks, 6i, p. 310; Adair, \textit{History of the American Indians}, 266.

\textsuperscript{24} Paul Demere to William Henry Lyttelton, June 1, 1759, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3; \textit{SCG}, June 2-9, 1759, p. 4.

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid; \textit{SCG}, June 2-9, 1759, p. 4; \textit{SCCJ}, 1757-62, Unit 2, p. 101 (June 6, 1759); Richard Coytmore to William Henry Lyttelton, June 11, 1759, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
of Cherokee emissaries among the Creeks. By now, Demere’s spies had returned from their investigations. They confirmed earlier reports. And they saw five French boats, “loaded” with guns, ammunition, and rum at the Creek settlement on the Coosa.

Attakullakulla offered to lead an expedition to remove the settlement. But his was not the general will. The Slave-Catcher of Chota led a massive party of men and women to the Oakchoys and then to Fort Toulouse to meet with Creek and French representatives. The French, though hospitable, did not expect a supply of trade goods for four months. A larger joint Cherokee-Creek-French campaign was on hold.26

As tensions with the Cherokees heightened, a millenarian preacher predicting the end of the world took to the streets of Charles Town. For South Carolina’s tiny white oligarchy, life seemed to be unraveling. But for the colony’s enslaved black majority, the combined crises were an opportunity in the making. In fact, for African Americans, with militiamen drawn off to face outside enemies, and with Spanish governors offering freedom in St. Augustine, wartime was often the best time to seek a change in relationships with Anglo-Americans.

The Cherokees were one catalyst of hope for African Americans. Richard Clarke, the highly-esteemed rector of Charles Town’s St. Philip’s Parish, was another. Clarke wielded considerable influence on black and white South Carolinians alike. As one Anglican missionary put it, “His abilities as a Divine were so great, and his piety so strict,

26 The French gave the Cherokees clothing, boots, paint, guns, ammunition and knives. They expected a “very large Quantity” of goods in four months. And they offered to keep in touch. “August 1, 1759 An Indian Woman called the Buffolow Skin,” Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
that he gained over many” converts. He directed the school for black children at St. Philip’s. Seventy new pupils enrolled under his watch.  

Clarke was influenced by a millenarian tract that he read a few years earlier. But the tense situation with the Cherokee Indians and the worldwide dimensions of the Seven Years’ War inspired him to act. “The Clergyman of much Learning but of an overheated imagination” delivered some controversial sermons in February 1759, just as reports of Cherokee hostility reached Charles Town. Clarke “asserted that the World wou’d very soon be at an end.” And, Governor Lyttelton continued in his letter to the Board of Trade, the rector predicted that in September “some great calamity wou’d befall this province.” Clarke’s “Enthusiasm” soon “rose to such a height,” that, in the likeness of the Biblical John the Baptist, “He let his beard grow and ran about the streets crying, Repent, Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.” In early March, Clarke published a wildly popular book in which he calculated and predicted the end of the age. Then, according to plan, he resigned his benefice and sailed for England.

The minister “made an impression upon some weak minds,” wrote Lyttelton, unwilling to fathom the rectitude of what followed. Not long after Clarke’s departure, a free mulatto from St. Helena’s Parish named Philip John (also referred to as Johns and


28 William Henry Lyttelton to the Board of Trade, September 1, 1759, BPRO-SC, 28:213. In the wilderness of Judea, John the Baptist preached “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Matthew 3:1-2, King James Bible.

29 Tyler, “The Gnostic Trap,” 152, 159-61; Richard Clarke, The Prophetic Numbers of Daniel and John....(Charles Town: Peter Timothy, 1759); SCG, March 3-10, 1759, p. 2; St. Philip’s Vestry Minutes: 1756-1774 (October 2, 16, 17, 1758, January 22, 29, February 5, 1759) (SCDAH microfilm, L63002).
Jones) reported a vision of his own. It “reveal’d to him” that in September, the same month mentioned by Richard Clarke, “the white People shou’d be all underground, that the Sword shou’d go thro’ the Land, and it should shine with their blood, that there should be no more white King’s Governors or great men, but the negro’s should live happily & have Laws of their own.” In April, John gave a “secret paper” to two slaves, Tom and Trane, and asked them to “carry it to all the Negroes.” Tom and Trane reported John to the authorities. He was tried, whipped and branded “for endeavouring to stir up Sedition among the Negroes” of St. Helena’s Parish.30

But he was not done. The prophet retreated into the woods for a week. When he emerged, he told his wife “that God almighty had been with him in the woods sometimes before him and sometimes behind him.” John traveled and taught “among all the Slaves wherever he came.” And “a spirit of Cabal” allegedly “began to shew itself among them,” Lyttelton wrote. In June 1759, Thomas Drayton and Stephen Bull (the brother of Councilman William Bull II) wrote the governor from Prince William’s Parish, a predominantly black coastal district. John allegedly promoted a conspiracy and recruited volunteers there. John Pendarvis, a free mulatto of considerable means, provided £700 in South Carolina currency and purchased weapons. Caesar, an enslaved black carpenter, coordinated and planned the uprising. According to John, “the Indians were then to be sent to and they would come and assist in killing the Buckraas.” This caused an uproar in

Charles Town. With vastly different hopes and aspirations, white and black residents all wondered the same thing: had Philip John met with any Indians?31

The tips from Drayton and Bull spurred officials to action. On June 20, Chief Justice Peter Leigh signed warrants for the arrest of Philip John, John Pendarvis, Caesar, and several co-conspirators for “promoting and encouraging an insurrection of the Negroes against the white people.” Lyttelton alerted the militia colonels in the Lowcountry and reminded them to “cause the Laws to be attended to and pointedly executed in their several Districts.” Caesar was soon apprehended. Stephen Bull sent the prisoner and three witnesses to Charles Town.32

For white elites, the Philip John revelations seemed terrifying. Until the Indians were pacified, preachers like Clarke could stir up chaos. And blacks were more likely to revolt. Yet as slave unrest heightened, Cherokee warriors also made their move. In mid-June, a small war party from Eustatia took three scalps on South Carolina’s Pacolet River.33 Other warriors from an unknown village killed two more white men on the Broad River on June 22. Before the end of the month, the Cherokees killed two men and kidnapped two boys on the North Carolina frontier. Governor Arthur Dobbs sent 140

31 SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 2, p. 105-6 (June 20, 1759), p. 110-13 (July 9, 1759).
33 Yauchatanah carried them to his female relative, the wife of “half breed Jemmy,” nine miles from the fort. For a lengthy account of Coytmore’s efforts to retrieve these scalps, see Richard Coytmore to William Henry Lyttelton, July 23, 1759, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
Provincials to reinforce Fort Dobbs. Cherokee violence reached the Virginia frontier, where Overhills killed and scalped a man in early July.

The Setticos made a half-hearted effort to mollify the British by turning over the other eleven scalps their warriors had taken. But the ongoing negotiations at Forts Loudoun and Prince George made it clear that neither they nor any other Cherokees intended to fulfill Lyttelton’s demand for satisfaction. The Cherokee villages, acting independently, had begun what historian Wayne Lee has dubbed a “not quite war.” Beyond revenge and glory, the warriors were looking to alter the broken relationship between Cherokees and colonists. By failing to deal with the Cherokees on their own terms Lyttelton exacerbated Anglo-Cherokee tensions. He imposed economic sanctions by removing and transferring Settico’s trader on July 12. The next day the assembly funded two troops of Rangers to patrol the frontier.

On July 21, Attakullakulla traveled down the Tennessee River to the French Fort L’Assomption with a small group of family members. His intent was to collect French scalps and placate the British. The Lower Townsmen again refused Ensign Coytmore’s incentives to attack the new Creek settlements. They posed no threat to either Cherokees or British. Setticos and Tellicos actually visited the newcomers to maintain good will. If

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36 The units included a captain, lieutenant, and twenty men each. JCA, 1757-1761, 422-23 (July 12, 1759), 424-25 (July 13, 1759). Lee, “Peace Chiefs and Blood Revenge,” 718-20.
they attacked the French or the Creeks, Cherokees made themselves vulnerable to the west and the south. In any event, Attakullakulla’s trip proved unsuccessful. This further discredited him among his own people.  

On August 12, a handful of Lower Townsmen returned to Fort Prince George. They carried the scalps of a white woman and child from the Enoree or Broad River in South Carolina. A total of four war parties were out. Each vowed to return with white prisoners, and to put them to death. They informed Coytmore “that it is now War with the white People who they can kill like Fowls.” At Fort Prince George, Lower Townsmen accosted soldiers, “taring their cloaths and shaking Hatchets over their Heads,” Coytmore reported. And the Slave-Catcher of Chota once again visited Oackchoy and Fort Toulouse, returning with “a great many bad Talks.” Coytmore had not “the Least hopes of a change of affairs in these Parts.” The Cherokees had killed thirty-three whites since the previous fall. It was still less than they had lost in Virginia. Coytmore invoked some instructions the Governor had sent him in May. On August 14, he stopped the guns and ammunition headed to the Cherokee villages. This proved to be a critical mistake: the winter hunting season was approaching. And Cherokee depended on skins to repay debts to the traders, to supply their families, and to get weapons to defend themselves against their enemies.  

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38 William Atkin and Billy Germany, Conference, Spencer’s near Mocolassah, August 20, 1759, Richard Coytmore to William Henry Lyttelton, August 23, 1759, Paul Demere to William Henry Lyttelton, August 28, 1759, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
Meanwhile, Wawhatchee, a Lower Town warrior, journeyed to Georgia’s Broad River on his own initiative. At John Vann’s trading post, he dictated a letter to Georgia’s Governor Henry Ellis. The letter protested that “the People of South Carolina have made Encroachments upon their Lands & have Settled so near to their Nation That it of Course
makes Deer scarce, so that they are not able to Support their Wives & Children with Meat & Cloaths.” This, Wawhatchee claimed, “is the great Grievance they have to complain of.” He begged Ellis to intercede to “cause the People of [South Carolina] to remove within certain Bounds vizt to long Canes.” The warrior requested a meeting with Ellis, vowing that the Cherokees’ greatest desire was “to preserve Peace.” In his own correspondence with the South Carolina governor, Ellis offered to mediate, but Lyttelton did not accept. Many Cherokees would have accepted Ellis’s involvement as a path to peace. Indian diplomacy often used neutral third parties. The British generally did not. Refusing to set a precedent, Lyttelton told Ellis that Wawhatchee should address matters of diplomacy directly to him, and to him only.

Unaware of Coytmore or Wawhatchee’s adventures, on August 15, 1759, Lyttelton detached seventy South Carolina provincials under Captain John Stuart to reinforce Fort Loudoun, raising the number of soldiers there to two hundred. Their arrival put the Cherokees into a heightened state of alarm.

39 William Henry Lyttelton to the Board of Trade, September 1, 1759, BPRO-SC, 28:210-11; William Henry Lyttelton to the Emperor Old Hop & the Head Men & Warriors of the Upper, Middle, & Lower Towns of the Cherokee Nation, August 29, 1759, Lyttelton Letterbooks, 6i, p. 393.

40 Henry Ellis to William Henry Lyttelton, August 27, 1759, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3. Ellis understood Indian politics and culture quite well. Georgia was uninvolved in the crisis, so he had no reason to seek blood revenge. Cashin, Governor Henry Ellis and the Transformation of North America (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2004); Lee, “Peace Chiefs and Blood Revenge,” 737.

41 SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 2, p. 116 (August 14, 1759), 116; William Henry Lyttelton to Captain John Stewart [Stuart], August 15, 1759, Lyttelton Letterbooks, 6i, p. 385-86. Ninety others were stationed at Fort Prince George. William Henry Lyttelton to the Board of Trade, September 6, 1759, BPRO-SC, 28:209; SCG, August 11-18, 1759, p. 2. This number added to the men sent on March 21. William Henry Lyttelton to the Board of Trade, April 14, 1759, BPRO-SC, 28:177; SCG, March 24, 1759, p. 1. Some provincials had new red uniforms, replacing the old “buff” cuffs and lapels. John Stuart to William Henry Lyttelton, November 15, 1759, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3. The assembly downsized Howarth’s Provincial Regiment. JCA, 1757-1761, 415-16 (July 7, 1759).
Cherokee unrest encouraged slaves to plot a revolt. In July, Philip John and John Pendarvis were captured. And throughout July and August, Lyttelton interrogated blacks detained “some Time in our Jail for seditious Practices,” the South Carolina Gazette reported. The Governor uncovered “their Scheme.” In a plot that bore a striking resemblance to the Stono Rebellion exactly twenty years earlier, they planned to seize “some Arms & Ammunition” from a storehouse in the country. But this time, “with what force they could collect,” the co-conspirators planned to march on Charles Town. With many white residents gone to their summer homes, the rebel army could gain new recruits and inflict damage in the city. Lyttelton, who tried to project an air of calm, dubbed the plot a “crude, ill-digested project.” But a story in the Gazette pointed to something more substantial. It reported that John and the others “widely communicated” their conspiracy to “the most sensible Fellows throughout the Province, and even in Charles-Town.” According to the paper, the plot extended still further. John told many “that the Indians were to be concerned in the extirpation of the white People from the Face of this Earth.” The possibility of an interracial alliance horrified South Carolina elites.

Philip John and John Pendarvis stood trial in Prince William’s Parish for “seditious and treasonable Practices.” The Governor dismissed the others who testified against the leading conspirators. On the day of the trial, Pendarvis escaped from custody. Upon “very full and clear” evidence, the court sentenced Philip John to death. He met

42 SCG, August 11-18, 1759, p. 2.
43 William Henry Lyttelton to the Board of Trade, September 1, 1759, BPRO-SC, 28:214; SCG, August 11-18, 1759, p. 2.
the hangman’s noose two days later. Pendarvis disappeared, never to be heard from again. The plot fueled lingering “suspicions and apprehensions” among whites, especially south of Charles Town. Sheer numbers made slave insurgency a possibility at any time, but several factors converged in 1759 to heighten white anxieties. A severe drought and a projected decline in the rice harvest meant that black Carolinians had more mobility and free time than in typical seasons. War with France – and the French privateers along the Carolina coast – gave slaves a viable if distant ally. And an incipient war with the Cherokees gave them an ally closer to home. Similar dynamics shaped the calculations of South Carolina’s ruling class for weeks, months, and even years to come.44

Back in the Cherokee villages, Coytmore’s ammunition embargo put the Cherokees “in an uproar,” Captain Demere reported. They believed that the English “wanted to Starve them.” Oconostota reminded British officials that his people had missed the last year’s hunts because of the Forbes campaign. They needed clothes, and they needed food. The Green Corn Dance ended in late August, two weeks after Coytmore halted the munitions supply. Then hunting season began. Without powder, shot, and working weapons, the onset of winter looked grim. In the “not quite war” environment, some Cherokees expected to continue normal trading relations even though other Cherokees were raiding the frontier. From a European perspective, Coytmore’s

move made perfect sense: British military and political brass in the colony thought that
the embargo would cause all Cherokees to fall into line with British expectations.45

In fact, the arrival of Stuart’s detachment struck many Cherokees as a clear sign
of British aggression. As Richard Coytmore put it, some threatened that “if they did not
get ammunition, they had nothing to do but kill the white People here, & carry their
Scalps to the French,” who would provide for them.46 But he and Demere dug in their
heels. They refused to release the ammunition without orders from Lyttelton. Lyttelton
refused to release the ammunition until the Cherokees provided “satisfaction.”
Cherokees refused to provide satisfaction because they did nothing wrong in the first
place. And no coercive power existed to force anyone to hand over the purported
“murderers.” Cherokees just wanted ammunition to hunt. Coytmore exaggerated matters
in his official reports and antagonized the people of the Lower Towns.47

The Cherokees brought their own pressures to bear on British officials.
Continuing the “not quite war,” warriors took six scalps on the Broad and Saluda Rivers.
Militiamen responded in kind, killing two Cherokees and wounding two more.48 The
agitation was at its highest in the Lower and Overhill Towns. Desperate for ammunition,

45 “These two last Winters I have been at Warr, and my People are almost Naked.” Oconostota told
Demere. He intended “to go a hunting, a little while after the Green Corn-Dance that they may be
Cloathed.” Paul Demere to William Henry Lyttelton, Fort Loudoun, August 28, 1759, and Richard
Coytmore to William Henry Lyttelton, August 23, 1759, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
46 Patrick Calhoun concurred. Spying on the Cherokee Lower Towns, he wrote that “a Great money Semed
much Displeased & others in a Conflammation.” Paul Demere to William Henry Lyttelton, September 13,
1759, Patrick Calhoun to William Henry Lyttelton, September 21, 1759, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
47 Richard Coytmore to William Henry Lyttelton, September 8, 1759.
48 Francis offered a plan for fortifying the northwestern Carolina frontier. James Francis to William Henry
Lyttelton, August 29, 1759, Lachlan Shaw to William Henry Lyttelton, August [1759], Lyttelton Papers,
reel 3.
the Big Canoe shot at trader Cornelius Brown near Fort Prince George on August 30. A few days later, Setticos killed packhorseman Peter Arnaud two miles from Tellico. Arnaud was escorting a supply convoy to Fort Loudoun.49

Disaffected Cherokees were led by Ostenaco, once Britain’s leading Indian warrior on the Virginia frontier. Cherokees “block’d up” all the roads in the Overhill region and vowed to kill any white man who tried to pass through. “General fear” overcame the white traders. Warriors continued their opportunistic revenge strikes. On September 7, four Setticos killed a lone soldier who went out of Fort Loudoun to gather grapes. On September 12, a crew of Cullasatchee (Sugar Town) fellows killed Chilhowee trader William Veal. Nottely Cherokees blockaded the road leading to their town in the Valley and fired on traders and packhorsemen headed to resupply Fort Loudoun. Not coincidentally, the men who would call in Cherokee debts at a time when Cherokees could not repay them fell first. The garrison slaughtered and salted livestock “as fast as we can,” storing up food for an expected siege.50

Meanwhile, trade goods from Virginia were finally on the move. Lyttelton, however, would have none of it. Anxious to keep his embargo in place, he asked Virginia’s Lieutenant Governor Francis Fauquier to halt the shipment. The Virginian

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49 The Round O “Told them to have done and Drop all Bad Talks & Doe noe more mischief to the White People.” He “Really Talks abundance of Good Sence to them.” James Beamer to William Henry Lyttelton, September 10, 1759, Richard Coytmore to William Henry Lyttelton, September 8, 1759, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3; SCG, September 15-22, 1759, p. 2.

50 Patrick Calhoun to William Henry Lyttelton, September 21, 1759, Maurice Anderson to Richard Coytmore, September 12, 1759, Paul Demere to William Henry Lyttelton, September 13, 1759, Paul Demere to William Henry Lyttelton, October 1, 1759, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3; SCG, September 29-October 6, 1759, p. 1. Ostenaco’s precise role in these events remains unclear.
complied. The supply train stood still at Salisbury, North Carolina, on orders to remain there until the Cherokees acquiesced to South Carolina’s demands.51

Traders abandoned their possessions and their wares to Cherokee freebooters and streamed into Fort Prince George. Warriors cut off contact between the British posts and intimidated the soldiers inside. By the time Stuart’s detachment reached the fort on September 22, he had lost a fourth of his men and a number of his packhorses and was forced to await reinforcements.52 Cherokees welcomed Creek envoys in the Lower Towns on September 24, but records do not reveal what transpired. Facing hunger, exposure, and debt, the next day, Ostenaco, Oconostota, and eighteen Indians went to Fort Prince George to demand the ammunition. Coytmore and Stuart refused to release it. “Affairs here are blacker than my Pen is able to paint them,” the panicked commander wrote.53

Back in Charles Town, on October 1, Lyttelton and the Council sent orders to the commanders of the three backcountry militia regiments to fire the alarm, assemble their militiamen, and draft half of them into temporary service. Lyttelton also placed nearly all of the troops in Charles Town – about 150 in all – on standby. In the wake of a presumed

51 The trade goods left Williamsburg on June 19 and halted briefly at Petersburg. Lyttelton and the Council stopped the shipment after receiving Coytmore’s August 3 letter. Francis Fauquier to the Board of Trade, June 19, August 30, 1759, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3; SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 2, p. 116 (August 14, 1759). William Henry Lyttelton to Francis Fauquier, August 15, 1759, Lyttelton Letterbooks, 6i, p. 387; Francis Fauquier to William Henry Lyttelton, September 5 and 14, 1759, to Richard Smith, September 14, 1759, to William Henry Lyttelton, October 21, 1759, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.

52 Cullasatchees ambushed Stuart’s courier Isaac Atwood, firing a musket ball into his saddle. Unnerved, the former trader abandoned his mission. John Stuart to William Henry Lyttelton, September 2, 1759, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.

slave conspiracy, the move reflects true desperation. Lyttelton also penned several more letters. He secured the aid of the Savannah River Chickasaws and Catawbas. He informed British officials of his preparations. And he convened the Commons House to fund a military campaign. Without listening to Cherokee complaints, he had determined to go to war.

Most Cherokees, including those embroiled in the “not quite war,” wished to avoid full-fledged armed conflict. Encouraged by Oconostota, the Prince of Tanassee delivered four white wampum strings to Captain Demere at Fort Loudoun. This suggests that more than half of the Overhills had decided against war. The commander refused them, reminding the headman that “satisfaction” was the only way to restore their credit with the Governor. For the British to be satisfied, Cherokees must hand over the men who had killed white settlers. British gifts had not appeased the families of the warriors who fell on the Virginia frontier. Warriors had taken revenge according to Cherokee blood law. Negotiations got nowhere. Two separate parties, one under Oconostota and Ostenaco, and the other under the Round O of Stecoe, failed to convince Stuart and Coytmore to release the ammunition. On October 2, Oconostota and Ostenaco led about

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55 On October 4, Lyttelton and the Council planned a military expedition. Before the Commons House the next day, the governor requested funding to pay the militia and Provincials, and supplies, guns, one-pound field guns, and ammunition. He also asked them to fund a fort for the Catawbas. SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 2, p. 124-25 (October 4, 1759). A committee discussed Lyttelton’s proposals. JCA, 1757-1761, 431-34 (October 5, 1759).

56 Paul Demere to William Henry Lyttelton, October 1, 1759, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
fifty-five Lower, Valley, and Overhill Towns Cherokees to Charles Town to ask the Governor in person. Three days later, The Round O led more than forty Middle Towns men, women and children. The presence of women indicated their peaceful intentions. And, Captain Stuart noted, they were “not concerned in the Dissorders committed.” Ostenaco apparently had second thoughts. Along the way, he turned back and returned home to the Overhills.57

The South Carolina militia draft took place on October 12, while the Cherokee diplomats were still en route. The preacher Archibald Simpson described the day’s events from coastal Colleton County: “Early this Morning an Alarm was fired by the discharge of three muskets at every dwelling place in this Province. This seems very terrible. All the men Immediately repaired with their arms to publick places of Muster and there the one half were draughted and ordered to be in readiness at an hours warning to march against the Indians.” The draft and the impending war confirmed the millenarian spirit of the times. “We seem a people ripe for judgements,” Simpson added.58

John Oliphant claims that Lyttelton acted to prevent the assembly’s “contempt and distrust.” But this does not hold weight. Many in the Commons House opposed the impending war. Speaker Benjamin Smith reported that “Some think there was no

57 John Stuart to William Henry Lyttelton, October 6, 13, 1759; Richard Coytmore to William Henry Lyttelton, October 7, 1759, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3; SCG, October 27- November 1, 1759, p. 2; John Stuart to Allan Stuart, May 15, 1760, Grant Papers, Box 32 (DLAR microfilm 687, reel 31, frame 00020).

58 Archibald Simpson Journals and Sermons (ca. 1748-1784). CLS, fiche card 30:2:5 (Friday, October 12, 1759); SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 2, p. 126 (October 6, 1759); William Henry Lyttelton to Richard Richardson, October 6, 1759, Lyttelton Letterbooks, 6i, p. 433-34; McMaster, Soldiers and Uniforms, 20-21. Lyttelton appeared before the Assembly to request that they provide for 1,500 men. JCA, 1757-1761, 434-35 (October 6, 1759). SCG, October 6-13, 1759, p. 3.
necessity for the Expedition.” Lyttelton might instead have embargoed all trade goods “till ample Satisfaction was made.” Christopher Gadsden predicted war would “be attended with the greatest Evils and Calamities, and be productive of the most dangerous and even fatal Consequences.” The Commons House funded most of Lyttelton’s requests, but it only provided pay for the troops until January 1. The assemblymen also did something else: with provincial taxes skyrocketing, they expressed their distrust of Lyttelton by prohibiting him from leaving the colony’s borders. The action foreshadowed similar disputes in the years to come. Many in the assembly doubted that a Crown appointed governor and Council had their best interests at heart. 59

In early July, Indian Superintendent Edmund Atkin toured the Creek villages. As the tribes came to realize that the French had little to offer in the way of trade goods, weapons, and ammunition, Atkin made headway. He eased tensions and reformed the Anglo-Creek deerskin trade. Then, on September 28, an unexpected event sealed the success of his mission. Atkin described it in his own words. As he spoke to 150 of the leading headmen from all the Creek towns, he said, a Cussitah warrior called the Tobacco-Eater “suddenly started upon the Cabbin behind me, & with a Pipe Hatchet fell on me & by repeated Blows brought me to the Ground.” The dazed Atkin staggered, bleeding “immensely” from the head and shoulder. His secretary, stepping in to help, 

59 John Oliphant, Peace and War on the Anglo-Cherokee Frontier, 1756-1763 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000), 44, 70-71; Declaration of War against the Cherokees [October 1759], Lyttelton Papers, reel 3; SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 2, p. 128 (October 11, 1759); William Henry Lyttelton to the Board of Trade, October 16, 1759, Extracts from Letters rec’d from the Speaker of the House of Assembly in So. Carolina, BPRO-SC, 28:245, 266 (November 10, 1759); JCA, 1757-1761, 444-49 (October 11, 12, 13, 1759). For the assembly’s funding for troops and supplies, see: Benjamin Smith, Speaker, Commons House of Assembly to William Henry Lyttelton, October 12, 1759, Amherst Papers, WO 34/35, fols. 131-32. The House did not fund the construction of a Catawba fort.
sustained severe wounds. Atkin shouted to the white men to take up arms. Traders and Indians scattered while “Molton, a Half-Breed,” and other Indians seized the Tobacco-Eater. The renegade warrior had acted alone, hoping to clinch a Creek-Cherokee alliance. But no further violence transpired. The next day, Atkin resumed his speech in the same exact place. If this was to be the “first blow” disaffected Cherokees were waiting for, they were sorely disappointed.60

A large delegation of Lower Creeks went to Savannah. The Indians met with Governor Ellis and the Council at the governor’s residence on October 10. Just before news of the attack on Atkin arrived, the Indians complained of “Virginia” emigrants who settled in their hunting grounds and “wander[ed] all over the Woods destroying…Game.” When Ellis informed his guests of the assault, the Indians “were extremely alarmed” and sympathetic. They expressed relief when they learned Atkin’s wounds were not mortal. The Indians agreed to deter the Cherokees from attacking Georgia. And they agreed to stay out of Georgia and South Carolina. Ellis then ordered settlers “illegally occupying Indian hunting grounds to remove from those lands by January 1.61 The next day, he concluded that the Creeks would not fight against the English, even if the Cherokees did.62

60 Maryland Gazette, November 22, 1759, p. 3; Edmond Atkin to William Henry Lyttelton, October 2, 1759, to Creek Headmen, September 28-29, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3; SCG Extraordinary, October 13-17, 1759, p. 1; SCG, October 17-20, 1759, p. 1; 10.

61 CRG, 8:166-67 (October 10, 1759), 168-70 (October 11, 1759). In 1758, Ellis and Lyttelton halted land encroachment on the Altamaha. “Minutes of my proceedings pursuant to a Commission and Instructions...” SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 2, p. 66-67 (March 19, 1759).

62 He wished that Atkin would leave “for the Creeks that are with me have complain’d bitterly of him.” Henry Ellis to William Henry Lyttelton, October 11, 1759, 11 p.m., Lyttelton Papers, reel 3; The Creeks left Savannah on October 13, reportedly well satisfied. SCG, October 27-November 1, 1759, p. 2.
After the hatchet attack, Atkin and the Creeks also signed a treaty. The document opened the Choctaw trade and smoothed out disagreements in British-Creek own trade. The Choctaws ratified their own treaty, in the Creek village of Wauylhatchy, on November 10. Goods flowed freely to both peoples. For the time being, Atkin and Ellis had neutralized the Creek and Choctaw “threat” to the British. With trade goods at their disposal, and with a responsive Georgia governor at the helm, the Creeks and Choctaws had less incentive to join the Cherokees.63

On October 19, fifty-five Cherokees crowded into the Council chamber along with Governor Lyttelton and several of his advisors. “I am a Warrior but want no War with the English,” Ostenaco said. “I am Endeavouring to clear away all that is bad.” He sought peace and the restoration of trade and the embargoed ammunition. The “Great Warrior” laid a pile of deer skins at the Governor’s feet. This was a sign of magnanimity and friendship. Lyttelton refused to take the skins, a great insult.64

63 The hot-headed Spencer did not trade in the village where he was licensed. Alshenar peddled rum, goods, and horses without license. “If such men as those are not punished, I need not concern myself with Indian Affairs,” Atkin wrote. Edmond Atkin to John Cleland, December 23, 1759, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3; Treaty of Wauylhatchy, July 18, 1759, Amherst Papers, WO 34/40, fols. 85-87; Edmond Atkin to William Henry Lyttelton, November 30, 1759, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3. For the expenses of Atkin and his “Troop of Light Horsemen,” see Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 209.

64 SCG Extraordinary, October 13-17, 1759, p. 1; SCG, October 17-20, 1759, p. 1; William Henry Lyttelton, “A List of the Cherokees in Charles Town,” October 19, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3; SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 2, p. 132-33 (October 18, 1759); SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 2, p. 133 (October 19, 1759).
Then, several other Indians described their concerns and explained Cherokee discontent. Tiftoe mentioned fraud and the dearth of supplies in the deerskin trade. “They have used us Ill and the Officer says he is not afraid of us,” he said. Ill treatment drove the Keowees “to do what they have done.” Tiftoe turned to another major Cherokee concern: soldiers were raping Cherokee women. Coytmore “gets Drunk, he goes to our Houses, and draws our Women from us…and has to do with our Women at his own Pleasure.” James Adair, a deerskin trader among the Creeks, was well acquainted with events in the southeast. He wrote that “three light-headed, disorderly young officers of that garrison” had “forcibly violated some of their wives” lately, “while their husbands
were making their winter hunt…and which infamous conduct they madly repeated.”

Adair continued: “No wonder that such a behaviour, caused their revengeful tempers to burst forth into action.” The problem was not new. Agent Daniel Pepper had alerted the Governor in 1757 to widespread reports that soldiers took Cherokee women “in the Fort before their Husbands’ Faces and used” them.65

In Cherokee culture, women were respected, not violated. In Cherokee villages, women chose their husbands and sexual partners. Women were social and political equals. Sometimes they went to war. Their marginalization and mistreatment posed challenges for them and their husbands. British officials excluded women from their military and diplomatic councils (and often from their records). They viewed women as inferior, as passive observers, as unreliable snitches whose loyalty could be purchased for a trifle. Cherokee women were anything but. They had dignity and they had authority. Neither male nor female Cherokees ever accepted white expectations.66

Others spoke after Tiftoe. The Head Warrior of Estatoe and the Valley headman called Killianaca (the Black Dog of Hiwassee), invoked the Chain of Friendship and said they hoped trade and business would resume as usual. Killianaca promised that “None of

65 Ibid., Unit 2, p. 134 (October 19, 1759); Adair, The History the American Indians, 263. The Gazette dismissed Cherokee grievances, prefacing them with words like “alleged” and “pretended.” SCG, October 27-November 1, 1759, p. 2; Daniel Pepper to William Henry Lyttelton, May 7, 1757, DRIA, 2:371. See also John Oliphant, Peace and War on the Anglo-Cherokee Frontier, 1756-1763 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001), 84-87.

my boys [have] hurt a white man.” When pressed by the governor about whether they agreed, the other Cherokees present responded, “We all agree.”

Despite their complaints, the visitors wanted peace, which they defined as a temporary cessation of hostilities. Not all of the Cherokee Towns had participated in the violence. In fact, roughly ten – a third – had committed hostilities. If the guns and ammunition arrived, they could return to the hunt. The Virginia trade goods alone would alleviate much of their want. Creek and French aid looked doubtful, and only Attakullakulla and his family wished to turn against those neighbors. The council met twice to review accounts of Cherokee violence. For the Cherokees, the bloodshed reflected blood revenge but also came in response to multiple snubs and longstanding mistreatment. Lyttelton did not care. The Council conferred at length. The gentlemen divided equally. Four voted “for carrying the Expedition as proposed.” Four others voted “for keeping a certain number of Indians now in Town as Hostages till the Cherokee Nation should make the satisfaction to be demanded.”

That afternoon, the Governor summoned the Cherokees. He harangued them for the violence of the past eleven months. Peace would be restored and trade goods would

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67 SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 2, p. 134 (October 19, 1759). Oconostota even named some of the accused. “Memorandum of the Offenders who have committed Hostilities in the Cherokee Nation among the White People, received from Oconostota, The Great Warrior of Chote, and the Rest of the Headmen of the Same Nation at the House of Thomas Nightingale near Charles Town, 21 October 1759,” Grant Family Papers, National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh, Scotland, Bundle 561, cited in Fabel, Colonial Challenges, n30p.222-23.

68 The Governor pointed out that Tiftoe (November 16, 1758) and Attakullakulla (April 18) had promised “in the name of the Nation” to resolve their differences with Virginia. Each had also received goods from Charles Town. SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 2, p. 135-36 (October 20, 1759), p. 136-37 (October 21, 1759); See the tally sheet following “Extracts of Letters &ca. to William Henry Lyttelton, relative to the Murders & Outrages committed by the Cherokees, 1759,” Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
flow again, but not until he marched to Cherokee Country to secure the “murderers.” Oconostota attempted to speak, but Lyttelton terminated the conference. In so doing, he ignored not just the Cherokee but also one of his own. William Bull, a council member and militia brigadier general with extensive experience in Indian diplomacy, urged Lyttelton to hear Cherokee “Proposals for Satisfaction, which the Indians then in Town were contriving to propose.” Lyttelton instead sent the Indians away under an armed guard. The Cherokees would march with the army – as hostages.69

The South Carolina governor, like most other British civil and military officials, blatantly disregarded Cherokee culture and expectations. As James Adair, the eighteenth-century trader and ethnographer wrote, “he failed, by not knowing aright the temper and customs of the savages.”70 He also thought that Attakullakulla spoke for all, and that what Attakullakulla said was, or could be, the general will. Further, the South Carolina Gazette distorted the efforts of peace-seeking Cherokees. Only William Bull, it seems, and some of the South Carolina Commons House, had some discernment.71

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69 SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 2, p. 137-39 (October 22, 1759); Milligen-Johnston, A Short Description, 79-80; SCG, October 27-November 1, 1759, p. 2; See also William Henry Lyttelton to Ellis, to the Board of Trade, to Dobbs, to Fauquier, and to Amherst. Lyttelton Letterbook, 2i, 15-18, 18-20, 20-22, 22-25, 25-27; William Bull to James Grant, May 15, 1760, Grant Papers, Box 32 (DLAR reel 31, frame 00027).

70 Adair, History of the American Indians, 265. Historians have often written of “a collision of military cultures,” to describe the origins of Indian wars. Lee, “Peace Chiefs and Blood Revenge,” 738-40.

Charles Town’s troops, with gentleman volunteers that included future Revolutionaries Francis Marion, John Moultrie, and Benjamin Hayne, left the city on October 23 and 26. At Monck’s Corner just outside Charles Town, the Round O of Stecoe and more than forty peace-seekers arrived from Cherokee country. Lyttelton offered to provide security for the delegation if they accompanied his army back to the Cherokee Country. They followed the Army to the Congarees, where Lyttelton joined militia battalions under Colonel Richard Richardson and Colonel John Chevillette on October 31. Colonel George Gabriel Powell’s battalion, “300 of the sadest Dogs that were ever got together,” soon arrived. Many of the militiamen were shoeless, unarmed, and poorly disciplined. They drew the ire of their commanders as they deserted in droves to protect their families. There can be no doubt that the Cherokees among Lyttelton’s men noticed this.

No sooner had the army left Charles Town than a group of Lowcountry slaves took advantage of the military vacuum. Peter Timothy reported to the governor on November 3 that the militia of St. Andrew’s, Stono, and Wadmalaw “have been twice out in Quest of a Gang of violent arm’d run-away negroes.” They took only two. African American prisoners wounded a sentinel at the Charles Town guard house. In the confusion another sentinel shot a co-worker. Alexander Garden, an Anglican minister in

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Christ Church Parish, summed up the situation for coastal elites: the Province teetered on the precipice of a dangerous Indian War. Half of the men aged sixteen to sixty were “drawn out to march at an hours Warning…Whilst the other half of the militia is employed in Guarding ag[ain]st the Insurrections of our numerous Slaves.”74 The Cherokees had reignited internal divisions and created an opportunity for black residents.

After several Indians slipped off under the cover of darkness, on November 7, the governor detained the rest of the Round O’s party under armed guard.75 Lyttelton now held more than ninety Indians, among them women and children. As historian Alexander Hewatt, a friend of William Bull II, later wrote, “The breach of promise an Indian holds an atrocious crime.” This, “they with reason deemed an unpardonable injury.” Five more Cherokees escaped and returned home with news of the governor’s betrayal. Meanwhile, Lyttelton ordered more militia companies to reinforce Ninety Six.76 Drawing militiamen from the coastal regions of the province further exposed the white inhabitants to slave unrest.

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75 SCG Extraordinary, October 13-17, 1759, p. 1; Supplement to the SCG, November 10-17, 1759, p. 2.

76 Lyttelton called five hundred men from Colonel Hyrne’s Lower Berkeley, Heyward’s Lower Granville, Rivers’ Lower Colleton, and Pawley’s Lower Craven County militia companies to “guard the Waggons at Ninety-Six, and remain there as a Corps de Reserve.” SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 2, p. 141-42 (November 10, 1759); Supplement to the South-Carolina Gazette, November 17-24, 1759, p. 1; Hewatt, An Historical Account, 2:217-18.
After about ten days the army marched to Saluda Old Town, site of the controversial treaty negotiated by Attakullakulla and Governor James Glen in 1755. Men sickened. Others abandoned the service in droves, “10 and 12 at a Time,” according to the *South Carolina Gazette*.

The army reached Robert Gouedy’s trading post at the town of Ninety Six on November 21. Here, soldiers, local militia, volunteers, and

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78 “Ninety Six” appears on maps as early as 1731. Some believe that “Ninety Six” refers to the number of streams that flowed in certain directions. But it was also the estimated distance of the locale from Keowee.
slaves toiled for a week. They built a magazine and stockade fort around Gouedy’s barn. Engineer Richard Dudgeon observed that the fort “has neither the Strength nor advantages Requisite for a Post of Consequence.” And the Cherokees with Lyttelton knew it. Though no one knew it then, Fort Ninety Six became a strategic outpost on the South Carolina frontier.  

Cherokee spies reconnoitered the camp, observing the motions and size of the army. Sickness and desertion continued. Soldiers contracted measles, influenza, and pleurisy. The governor’s glorious march to Cherokee Country looked more and more like a debacle. Yet Cherokees could not capitalize on it. Lyttelton still had the hostages. And British reinforcements arrived daily – among them Savannah River Chickasaws and more gentleman volunteers.

Lyttelton left the sick at Fort Ninety Six and set out for Fort Prince George on November 29. Fearing a Cherokee attack, the army practiced deploying into lines of battle on both sides of the road. Perhaps the Cherokee escapees had gone home to organize a rescue attempt. The terrified hostages looked on as the army approached the

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79 Dudgeon described the fort: “of the Star kind with four angles, the Exterior side Ninety feet, a simple stockade without a Ditch Erected.” Inside the palisade, a firing step gave marksmen a better view. “A large Convenient Barn [Gouedy’s] ready Built…was converted into a Store House to Lodge Provisions & in.” Newly-built sheds served as barracks. Greene, *Historic Resource Study*, 25; SCG, December 1-8, 1759, p. 2.

rugged and narrow pass at Twelve-Mile Creek. On the one hand, Cherokee warriors had firsthand intelligence of Lyttelton’s unraveling army. They knew that the men were poorly trained and that many lacked guns and ammunition. But on the other hand, Cherokees also knew that if they attacked, Lyttelton might exact retribution on the hostages. Grennan’s Rangers sounded the alarm. The troops rushed to their posts. But no enemy appeared, and the two-mile long train continued unopposed.81

Two days later, “many” Cherokees gathered on the high hills of Keowee that overlooked Fort Prince George. They watched as Lyttelton’s army approached. Their kin were in Lyttelton’s custody. It was foolish to attack given such overwhelming odds against them. The fort and the incoming army saluted each other in a symbolic welcome.82

To Cherokees, the intruders were anything but welcome. Lyttelton’s army set up camp in the windswept plain below Keowee and outside of the fort. The governor dismissed all but twenty-eight of the hostages, whom he considered headmen of note. Many of these men came from towns that had nothing to do with the revenge killings. “Above 200 Indians,” a soldier observed, “appeared on the Hills and gave two running Fires after their Manner.” Some soldiers “looked upon [it] as a Salute.” But others saw it


82 Fort Prince George “is situated on this Side the River, opposite to Keowee…There is a good Ditch about 13 or 14 Feet wide and in the Fort a Magazine for Powder built of Stone, and covered with Slate, which abounds there.” SCG, December 22-29, 1759, p. 1.
“as bidding Defiance, and to shew that they had Ammunition to spare.” Indians from four Lower Towns – presumably the only four whose kin had taken blood revenge – gathered that afternoon in the Keowee Town House. They then tried to negotiate with the governor. Lyttelton agreed to meet only with the conciliation-minded Second Man of Cullasatchee. One report in the *Gazette* suggested that he “communicated to the Governor” the Council’s resolution to “acquiesce.”

For all parties, developments were ominous. Smallpox was rampant in Keowee. Measles was “rife” among the soldiers. Two hundred more militiamen and six Catawba warriors joined the army on December 9. Yet Cherokees did not know that Lyttelton’s power to bargain was slipping. His troops were only paid through the end of the month. Fearing smallpox, the Chickasaws fled. A muster on December 12 totaled just 1,105 men fit for duty. The Virginia Assembly refused to send troops. Hugh Waddell’s North Carolinians were finally on the march. They numbered just fifty provincials and fifty militiamen. And they “Every Night Deserted,” the frustrated officer reported.

When Attakullakulla received the governor’s invitation to come treat for peace, the Indian first visited Fort Loudoun. He met with Captain Stuart, who had finally reached the Fort on October 27. Attakullakulla “shed tears” at the notion of “Delivering up their Countrymen,” Stuart wrote. Instead, the headman again proposed accompanying

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white soldiers against the French “as the properest way of making up matters.” Stuart and the other officers declined this not-so-unusual Indian method to defuse tensions. Instead, they offered him power and status if he would “heartily fall in” with Lyttelton’s demands. If not, he would “Loose the good character he has acquired.” This “made a deep impression,” Stuart wrote, “and I Expect he will heartily fall into any measures your Excellency will propose.”

The negotiations brought “The Jealousy which has Long subsisted” between Connecorte and Attakullakulla “to an open quarrel,” Stuart reported. According to the captain, “Old Hop” accused his rival “of being an Enemy to his Country and a servil dependent upon the English.” Attakullakulla, in a failed attempt to placate British authorities, had just taken two French prisoners and four scalps at Fort L’Assomption. But he lost two dead and one wounded in the process. It was hardly the sign of a great warrior, Connecorte pointed out. Attakullakulla was “Greatly incens’d,” Stuart reported. “The Little man,” he wrote, “ordered his people to Look no Longer on old hop as their head beloved man.” On December 7, Attakullakulla promised Stuart “that his voice will be for Delivering [the accused].” Though he might “at first plead for them as he Affects popularity,” the Captain continued, “I am confident he will fall in to all your Excellency’s measures.” Stuart added that in this “present Emergency,” Attakullakulla sought to bolster his own stature.

85 John Stuart to William Henry Lyttelton, November 15, 22, 1759, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
86 Paul Demere to William Henry Lyttelton, November 2, 1759, Attakullakulla to William Henry Lyttelton, November 2, 1759, John Stuart to William Henry Lyttelton, December 3 [with November 22], 7, 1759, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3. For the Fort L’Assomption trip, see Richard Coytmore to William Henry
Motivated in part by spite, Attakullakulla proceeded to Fort Prince George with a few loyal supporters. He went “without acquainting him [Connecorte] where they were going, or what they were about,” Captain Paul Demere reported to the Governor.87 The governor erroneously imposed British structures of diplomacy on the Cherokee Indians. He resolved to treat Attakullakulla as the voice not only of the Overhills but of the entire Cherokee people. The headman was neither. On December 19, Attakullakulla reached the Fort, bearing an English flag and carrying a French prisoner. “So small was his influence among the Cherokees at this time,” historian Alexander Hewatt noted, “that they considered him as no better than an old woman.”88

The governor removed the black beads from the wampum string he had given the chief the previous April.89 The next day, Attakullakulla, Willenawa of Toqua, and some of their party met with the governor. Several hostages joined them. Referring to the symbolic chain of friendship that extended from the king to the Cherokee people, Attakullakulla presented a string of white wampum. Ocayulah, speaking for Connecorte, did the same. He hoped that “people and goods may pass as before.” For most Cherokees and for Indians in general, peace was less a formalized arrangement than a temporary

Lyttelton, October 28, 1759, Attakullakulla to Lyttelton, November 2, 1759, Paul Demere to William Henry Lyttelton, November 3, December 4, 7, 1759, Ibid.
87 Paul Demere to William Henry Lyttelton, December 12, 1759, Ibid.
mollification of feelings. Attakullakulla, and even Ocayulah, simply asked the Governor to agree to a truce.90

The Governor responded sternly: “the great king did give a chain of friendship between his people and yours.” But, he continued, “in order to prevent that chain from contracting rust, and at last being broken, certain conditions must be observed.” He produced a copy of the 1730 Treaty of Whitehall. “If any Indian kills an Englishman,” he read, “the Indian who does it shall be delivered up to the governor, to be punished as he shall deserve according to our law.” He demanded that Cherokees surrender twenty four “murderers” without delay.91

“It would now be difficult” to get them, Oconostota interjected, “as they were all out from home, and many of them over the hills.” The Indians conferred privately. The next day, Keowees delivered two of the accused. In exchange, Attakullakulla secured the release of hostages Tiftoe and The Warrior of Estatoe. Then, for a few days, he disappeared. If he planned to wait for Lyttelton’s army to unravel, claim favorable terms, and return home a hero, things did not work out as he intended.92

December 25, 1759, was Lyttelton’s thirty-fifth birthday. He was unaware that on November 14, the Board of Trade had “promoted” him to the governorship of the

91 SCG, January 8-12, 1760, p. 1; “Articles of Friendship and Commerce…,” September 7, 1730, Lyttelton Papers, reel 1.
92 SCG, January 8-12, 1760, p. 1.
empire’s most profitable colony, Jamaica. His plans for invading France’s southeastern possessions had not materialized. His demands for satisfaction from the Cherokees looked more like empty threats. Some saw this campaign as a defining moment, if not for the governor, for the colony as a whole. Though it would have been the right solution, Lyttelton would not relent from his incendiary demands.

Lyttelton dispatched Coytmore with two traders to confront the headman. They found him camped outside Tomassee, cast off by the Lower Towns. Unless Attakullakulla settled matters to the governor’s satisfaction the next day, Lyttelton vowed to “lay waste” to Estatoe. More Berkeley County militiamen arrived later that day. This, he said, “occasioned a very great consternation among the Indians.”

The Indians had surrendered just two “murderers.” Nine others had fled the Lower Towns. Lyttelton’s aide drafted a treaty. To save lives, Attakullakulla and Oconoea signed it. With January 1 approaching, however, Lyttelton’s army probably would not have done much damage. In exchange for freedom that would enable them to carry on the struggle, the hostages Killianaca, Kettagusta of Chota, Oconostota, and Ottacite also signed. The treaty renewed the 1730 Treaty of Whitehall and reaffirmed that “a firm peace and friendship” existed between the Cherokees and the British. The Cherokees agreed to deliver twenty-two more men “to be put to death or otherwise disposed of.” The other hostages remained in British custody, to be replaced by these “murderers.” Only then would Lyttelton restore the trade. Using their “utmost

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93 Board of Trade to William Henry Lyttelton, November 14, 1759, Earl of Halifax to William Henry Lyttelton, November 15, 1759, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
94 SCG, January 8-12, 1760, p. 1.
endeavours,” Cherokees had to capture or kill Frenchmen among them. The treaty said nothing about white land encroachment. It stipulated no trade regulations. And it addressed none of the allegations against the garrison of Fort Prince George.95

Keowees delivered Youctanah of Estatoe two days later, on December 28. When the governor suggested “that such as were afraid” of smallpox “might move away,” seven hundred militiamen left immediately. The remains of Lyttelton’s army scurried back to Charles Town with just three Indian prisoners. Charles Town was astir, as a wave of robberies overwhelmed the skeleton crew of militia and regulars remaining there.96

Meanwhile, Lyttelton left twenty-one innocent Cherokee headmen at Fort Prince George in a small, dark hut. The Gazette predicted “public rejoicings” when the governor returned. “This Expedition has terminated honourably,” it continued, “and we hope happily, for ourselves; for the neighbouring Provinces, and for Posterity.” The governor had not forced “a very numerous, powerful, treacherous and insolent nation of SAVAGES” to “submit,” as the Gazette reported. Quite the opposite, he had further alienated them with his inflexibility and lack of cultural understanding. And the Cherokee response sowed discord between the South Carolinians he governed.97

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97 SCG, December 29-January 5, 1760, p. 4.
Chapter 6: “This awful Malignancy”: The Upheaval of the Charles Town Smallpox Epidemic of 1760

On Tuesday, January 8, 1760, Charles Town residents awoke suddenly as three cheers and three volleys of gunfire sounded in the crisp night sky. The noise marked the return of Lyttelton’s army from the Cherokee country. Residents poured into the streets to greet the soldiers as the celebration moved on to Governor Lyttelton’s mansion. The next day, cannons boomed from the forts and from vessels in Charles Town Harbor, and local troops regaled the governor “with a general Volley.” Fireworks, bonfires, “and other Demonstrations of that Satisfaction and Joy” later lit the night sky. All marked the apparent success of the expedition.¹

Jubilation soon turned to frustration. In the ensuing weeks and months, white Carolinians found little cause to rejoice. Cherokees attacked Fort Prince George and the southern Appalachian frontier. And a fearsome epidemic took hold in Charles Town. “Our Governor returned from the Cherokee country in January, as we then thought crowned with laurels,” physician and naturalist Alexander Garden wrote, “but, alas,” he griped, “bringing pestilence along with him, and having the war at his heels.”²

¹ When the infected troops returned, the disease was already in the city. SCG, January 8-12, 1760, p. 2; SCCJ, 1757-1762, Unit 2, p. 152 (January 7, 1760). This challenges the work of some scholars. Joseph Waring, *A History of Medicine in South Carolina, 1670-1825* (Charleston: South Carolina Medical Association, 1964), 74; Hatley, *The Dividing Paths*, 125. The Council, the Charles Town Library Society, and the Presbyterian Clergy, formally praised Lyttelton for his handling of the expedition. SCG, January 8-12, 1760, p. 1.

² Alexander Garden to John Ellis, March 13, 1760, in James Edward Smith, ed., *A Selection of the Correspondence of Linnaeus, and Other Naturalists, from the Original Manuscripts* [hereafter Linnaean Correspondence], 2 vols. (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1821), 1:473.
Smallpox first appeared in Charles Town six days before the troops came home. An African American boy contaminated on a ship from Philadelphia left quarantine during the incubation period. In a few days, smallpox struck at Mr. Duvall’s house on the southern tip of the peninsula at White Point.\(^3\)

Scholars have already chronicled the symptoms, transmission, and treatment of the disease. They have discussed its effects on native populations and have offered general analyses of its impact in early America. But the social and political consequences of smallpox deserve further attention, particularly in South Carolina in the year 1760. The epidemic demoralized, debilitated, and destroyed Indian communities. It exacerbated race and class tensions, exposing a colonial government unprepared, reluctant, and unwilling to deal with the contagion effectively. In the midst of the crisis, Lyttelton left the Province. Charles Town elites questioned his leadership and by extension, criticized British rule in general. Seeds of doubt took root for what would soon become the revolutionary generation. The transition was stunning. On January 8, Charles Town greeted Governor Lyttelton “as a Conqueror,” George Milligen recalled, “such as the Intrepidity of a Wolfe, or the gallant and exemplary Behavior of a Lord

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\(^3\) SCG, January 8-12, 1760, p. 1; David Ramsay, Ramsay’s History of South Carolina from its First Settlement in 1670 to the Year 1808 (Newberry, SC: W.J. Duffie, 1858), 42-43; Garden to Ellis, March 13, 1760, Linnaean Correspondence, 1:473. On Sullivan’s Island, see George C. Rogers, Charleston in the Age of the Pinckneys (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1969), 27; George Fenwick Jones, ed., Detailed Reports of the Salzburger Emigrants Who Settled in America, ed. Samuel Urhlesperger (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1993), 17:117; William Henry Lyttelton to the Board of Trade, January 21, 1760, BPRO-SC, 28:295. White Point lay at the southernmost tip of present Charleston, near the “Battery.”
Howe, or such-like, could only deserve.” It took only a month to demolish the conqueror’s reputation.

South Carolinians faced epidemic disease regularly. Yellow fever, malaria, dysentery, diphtheria, and mumps took many lives. Measles, whooping cough, and respiratory ailments lingered for much of 1759. But everyone feared the worst disease of all: smallpox. A common killer in Europe and Africa, it appeared in the American colonies with sporadic regularity. South Carolina withstood five mild epidemics from 1698-1732 and then suffered a severe outbreak in 1738. The smallpox-infected troops sent to the colony under Colonel Henry Bouquet’s command in 1757 somehow avoided spreading the illness to local residents. The next year, Lyttelton sent an armed guard of militiamen to quarantine the DeSassure plantation and tavern outside the city until an outbreak there ran its course. Smallpox confers immunity to those who survive it. But in 1760, then, 6,000 of Charles Town’s 8,000 inhabitants had never contracted the

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5 Krebsbach, “The Great Charlestown Smallpox Epidemic,” 30; McCandless, *Slavery, Disease, and Suffering in the Southern Lowcountry*.

6 South Carolina had suffered mild epidemics in 1698, 1700, 1711-12, 1717-18, and 1732 and had a fairly serious outbreak in 1738. Duffy, *Epidemics in Colonial America*, 23-34, 74-77, 82-83; Arnemann, “The Medical History of Colonial South Carolina,” 130-83.


8 William Henry Lyttelton to John Stewart [Stuart], July 11, 1758, Lyttelton Letterbooks, 6i, p. 152-53; *SCG*, November 10-17, 1758.
The population had doubled due to immigration and natural growth since the last epidemic. The city had no public health laws or disaster relief plans.

For the residents of Charles Town, January 1760 was a frightening month. Returning soldiers arrived daily with measles, “pleurisies,” and worst of all, smallpox. It took just “two or three weeks,” Dr. Garden reported, for the pox “to spread . . . furiously” through the town. By January 26, it broke out “at the New Barracks, out of Town.” Guards kept watch at the Duvall House and the army barracks. Doctors fumigated the homes on White Point. On February 2, the Gazette tried to soothe its readers’ fears. The “Distemper will spread no farther,” the paper opined, “no other House whatever being infected, and all proper precautions continuing to be taken.” Contrary to rumor, the outlying settlements at Monck’s Corner and Ashley Ferry remained smallpox-free. But other signs were ominous. The virus killed two people—one at Duvall’s, the other at the barracks. By February 7, the pestilence appeared at several more homes. Finally, on February 9, the Gazette conceded that containment efforts had failed: “all Hopes of its being prevented spreading are over.” For the first time, the assemblymen began discussing how to deal with the epidemic.

Smallpox had in Indian country for months before it arrived in Charles Town. Catawba warriors brought it home from the Pennsylvania frontier in early 1759 when they returned from the Forbes campaign against Fort Duquesne. It “raged with great violence” through December, when the Gazette reported that it had “carried off near one

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10 SCG, January 12-19, 1760, p. 4, January 26-February 2, 1760, p. 3, February 2-9, 1760, p. 4; Ramsay, Ramsay’s History of South Carolina from its First Settlement in 1670 to the Year 1808, 43.
half” of the Catawba Nation. The missionary William Richardson, who visited the Catawbas after his short stint with the Cherokees, described the epidemic and its outcome. “The Smallpox spread among them surprisingly,” he wrote, “on which they fled to the woods, and died in great numbers; which, with the present disturbances, have made them leave their towns, so that they are at present out of my reach.”11 By 1760, as few as sixty warriors remained. The Catawba population now stood at just four percent of its number at the time of Carolina’s settlement less than a century earlier.12 Only eight warriors from the tribe joined Lyttelton’s campaign. More vulnerable to their traditional enemies than ever before, Catawba warriors requested a reservation with a stockaded fort to house their women and children when they were gone. These long-term Anglo-Carolinian allies lost the influence they once enjoyed.13

The disease was spread by Catawba warriors raiding Cherokee villages. It raged for at least six weeks in Keowee. By January it swept through the Lower Towns. “The living Ones are all fled to the Woods to avoid it,” reported the Gazette. But they unwittingly carried the infection with them. As a consequence, the paper observed, “many of them must perish as the Catawba did.” Richard Coytmore, the commander of Fort Prince George, viewed the epidemic as his ally. “I cant help being so unhuman,” he


12 James Adair, The History of the American Indians, ed. Kathryn E. Holland Braund (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005), 246; SCG, April 26-May 3, 1760, p. 3; JCA, 1757-1761, 737 (July 19, 1760). By 1760, few of the tribes the Catawbas absorbed are mentioned specifically.

wrote, “as to wish it may spread through the whole nation.”\textsuperscript{14} By the end of the month, it reached the Middle Towns. The \textit{Gazette} reported in April that an “abundance of Cherokees are dead of the Small-Pox.”\textsuperscript{15} The Overhill Towns so dreaded the infection that they refused to admit “a single Person” from the Lower Towns. Because of their location, they had less contact with South Carolinians, too. The inhabitants of those towns remained largely smallpox free.\textsuperscript{16}

Smallpox increased generational tensions and tested the authority of conjurors and healers. Interpretive accounts from the 1760 outbreak are elusive. But in the 1738 epidemic, many Cherokees had blamed smallpox on the indiscretions of their young married people, who “had in the most notorious manner, violated their ancient laws of marriage in every thicket, and broke down and polluted many of the honest neighbours bean-plots, by their heinous crimes.” The treatment of victims may have served to restore balance. Since the pox “was believed to be brought on them by their unlawful copulation in the night dews,” villagers isolated the victims and forced them to “lie out of doors, day and night, with their breast frequently open to the night dews, to cool the fever.” The religious men “shewed their priest-craft,” said James Adair, “in the fields where the infected victims had allegedly committed their transgressions.” Conjurers “poured cold water on their naked breasts, sung their religious mystical song…and

\textsuperscript{14} SCG, January 12-19, 1760, p. 4; Richard Coytmore to William Henry Lyttelton, December 6, January 7, 1760, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.

\textsuperscript{15} SCG, April 12-19, 1760, p. 2.

shaked a calabash with the pebble-stones.” They also put patients through the intense heat and humidity of the sweat lodge. Indian medicine, like European medicine, was ineffective against smallpox, and a great many died. “The Cheerake showed . . . little skill in curing the small pox,” Adair noted. The epidemic undermined unity as villagers called conjurers’ abilities into question.\textsuperscript{17}

Smallpox took a deep psychological toll on individual Cherokees. Scars showed easily because they were “never genteely drest.” Adair recalled that “A great many killed themselves; for being naturally proud, they are always peeping into their looking glasses.” He witnessed suicides, one at the hands of a hoe-helve. As soon as they fell ill, many took their own lives by “throwing themselves into the River.” Adair continued: “A death, in defence of their beloved land, and beloved things, was far preferable” to spreading the disease to others. Such Cherokees might have viewed suicide as a courageous sacrifice. Otherwise, “They were only spending a dying life, to the shame and danger of the society,” Adair wrote.\textsuperscript{18}

Farther east, in Charles Town, most people who could afford it turned to inoculation. A practitioner inserted a bit of pus from the pox of an infected patient into an incision (usually in the upper arm) of an uninfected patient. If all went well, the

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item Adair, \textit{History of the American Indians}, 152, 252-53; Kelton, “Avoiding the Smallpox Spirits,” 62. Sources reveal almost nothing about smallpox in Cherokee villages or of the role of conjurers. 
\item \textit{Ibid.}, 253, 90.
\end{itemize}
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inoculated patient contracted a mild, shorter-duration form of the disease. After recovery, the inoculated individual had lifelong immunity.\(^{19}\)

Eliza Lucas Pinckney, a widowed plantation owner six miles upstream from Charles Town, reported the mood in Charles Town: “The people,” she wrote, “were inoculation mad.” They “rushed into” inoculation “with... presipation.” The doctors, Garden noted, “were in a state of hurry and confusion.” But, Pinckney added, “The Doctors could not help it – the people would not be said nay.”\(^{20}\) Inoculation had risks. Inoculees could die. They could also spread smallpox to others. Still, smallpox by inoculation in 1760 proved seven times less fatal than smallpox contracted naturally.\(^{21}\)

Those who could not afford inoculation and contracted the disease naturally suffered severely. Those without access to medical care placed butchered fowls on the feet to reduce fever and slathered one’s throat with a honey and dried dog dung poultice.


\(^{20}\) John Adams, *Disc Three* (New York: HBO Video, 2008); Eliza Lucas Pinckney to [Mrs. Evance], March 15, 1760, in *The Letterbook of Eliza Lucas Pinckney*, 148; SCG, April 19-26, 1760, p. 1. By March 1, practitioners inoculated at least 2,500 people. Many were soon “out of Danger.” By March 15, six thousand patients had contracted smallpox either naturally or by inoculation. Only five hundred residents had never had smallpox. Doctors treated new patients from outside the city. SCG, February 23-March 1, 1760, p. 2; SCG, March 15-22, 1760, p. 2; Garden to Ellis, March 13, 1760, *Linnaean Correspondence*, 1:473. See also McCandless, *Slavery, Disease, and Suffering*, 204-20.

\(^{21}\) Inoculation incisions often became infected. Ninety-two inoculated patients died. Once ill, many “died for want of proper nursing.” Patients stayed in bed, with the windows nailed shut. Ramsay, *Ramsay’s History of South Carolina from its First Settlement in 1670 to the Year 1808*, 44. An early April letter in the *Boston Gazette* reported “Of the white Inhabitants, 95; Acadians 115; Negroes 500, were dead two days ago... About 1500 white Inhabitants, 1800 Negroes, and 300 Acadians have had the Distemper, and chiefly by Inoculation.” *Boston Gazette*, April 21, 1760, p. 2. “The poor blacks have died very fast even by inoculation.” Eliza Lucas Pinckney to [Mrs. Evance], March 15, 1760, in *The Letterbook of Eliza Lucas Pinckney*, 148. “They have inoculated about 2500 people in Charlestown with the smallpox and daily accounts that it does not answer any way so well as expected.” Archibald Simpson Journals and Sermons (ca. 1748-1784) [hereafter Simpson Journals], CLS, February 23, 1760, fiche card 30:3:1.

In part because they had access to inoculation, the wealthy white inhabitants of the city fared better than those who were less privileged. But they suffered hardship nonetheless. Many white families left the city. William Hutson, pastor of the Independent Meeting, his pregnant wife, and six small children went to James Island. The stress of the move had tragic consequences, inducing premature labor in Mary Hutson. Both newborn and mother died.

Many of the city’s slaves had smallpox. And whites in the country attempted to keep their slaves out of Charles Town. Whites fled Charles Town, while those on its outskirts avoided coming in. Thus, the virus “almost put a stop to all business” in the city. Commerce ceased between Charles Town and the surrounding countryside. Merchants and businessmen relocated to Dorchester village. A women’s academy and a tavern shut down briefly and thereafter struggled for months to regain customers. Still, because of their socioeconomic advantages and mobility, fewer than five percent of Charles Town’s white residents died of smallpox. Survivors displayed their grief publicly

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22 Fraser, Charleston! Charleston!, 93; Pinckney to [Mrs. Evance], March 15, 1760, in The Letterbook of Eliza Lucas Pinckney, 148. On medicine in early South Carolina, See McCandless, Slavery, Disease, and Suffering, ch. 9.


24 Pinckney to [Mrs. Evance], March 15, 1760, in The Letterbook of Eliza Lucas Pinckney, 147.

25 On Dawson, see SCG, April 12-19, 1760, p. 3. On Valois, see: SCG, March 15-22, 1760, p. 3. Fears of smallpox hurt business, even after the epidemic had run its course. See the ad of Abraham Crouch, pub-owner. Former proprietor of the Sign-of-the-Eagle Tavern, John Smith, Jr., may have died of smallpox. SCG, November 29-December 6, 1760, p. 3.
by reading poems aloud from the *Gazette* and by donning mourning clothing and jewelry.26

Charles Town’s African Americans fared worse. Nearly fifteen percent of the entire black population in the provincial capital, five hundred people in all, died within two months of the virus’s appearance.27 The epidemic demoralized slaves already disappointed by the failure of Philip John’s plot. In a revealing letter to the *South Carolina Gazette,* “Z. Z.” reported that slave owners sought to protect their property from infection. But in so doing, they denied slaves work, and they denied them the opportunity to grieve and to bury their loved ones properly. They paid white laborers generous wages to bury African American smallpox victims. With business stymied, urban slaves fell behind in the earnings that they needed to fulfill their obligations to their masters. Z.Z. argued that blacks “would have been very thankful” to do the work. The *Gazette* reported a grinding mortality in the black community, sometimes “12, 14, 16, and 18 buried” per day. The hastily dug graves were inadequate. “Z. Z.” reported many “buried not a Foot under Ground” at the Negro Burial Ground. “I do assure you,” he added, “that the very Cows, by their pawing, had laid one Coffin quite bare.”28


28 SCG, March 29-April 2, 1760, p 3.
When they denied bondspeople the opportunity to bury their friends and family, slave owners deprived them of the chance to congregate and mourn in the presence of the deceased. When they let cattle desecrate slave corpses and graves, slave owners interfered at the spiritual level. Many South Carolinians of African descent believed the soul traveled back across the Atlantic in the afterlife. But white authorities imposed their will whether slaves were dead or alive, with little regard for spiritual and physical consequences.  

Dr. Alexander Garden boasted that he tested new methods of inoculation “partly by some bold trials on a negro of his own.”

Since “a Principle of Humanity” did not compel the slave master “to see his Negro buried in a different Manner from his Dog,” Z. Z. hoped “Self-Preservation would.” The anonymous writer suggested that “every one may conceive…some Pestilence far worse than the Small-Pox.” On the day that the Gazette acknowledged the epidemic was out of control, Lyttelton issued guidelines to the assemblymen in hopes of averting a slave revolt. The men must strictly obey all laws. They must closely monitor their families and domestic affairs. Moreover, the governor urged the assemblymen to use their influence to “preserve the internal quiet of the Country from any attempts of Negroes or other Persons to disturb it.” Patrols regularly kept watch over the city, especially on nights and weekends, to “intimidate the black slaves” and to nip

30 Alexander Garden to John Ellis?, April 12, 1760, *Linnaean Correspondence*, 1:483.
31 *SCG*, April 2-7, 1760, p. 3.
opportunistic activities in the bud. Now, the patrols increased in frequency and strength as fears of a slave rebellion became widespread.\textsuperscript{32}

Some concerned citizens worried that such treatment heightened slave resentment. The epidemic had limited their financial opportunities. Charles Town’s African Americans faced a food shortage. Their markets barely operated. Those whose owners allowed them to hire themselves out had no work or wages. Philip Johns’ conspiracy still lingered in the minds of blacks and whites alike. And despite their own high mortality, enslaved Carolinians saw the ratio of black to white inhabitants increase in Charles Town as whites fled. “From one of the most flourishing provinces,” Dr. Garden wrote, “we are…brought into a situation too terrible for us, who have a double enemy within ourselves to fear, viz. the small pox and the negroes.” Outside the capital, the demographic imbalance sparked longstanding white fears. “About 70,000 negroes in our bowels!” despaired Garden. Militia rolls were down. “We muster about 8 or 9,000 men in the province,” he complained, apparently unaware that the province actually mustered close to 7,000. “This is our happy situation.”\textsuperscript{33}

As hundreds of African Americans died, whites feared for their own financial and physical well-being. The Presbyterian pastor Archibald Simpson summarized his concerns succinctly. “Should this awful Malignancy prevail and spread” among slaves


\textsuperscript{33} Garden to Ellis, March 13, June 1, July 16, 1760, Linnaean Correspondence, 1:474, 490, 492, 495.
outside Charles Town, he wrote, it could ruin “numberless families and prove dreadful
indeed.” The families he worried about were not black but white.

Frontier disruptions compounded the province’s ethnic and class divisions. Wealthy whites failed to mobilize the resources needed to support a dislocated and destitute populace. Thousands of Scots-Irish Presbyterians fled the frontiers for fear of the Cherokee Indians. They carried the virus with them. They lost their homes and their families. Pastor Simpson peered out of his parsonage at the “most deplorable state of…misery & distress.” “No Description can surpass its Calamity,” a Charles Town resident wrote to a friend in Philadelphia on March 20. “What few escape the Indians, no sooner arrive in Town, then they are seized with the Small-Pox, which generally carries them off.” Simpson discerned “with much grief” that in Charles Town “these poor distressed families” received “little Sympathy, pity or assistance, even are abused.” Their treatment rubbed old wounds raw, convincing them of the indifference of the Anglo-Carolinian elite.

South Carolina’s Acadian exiles, all of them poor, suffered a more miserable fate. In 1755, the British removed five thousand poor, Catholic, French-speaking farmers and fishermen from Nova Scotia and dispersed them through the British colonies. Several

\[\text{\textsuperscript{34}}\text{Simpson Journals, February 23, 1760, fiche card 30:3:1.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{35}}\text{Ibid., March 27, 1760, fiche card 30:3:2; Boston Gazette, April 21, 1760.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{36}}\text{“Many were ill of the Small-Pox in Mr. Tobler’s Fort.” SCG, March 15-22, 1760, p. 2.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{37}}\text{Simpson Journals, February 12, 1760, fiche card 30:3:1.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{38}}\text{Boston Gazette, April 21, 1760, p. 2; Simpson Journals, March 27, 1760, fiche card 30:3:2. The letter, based on a late-March report from Charles Town, was dated April 10.}\]
hundred of the one thousand who landed in Charles Town still remained. With smallpox spreading through the city in early February, a Commons House committee met to “inquire into the present state of the French Acadians” and to address other matters of concern. The committee issued a report with ideas on how to accommodate the unwelcome strangers as it also made recommendations for “preventing the Small-Pox from spreading” further. The Acadians, 340 in all, lived in four dilapidated buildings. “These several Houses are insufficient,” the report stated. Their derelict condition might “produce Contagious and Malignant Distempers, dangerous in their Consequences to the health of the Inhabitants of this Town.” And it threatened to create “the most direful Effects to [the Acadians] shou’d the Small-Pox spread amongst them.” The Assembly converted an old school building and the army barracks into temporary shelters. Five days later, it granted a mere £2,000 and hired a single doctor for the 340 refugees. These measures came too late.

Charles Town had no poor house or public aid. Unlike northern seaport towns, the city forced its poor to rely on private charity for survival. Wealthy merchant Gabriel Manigault, himself the grandson of French Protestants, coordinated the Acadian relief effort. Volunteers inoculated some of the exiles in a gesture toward preventive care. But they put a greater effort into alleviating the suffering of those who fell ill. The expense

40 JCA, 1757-1761, 453 (February 7, 1760).
41 JCA, 1757-1761, 453 (February 7, 1760), 460, 460n (February 9, 1760), 462-64 (February 12, 1760); South Carolina Assembly to William Henry Lyttelton, February 12, 1760, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
ran to £5,235, a price that vastly exceeded the £2,000 allotted by the Assembly and the charitable contributions from concerned citizens. Thirty-four percent of the Acadians died of smallpox. Another four percent succumbed to other ailments. By July 15, only 210 remained alive. A Commons House report acknowledged that the French-speaking refugees “suffered extremely in the late Calamity.” Some “lost their Limbs, some their Eyes and others their Lives for want of proper Care, Necessaries, and Attendance.”

When the costs of caring for the Acadians rose, the Assembly mercifully covered those costs. The deportees also appreciated the private charity they received. But it did not keep them from becoming “disaffected and discontented.” “The wants they daily see and feel oblige them” to become “wholly averse to living under an English Government,” reported another Commons House committee. In May, the committee proposed that to “prevent any Mischief being done” by the “burthensome and useless” Acadians, they should be deported yet again. Britain’s Board of Trade nixed the plan. Charles Town’s Acadian community stayed where it was, miserable and impoverished, depleted by 38 percent in just a few months.

In mid-April 1760, the Gazette reported that the pestilence was “happily abated or attended with much less malignant circumstances.” But officials were still concerned. Lieutenant Governor Bull called for legislation to help eliminate any trace of smallpox. On May 30, the governor signed it into law. Recognizing that ongoing inoculations might reignite the epidemic, the act imposed a £100 fine on anyone engaging in the

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42 JCA, 1757-1761, 712-13 (July 16, 1760, 583 (May 27, 1760), 673-74 (June 27, 1760), 693 (July 15, 1760), 712 (July 12, 1760); McCandless, Slavery, Disease, and Suffering, 55-56.

43 JCA, 1757-1761, 583 (May 27, 1760), 673-74 (June 27, 1760), 693 (July 15, 1760), 712 (July 12, 1760).
practice. The ban alienated doctors and slave owners who viewed it as intrusive. The law also required householders to post warning signs outside infected homes. This proved effective but could have come earlier. In addition, the act created a board of “smallpox commissioners” and ordered them to meet at the State House on the first Monday of each month. Beginning in August 1760 and continuing until the epidemic subsided, the commission members kept tabs on all families whose members suffered from the virus.\textsuperscript{44} This proved too late to be of much help. By late June or early July, only isolated cases remained. On August 9, the commissioners reported smallpox in only three homes.\textsuperscript{45}

The toll of the 1760 smallpox epidemic was not just physical and demographic but political and psychological as well. “This is truely the most awful time ever I or the oldest person in these parts ever saw,” Archibald Simpson wrote.\textsuperscript{46} For black Carolinians, the scourge only confirmed the dominance of a planter-merchant class that tried to control every dimension of slave life. Coming on the heels of the Philip John conspiracy and Cherokee attacks, the epidemic reinforced white awareness of the colony’s internal instability.\textsuperscript{47} But the scourge also undermined white confidence in

\textsuperscript{44} Krebsbach, “The Great Charlestown Smallpox Epidemic of 1760,” 36; for the creation of the act, see \textit{JCA, 1757-1761}, 497-98 (April 16), 504 (April 18), 507 (April 19), 511 (April 23), 546 (May 6), 561-63 (May 13-15), 545 (May 28), 589-90 (May 30, 1760).

\textsuperscript{45} \textit{SCG}, August 2-9, 1760, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{46} Simpson Journals, February 12, 1760, fiche card 30:3:1.

British authority and benevolence. On February 7, a month after his triumphal return from Cherokee country, Governor Lyttelton conceded failure on two fronts: he announced the renewal of hostilities with the Indians as well as the epidemic status of smallpox. The men of the Commons House responded with a public rebuke. They also “omitted the common form of giving thanks for the Speech.” Lyttelton noticed the gesture and promptly reported it to higher authorities.48

On February 13, Lyttelton received an official letter dated November 27, 1759. It informed him that he was now the governor of Jamaica. The Board of Trade appointed William Bull as South Carolina’s Lieutenant Governor, to serve in an executive capacity until Thomas Pownall, transferred from Massachusetts, assumed the reins. Pownall resigned without ever filling his post. Bull remained in office until Pownall’s successor, former New Jersey Governor Thomas Boone, arrived in December 1761.49 With smallpox raging, Lyttelton withdrew from public affairs. “We have been for this month past in a state of suspense,” Garden wrote on March 21, 1760, “our old governor embarrassed and taken up in settling his private affairs, and our Lieutenant-governor cannot act till the power regularly devolve upon him.” 50

On Friday April 4, Captain John Lindsay navigated the naval gunship the Trent over the bar. At noon, Lyttelton took his berth. The town where he had spent the past

48 William Henry Lyttelton to the Board of Trade, February 22, 1760, BPRO-SC, 28:314. Neither the Board of Trade nor Prime Minister Pitt ever commented on Cherokee affairs.


50 SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 2, p. 169 (February 14, 1760), 183 (March 27, 1760). William Henry Lyttelton to the Board of Trade, February 22, 1760, BPRO-SC, 28:317; Garden to Ellis, March 21, 1760, Linnaean Correspondence, 1:479.
four and a half years disappeared on the horizon two days later. The Trent, the Albany, and several ships under convoy, set sail “with a fair Wind.” But a tempest raged in the Southeast with no end in sight. Members of the merchant-planter elite – long the most Anglophile sector of South Carolina society – believed British colonial authorities had failed them. Dr. Garden blasted Lyttelton, arguing, “We are, by a fatal piece of ambition, brought into a situation too terrible for us.” 51

Chapter 7: “If Not by Fair Means by Force”: The Cherokees Attempt to Rescue the Hostages

Even if British authorities had freed the hostages, for the terms and reasons Cherokee leaders proposed, peace would not have come immediately. But such a gesture might have moved things in that direction. Instead, the December 26, 1759, Treaty of Fort Prince George unraveled more quickly than it came together. The hostage crisis snowballed. In the months that followed, negotiations failed, the outcry from the various Cherokee regions grew louder, and villagers united under Oconostota. Using violence and siege tactics in place of ineffective diplomacy, Cherokee villagers joined in a common sense of purpose. Together, they burst into action against the British.¹

War parties still consisted of warriors from one village only, though they sometimes acted in concert with others. Individual Cherokees still identified first with their villages or clans, then with their settlement clusters. Thus the hostage crisis did not create a singular, all-encompassing nation. But it did alter the Cherokees’ sense of themselves. It galvanized villages throughout the Cherokee settlements. And it pushed them towards unified stands not just on retributive justice but on other matters as well. Henceforth, they tolerated neither betrayal nor imperial arrogance.

¹ Some scholars see the events after the treaty as strictly the work of Oconostota. See J.P. Brown, Old Frontiers (Kingsport, TN: Southern Publishers, 1938), 93-94. This overlooks the multipronged campaign to free the hostages and the tension that enveloped Cherokees throughout the settlement clusters.
Cherokee villagers weighed matters of import in their town houses, the centers of community life. A town house was a conical rotunda, as large as sixty feet in diameter. The roof’s central high point stood some thirty feet above the ground. From there, it sloped down and out, extending to low, wattle-and-daub walls at the building’s perimeter. The roof consisted of layered poles, cane, bark, soil, and grass, all supported by eight interior posts. On the south side, a narrow, winding entryway led to a small door, which in turn opened into a large, circular amphitheater. This was where village politics unfolded. As many as six hundred tribespeople could congregate here, seated by clan on benches, mats, or carpets woven from ash or oak splints. A large fire burned at the center.
of the room for such gatherings, the smoke venting through an opening in the roof. War and peace chiefs sat near the fire, and to their left and right, respectively, all other men and women of rank, whose opinions carried equal weight.²

Figure 17: *Cherokee Townhouse at Chota* [mid-eighteenth century], by Thomas Whyte. Courtesy of the McClung Museum.

From Tugaloo in the Lower Towns to Tallassee in the Overhills, villagers crowded into their town houses in the winter of 1759-60. Women and men alike,

according to custom, discussed the kidnapping of innocent and unsuspecting delegates now called “hostages” by the British. They rejected the hastily-imposed “treaty” signed without the consent and ratification of the Cherokee people. They discussed the hostages’ confinement at disease-infested Fort Prince George in a cold hut unsuitable for a fourth of that number. As Captain John Stuart noted, “Indians know no Difference between a prisoner and a slave, to which they prefer Death, it’s impossible to give them an Idea of any confinement that is not Ignominious.”

Village by village, sometimes alone, sometimes in tandem, the Cherokees organized to take action.

During the first few days of January, as runners shuttled news to the far-flung corners of Cherokee country, all seemed quiet at Fort Prince George. The Lower Towns exchanged Scalp Jack of Toxaway for a hostage. But the quiet masked “A Universal uneasiness,” as Lieutenant Richard Coytmore put it in a letter. At the frontier forts, Cherokee spokesmen from each of the settlement clusters negotiated in vain for the release of the hostages. Their frustration only grew. When Tiftoe, head warrior of Keowee, urged Coytmore to free the hostages because their families were “very uneasy at their Confinement,” the officer responded by reading the treaty aloud and haranguing the Indians present. The Round O of Stecoe then “declared that he was ignorant of the contents” of the treaty that “he was inadvertently persuaded to sign.” A flummoxed Coytmore, noting that the Out Town headman’s two adult sons were hostages, dismissed the objection as a mere expression of “Paternal affection.” Meanwhile, Oconostota, head

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3 John Stuart to Archibald Montgomery, Fort Loudoun, May 2, 1760, Grant Papers, Box 32 (DLAR reel 31, frames 00018-19).
warrior by affirmation, and his brother, the Raven of Chota, scurried back to that village to consult with Connecorte. On the way they passed through Estatoe, where they urged the Lower Towns to halt all exchanges of accused murderers for hostages. The situation called for more drastic measures.⁴

On January 6, the hostage Chistannah of Estatoe took matters into his own hands and tried to escape. He “rushed precipitately by the Sentry,” who grasped desperately for the Indian’s blanket. A soldier outside the fort chased him toward the riverbank and fired a shot that missed its target. Moments later, Coytmore promised the hostages kind treatment – though he never delivered on it – and ordered his sentries “to Fire on any of them that shou’d offer to Pass by them.” He resolved to detain the first Estatoe man he could seize to fill Chistannah’s place.⁵

By January 7, Cherokees in the Lower, Middle, Out and Valley Towns felt “unsettled and uneasy.” War parties “much Chagreen’d at the Confinement of their People” set out for the British posts. Their intent, Coytmore learned, was to use “every method to redeem them, if not by fair means, by force.” Overhill warriors soon followed. A week later, Seroweh – whom the British called “The Young Warrior of Estatoe” – announced that he would arrive in a few days at Fort Prince George with three or four murderers to exchange for hostages.⁶ The garrison waited tensely, unaware that the proposed exchange was a ruse intended to launch the Cherokee offensive.

⁴ Richard Coytmore to William Henry Lyttelton, January 7, 1760, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
⁵ Coytmore to Lyttelton, January 7, 1760, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
⁶ Richard Coytmore, Alexander Miln, and John Bell, A copy of a journal kept at Fort Prince George, January 13-February 7, 1760 (January 13), [hereafter FPG Journal], Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
On January 17, three traders – Cornelius Dougherty of Hiwassee, James Baldridge of Settico, and Henry Lucas – arrived at the banks of the Keowee. They had news to report. Some Indian women had warned them “to make their Escape directly.” The women whispered that the people of the Lower Towns “were determined to Come in a Body to kill the White Men, first at Keowee, than at Mr. Elliotts.” After that, they would “try what they could do at the Fort.” Coytmore ordered the soldiers under arms and vowed to the hostages that “if One of my Garrison was hurt” by the Indians, he “would put every One of them to the Sword directly.”

On January 19, seventy to eighty Cherokee men and a few women from all of the Lower Towns assembled at Estatoe. Their leaders were Seroweh and Tiftoe, the Keowee head man. They convinced Thomas Beamer to accompany them as interpreter. Unbeknownst to the half-Cherokee trader, they were all secretly armed and they had the support of additional men hiding nearby. They planned to rush the fort, kill the soldiers, and liberate the hostages.

Thirty warriors split off from the larger group. The other forty or fifty, clad in blankets, arrived at the fort in a downpour at 4 P.M. The Cherokees sought admittance into the fort “to see their friends, and choose which of them to release [exchange]” for two murderers. Coytmore, convinced that the Indians planned “to surprise the fort,” would admit no more than three or four at a time and ordered the soldiers to remain in

7 Ibid.
8 SCG, February 2-9, 1760, p. 1; FPG Journal (January 19), Lyttelton Papers, reel 3. Moments before, traders Isaac Atwood and Thomas Hayley arrived from Hiwassee. They announced that they had been pursued by Setticos and the entire fighting force of Great Tellico, both of which were coming to the Fort.
their barracks with weapons ready. “I took every precaution to guard against any Strategems they might Endeavour to practice,” he wrote. The hills overlooking the fort teemed with Indians. One soldier counted 115 men.  

After much negotiation, Seroweh agreed to enter the fort with three or four companions as well as the purported murderers. But twelve men, none of them accused murderers, pushed their way inside. All carried weapons under their blankets. Coytmore ordered the gate shut. Inside, he and Seroweh had a “friendly” talk. The latter “went out to fetch the Murderers.” A hubbub ensued, and two of the accused Overhills – Tullatahee of Toqua and The Yellow Bird of Watauga – escaped. Seroweh offered only “frivolous Excuses” when he returned empty-handed. A soldier escorted the Cherokee men out. Anticlimactically, the Cherokees dispersed and Beamer went home.  

While these events unfolded at Fort Prince George, Cherokee warriors vented their frustration nearby. The thirty warriors who had split off on the way to Coytmore’s outpost proceeded to trader John Elliott’s house at Little Keowee, just a mile and a half from the fort. A few days later, Beamer learned what happened there from a Keowee boy sent to Estatoe to “fetch some physic for the warriors.” While Seroweh and his gang were at Fort Prince George, the other war party killed Elliott and thirteen others, including the interpreter for the treaty signing, Joseph Axson. They took two prisoners. They drove off cattle and divided Elliott’s goods and rum among themselves. Later that day, Coytmore sent out The Round-O of Stecoe, who, in hopes of freeing his sons,  

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9 SCG, February 2-9, 1760, p. 1; FPG Journal (January 19), Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.  
10 Ibid. Beamer learned more of the grisly details of January 19 from his mother when he then went to remove his family, slaves and goods from his father’s store.
gathered intelligence confirming the reports. Several Indians hidden in the woods fired at three soldiers cutting firewood near the fort, killing one and wounding another.11 Warriors sought to weaken and demoralize the garrison by picking off its soldiers one by one.

Beamer, a close observer of Cherokee activities, “would not pretend to say” that the British had alienated all Cherokees. But he speculated that it might be so. Cherokee aggression was growing. They attacked traders; they besieged British forts; and they cut off all communication between the garrisons and Charles Town. A few hundred warriors surrounded Fort Prince George. The Lower Towns courted assistance from the Creek Indians, and two war parties from Cussitah in the Lower Creek towns arrived to consider whether to offer their assistance against the English. At the end of his bimonthly report, Coytmore summed up his situation succinctly: “Surrounded and Shut up (like Birds in a Cage) both Day & Night.”12

Bitterness spread throughout Cherokee country. Those Cherokees at a distance from the forts targeted the symbols of abuse close at hand: the traders who cheated and swindled them. The Cockeyed Warrior of Nottely, a Valley Town, enraged that his son was among the hostages, “gave a talk to his people, to kill all the white men.” Traders scattered. Those with Indian friends or good luck – like Dougherty, Baldridge, and Lucas – reached safety. When another Nottely headman told Isaac Atwood “that he would not

kill him then, but that he would never spare a white man for the future,” the trader fled to Hiwassee. The next night, he learned “that there was a party then coming to kill him.” Accordingly, he set off for Fort Prince George, where he arrived with fellow trader Thomas Haley on January 19.13

Other traders lost their lives as they attempted to escape. On the very day Haley found safety, the Hiwassees and Nottelies struck Nottely trader John Kelly, a long-reputed swindler and cheat “whom they cut into quarters, which they stuck up upon poles” or – by another account – “chopped in pieces & stuck about on the Bushes.”14 Lucas tried to help rescue his friends in the villages, but he returned empty-handed to Fort Prince George after a harrowing four-day ordeal. In the Overhill towns, Watauga trader James Crawford lost his life. At Nequassee, in the Middle Towns, Cherokees killed trader James Russel.15 Nequassee warriors “confin’d” five traders. In the Lower Towns, two more died at Cheowee and another three narrowly escaped. A dozen more white men lost their lives in other episodes.16

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13 On August 17, Atwood later reported, seventy or eighty Indians “besett” John Elliott’s house. Atwood fled south to Long Canes settlement. Isaac Atwood Affidavit, January 31, 1760, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
14 SCG, February 2-9, 1760, p. 1; Isaac Atwood Affidavit, January 31, 1760, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3. Attakullakulla tried to pass off the murder of Kelly as revenge for an Indian killed by trader Samuel Benn in 1757, then later backpedaled and agreed to have the Black Dog put someone to death for Kelly’s murder. Paul Demere to William Henry Lyttelton, January 26, 1760, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
16 At Mile Creek, Estatoes “beat, stript,” and robbed Joree trader David McDonald, his half-Cherokee son, and trader Robert Scott, “in an Instant. Friendly Middle Townsmen rescued McDonald and Scott and set them on their way. They counted “a Hundred and odd fire Places,” a mile from the fort and observed fifty of sixty Cherokees on the Fort Loudoun Path headed for Keowee. Hiwassee and Nottelies took Will Proctor and Thomas Cooper prisoner and forced them to go to war or face death. They chose the former. FPG Journal (January 28, February 4, 14), Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
At Fort Loudoun, as at Fort Prince George, the Cherokees tried negotiations first. The failure of negotiations caused the Indians to turn to the same sorts of violence they used at the other post. Throughout the month of January, two familiar guests frequented Fort Loudoun. One was Attakullakulla. The other was Oconostota. Both were rivals for power among the Overhills. The physical contrast between them was stark. As naturalist William Bartram later described him, Attakullakulla was “a man of remarkable small stature, slender, and delicate frame.” He was mild-featured and loquacious – a gifted statesman. 17 Oconostota was a “large man,” barrel-chested, “a man of extraordinary physical prowess.” He towered half a foot over his contemporaries and weighed perhaps two hundred pounds. He had a large head and a face that bore the scars of smallpox. He was pensive, terse, and intense. 18

On January 6, Attakullakulla arrived at Fort Loudoun and told its commander, Captain Demere, to expect peace. The next day, the conciliatory Cherokee spoke in the Chota town house to the Overhill headmen. He “spoke very severely to them all for their late behavior” and publicly called out Principal Chief Old Hop for instigating them. The lecture had little effect. The next day a “young fellow” fired upon soldiers cutting firewood outside Fort Loudoun, though he apparently missed his mark. Attakullakulla nevertheless convinced Demere of his loyalty when he visited again on the ninth. Oconostota, on the other hand, appeared dour when he arrived four days later. He warned “that there will be some disturbances.” The murderers’ relatives refused to give

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17 Bartram, Travels, 485.
18 Brice Martin to Lyman Draper, May 18, 1854, Draper MSS, 14DD16, 2; “Narrative of William Martin,” 1782, Draper MSS 3XX44, 7-9.
them up, and by Cherokee law and custom, there was no recourse. “We cannot take them away from them by force,” Oconostota said, and “a great number of People” opposed such a move.\textsuperscript{19}

\begin{figure}[h]
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\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure18.png}
\caption{Archaeologist’s rendition of eighteenth-century Chota. Courtesy of Richard Thornton.}
\end{figure}

Trudging through snow so deep that “no Indian ever remembered to have seen the like,” the two men visited Demere again on January 23. When the captain asked if they had any murderers to deliver up, “they were several minutes without saying any thing.” At last, Attakullakulla confessed that anti-British fervor had spread throughout the Cherokee settlements, and that “the consequences will be worse than before.” Villagers complained of the lengthy confinement of their people, and readied to strike. Attakullakulla demanded that Demere write a letter and promised that his brother would

\textsuperscript{19} Demere to Lyttelton, January 26, 1760, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
carry it to Fort Prince George. The letter, the headman said, should contain the following terms: The British would free the hostages. In exchange, Overhill warriors would set out against the French in the spring and would return with French or Indian enemy scalps equal in number to the settlers killed in 1758 and 1759. Demere refused. He knew that warriors had already departed to seek an alliance with the French. He held a different conception of justice, and he understood his place within the imperial system’s hierarchy. But beyond this, he believed strongly that British gentlemen, not Indian subjects, should make the rules.20

If he secured the release of the hostages, Attakullakulla might cover for his complicity in the Fort Prince George treaty that kept them confined. He might bolster his tenuous claims to political authority over the Cherokee. He thus assured Demere that it was not too late. An express “with a painted stick, and a White mans scalp” had arrived from the Lower Towns, but to no effect, he reported. Oconostota knew this was not true. His own people had lied to Attakullakulla. Standing by stoically as the conversation between Demere and Attakullakulla unfolded, Oconostota “seem’d to be very cross.”21

Did he know about Attakullakulla’s commitment to the British? Throughout the month of January, runners from all corners of the Cherokee Settlements had streamed into Chota, “complaining that their Friends were still confined.” Oconostota felt personally responsible. Frustrated, aggrieved, and mindful of his own recent captivity, he concluded

20 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
that diplomacy had failed. The Great Warrior, answerable to his people, would take a
different route than Attakullakulla.

The men at Fort Loudoun, like those at Fort Prince George, felt the direct effects
of changing Cherokee tactics. Sieges at both posts now bolstered the Indians’ negotiating
position. Captain Demere tried to write to the governor several times from January 15 to
January 25. But communication eastward was impossible – at least for white emissaries.
“The Path from hence to Charles Town is the most difficult and dangerous, as all the
Indians, are resolved to kill any Body, that go on the Path, and are watching it,” Demere
said. Overhills warriors intercepted two dispatches. The captain exhorted his men and
offered money, but “all in Vain.” They refused to attempt the trip. In desperation,
Demere “fixed upon a Negro fellow,” Abram, “and promised him his freedom, if he
wou’d undertake it.” During the next several months, Abram repeatedly risked his life
for his white masters. He undoubtedly knew that heroic acts were one of the few routes
to manumission in late-colonial South Carolina.22

Abram had the highly-desired skills of a frontiersman. Although it was illegal to
employ slaves in the deerskin trade, the law was not enforced. Numerous bondsmen
toiled for traders as packhorsemen, blacksmiths, and boat pilots. Abram had a decade or
more of experience as Chota trader Samuel Benn’s assistant.

Three years earlier, Benn had left Charles Town with a caravan of goods intended
for the newly constructed garrison of Fort Loudoun. Near Nottely, an angry horde of
Cherokees accosted him and demanded rum. Adhering to South Carolina law, which

22 Ibid.; JCA, 1757-1761, xvii.
forbade traders from supplying Indians with liquor, he refused. The outraged Indians assaulted him with rocks and sticks. One man pulled Benn off his horse. In self-defense, Benn fatally shot the Indian and his assailants drew back. Taking charge of the situation, Abram shouted to his master to abandon the pack train and to run away. A battered and shaken Benn departed, and while Abram watched, the Indians carted off a load of Benn’s goods. They told Abram to remain in the same spot until they returned. Abram instead fled and reunited with his master. Old Hop assigned culpability to the Indians and ordered the brother of the deceased to ingest “physic” to purge thoughts of revenge from his mind.23

Why did Abram return to Benn? The Cherokees had agreed in 1751 to return runaway slaves to South Carolina authorities. He had a privileged position compared to other African Americans. He may have feared for his life. He may have had nowhere else to go. While the available historical record does not say where Abram came from, how old he was, or how long he lived with Benn, references to “Benn’s Negro” and to Benn himself show that Abram frequently accompanied his master on journeys throughout the Southeast. He had escorted Cherokee emissaries to Charles Town. He had traveled to and from the several British forts in the region. He had visited Indian villages. He knew the paths from the Overhills to Charles Town as well as anyone.24

Abram left Fort Loudoun for Fort Prince George on January 26, 1760, and made the one-hundred-and-fifty-mile trek in just over a week. The news he carried showed the


grim situation at Fort Loudoun. He reported that Demere expected a siege. The men were on reduced rations. Only ten weeks’ worth of corn and “four Months meat provision” remained. The soldiers, however, were still “in high spirits and fully resolved to sell their Lives very dear if they are Attacked. They are constantly at work, to put the Fort in the best posture of Defence.” Having delivered his news, Abram waited at Fort Prince George for Lieutenant Coytmore to send him on the next leg of his journey.²⁵

By late January, the Middle Towns and the Overhills were mobilizing for full-fledged war. The Middle Towns held a general meeting at Echoe and sent numerous war parties down the path. Among the Overhills, Old Hop blocked all efforts at diplomacy, calling The Seed of Settico “a Rogue” for suggesting it. Warriors sought “any White People” that “shou’d pass by the [Overhill] Towns,” Demere learned. Cherokees would also execute any whites found with letters: “Orders were sent every where to that purpose.”²⁶ Overhill representatives also headed for Fort Prince George “to demand the Hostages belonging to their Parts.”²⁷

Within the next few days, repercussions of another event rippled throughout the Cherokee settlements. Connecorte, recognized by most Cherokees as the principal religious and political figure in the Overhills, if not beyond, died. The demise of “Old Hop” left a leadership void at a critical period. His death further galvanized a single anti-British mindset. Villagers as far away as Keowee sang the death song. As a faithful supporter of Connecorte, and with military prowess to boot, Oconostota gained influence

²⁵ FPG Journal (February 4), Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
²⁶ Demere to Lyttelton, January 26, 1760, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
²⁷ FPG Journal (February 4), Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
among the Overhills beyond what Old Hop had once had. Eventually he and Second Warrior Ostenaco secured the election of Connecorte’s nephew, “The Standing Turkey,” as the deceased chief’s replacement. The tug of war for political power between Attakullakulla, who cast his lot with the British, and Oconostota, who favored a non-accommodationist approach, continued. The British recognized Attakullakulla as the “Emperor” of the Cherokees, but the Indians themselves did not. They fed him false intelligence and ignored his counsel. Attakullakulla’s authority proved so feeble that his son, Dragging Canoe, split with him publicly two decades later.

Oconostota took charge, filling the political vacuum left by Connecorte. At Fort Loudoun on January 29, he met with Captain Stuart. Soon thereafter, the head man also went to Fort Prince George to secure the release of the five Overhill hostages. The captives, he insisted, were innocent of murder. And neither he nor Attakullakulla could deliver up the true culprits. By Cherokee law, only “their Relations” had the “power to punish them.” But the families could “not be prevailed upon to Deliver them.” Aside from this, Stuart said, the Overhills would agree to all the other articles of the treaty. Stuart believed that if Oconostota succeeded in his mission, “these Towns may in all probability remain Quiet.” If not, “we must Expect that they will be as bad as the Rest of the Nation.” Oconostota misled Stuart. He did not tell him that war parties from Settico, Tellico, and Chota, had already set out for the frontier settlements.


29 John Stuart to William Henry Lyttelton, January 29, 1760; FPG Journal (February 4), Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
As new negotiations failed at Fort Prince George, disaffected Cherokees came together in a show of force. The sick and poorly supplied garrison was vastly outnumbered. Warriors from each of the Lower Towns joined six hundred more Middle Townsmen and most of Hiwassee’s fighting men. They converged on the fort as soon as they learned that Seroweh’s January 19 attempt to take the post and free the hostages had failed. The Mankiller of Nequassee visited four times from January 25 to 28. The Tail of the Overhills arrived to urge Coytmore to free the hostages, to no avail. Cherokee bitterness only grew. Eight hundred Cherokee freedom fighters, dubbed as “Rascals” by Coytmore, besieged the fort and intimidated its inhabitants. Inside the post walls, five hostages had died, four of them from smallpox. Coytmore expected this news to further “enrage” the Cherokee people. We are always expecting an attack,” he wrote. Hoping to liberate his sons, The Round-O of Stecoe visited several of the Lower Towns to encourage peace but found reluctance everywhere.30

The growing aggregation of disaffected Cherokees outside Fort Prince George frightened Coytmore enough. But inside, the garrison faced desperate conditions. Soldiers had detained a drunken Cullasatchee man and now held him with the hostages. He later confessed to killing four of the men at Elliott’s trading post. When the newcomer urged the hostages to revolt and kill the sentries at the fort gate, he was shackled and guarded night and day.31 Soldiers did not dare to “go an Hundred Yards


31 FPG Journal (January 23, 31), Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.

208
from the Fort” to fetch firewood, though the situation was desperate: “Not a Stick…but what our Out Houses which are all pulled down” remained. Heavy rains collapsed the well. Four men had died of smallpox and eighteen were “dangerously ill of it.”

Coytmore and others also complained of a different “Disorder seemingly of as bad a Nature” – possibly mumps – consisting of “a violent pain in the Head, Loyns, and Back, with a Vomiting.” Coytmore again dispatched Abram with a plea for reinforcements for his garrison, “now like Birds in a Cage.”

On February 6, under the cover of darkness, Abram went from Fort Prince George to Keowee and “brought off a Horse that was tyed under a Corn House in the middle of Town.” He attempted to gather intelligence. The next morning, he departed with Coytmore’s journals and a letter to the governor. By the fourteenth, the day Abram arrived in Charles Town, the members of the South Carolina Commons House had already concluded “Fort Loudoun…cannot be reliev’d by this Government.” They held out hope for Fort Prince George and sent supplies for its relief. Lyttelton sent a letter to General Jeffery Amherst begging for British regulars and for a second military expedition to quell the Cherokee uprising and rescue the garrison at Fort Loudoun. Amherst obliged, but the new troops took months to arrive. In the meantime, in Charles Town, Abram came down with smallpox.

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32 Ibid. (February 4).
33 Coytmore to Lyttelton, February 7, 1760, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
34 Ibid.
35 South Carolina Assembly to William Henry Lyttelton, February 13, 1760, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
36 William Henry Lyttelton to Paul Demere, February 14, 1760, Lyttelton Letterbooks, 2i, p. 19-20 (SCDAH microfilm, S504001); SCG, January 8-12, 1760, p. 2, February 2-9, 1760, p. 4; February 9-16, 209
At noon on February 14, Oconostota, his brother, and the interpreters Charles McLemore and John Calwell arrived at the Keowee river bank beside Fort Prince George with several letters. “They were come for their Hostages,” they explained. They also brought Demere’s warning that the Overhills “wou’d soon go with the Flood” and take to the war path. Coytmore gave the same curt response he had given to the Middle and Lower Towns. He would honor Governor Lyttelton’s December 26 treaty. Oconostota “well knows the Agreement, made between himself, the other Warriors, and the Governor concerning the Hostages,” he said. Oconostota promptly “denied, that he made the least Agreement or consented to any Treaty.” With his brother and McLemore, the headman returned to Keowee “very much dissatisfy’d.” The interpreter Calwell “wou’d not go back with them.” Instead, he entered the fort to report that the Overhills had now joined “with the rest having been denied their Hostages” and that Chotas and Tellicos were already in the area.37

The morning of February 16 was exactly one moon after Seroweh’s failed attempt on Fort Prince George. As Ensign Alexander Miln reported, two Indian women who had been trusted informants appeared at the edge of the Keowee River. It was a trap. Before Dougherty could learn what brought them on their errand, Oconostota appeared and asked for Coytmore. Oconostota had “something of Consequence to impart” and asked for a white man to escort him to Charles Town. When Coytmore offered to provide a


37 FPG Journal, (February 14), Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.

210
horse, Oconostota argued that he would take care of it and “carelessly” whirled a bridle three times over his head. A volley of “25 or 30 Guns” fired from the thickets where warriors had taken cover before dawn. Coytmore “was shot thro’ the left Breast” and two other men also sustained wounds.38

Ambrose Davis rushed out to help Coytmore, escorting the weak and bleeding commander into the fort through a shower of fire. Davis then fired his rifle into a group of four or five Cherokees, dropping one. From the hills, rifle fire steadily sprayed the fort. From the fort, artillery launched heavy balls indiscriminately into Keowee. The wounded men found their way to the surgeon. Ensign Miln, whom the Indians despised as much as Coytmore, assumed command.39

Miln recorded the ensuing events in his journal. After the warriors outside the fort shot Coytmore and the others, “the Men swore bitterly that they wou’d kill every Indian” hostage. Indeed, “several of them got their Bayonets fixed and swore they would do it immediately.” Miln claimed he “order’d them not to attempt any such thing, for if they did I shou’d be obliged to use such Measures, which wou’d be very disagreeable to me at this time.” But the soldiers were beyond Miln’s control. He “pacified them a little” by ordering the hostages “to be put in Irons, and ty’d with Ropes.” In the afternoon, with irons and ropes in hand, one “Sergeant Parsell” and the soldiers approached the building the hostages occupied, and despite the absence of a translator, called for the captives to come outside. None did. “They imagined that we intended to

38 Indians shot an officer in the calf and the interpreter in the buttock. FPG Journal (February 16), Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
39 Ibid. (February 16).
put them to death,” Miln wrote. If the ensign’s report is correct, the hostages decided to defend themselves, uncovering tomahawks and knives buried in the dirt floor of their jail. The soldiers “went in to draw them out, but they were soon obliged to draw back, for they began to use their Weapons.” Miln’s account then becomes subject to dispute. With two of their companions wounded, the soldiers “immediately fired” on the captives. Miln claimed he tried to stop them, “but before I cou’d get one to hear or answer me, they laid them all lifeless.” Was Miln telling the truth? He continued, “Happy for us all, that they were destroy’d, for searching the House where they were kept, [we] found a bottle of Poison that they had hid under Ground, which we imagined was to poison the Well.”

In the evening, some Indians came near to the fort. Firing two guns, they cried out “Fight strong, and you shall be assisted.” The men then “expected a General Attack,” Miln explained. Gunshots erupted from the hills surrounding the fort. Before the day ended, Davis fatally shot a Cherokee civilian traveling on horseback from Sugar Town to Keowee. Cherokees “kept a continual firing all night,” but they made no attempt on the fort. Inside, “The Men lay upon their Arms in the Angles till Day Light.”

In Charles Town less than two weeks later, the South Carolina Gazette endorsed the soldiers’ massacre of the hostages. “In all Probability,” the paper said, “putting the Hostages to Death has proved a very critical Event.” Henceforth the garrison would at

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40 FPG Journal (February 16), Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
41 FPG Journal (February 16), Lyttelton Papers, reel 3. The journal continues for another week (February 18-24). The soldier wounded by the Indians died, three others succumbed to smallpox, and gunfire continued from the hills. On February 23-24, messengers arrived with dispatches from the fort, and with the second, Miln and Bell sent a copy of their journal.
least be safe from within. But the Gazette’s account of the events of February 16, 1760 was flawed. Read by literate Charlestonians and transmitted throughout the British Empire, it omitted the details Miln provided and failed to report that he had lost control of his men.

Few discerning minds in Charles Town believed the Gazette’s account. Did the garrison want to kill the hostages because they had created such a nuisance? Dr. Alexander Garden, a physician and naturalist, believed “they [the hostages] were, to a man, put to death in cold blood.” George Milligen, a physician in the Independent Company who later served with veterans of the skirmish, blamed Coytmore for the massacre. In A Short Description of the Province of South-Carolina, penned in 1763, he dubbed the slaying an act of “revenge” for the shooting of Coytmore. The soldiers, the doctor said, “were permitted to kill the innocent and unfortunate Prisoners, in a Manner too shocking to relate.” Milligen believed the carnage was avoidable.

In 1775, ethnographer and historian James Adair, who traversed the southeast as an Indian trader and knew hundreds of Indians, traders, and métis, offered yet another version of events. As Cherokee gunfire erupted from the hills, the hostages cheered their

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42 SCG, February 28-March 1, 1760, p. 3.
43 Ibid.
45 Bryan Forrest McKown, “Fort Prince George and the Cherokee-South Carolina Frontier, 1753-1768,” (M.A. thesis, Clemson University, 1988), 30; George Milligen-Johnston, A Short Description of the Province of South-Carolina (London: John Hinton, 1763), 86. The doctor, a former surgeon’s mate, purchased his ensign’s commission in the South Carolina Independents for 400 pounds sterling in 1743. He resided in Charles Town, but sometimes visited the frontier. He later returned to England and inherited a baronetcy from his mother’s family.
countrymen. Adair described what happened next: “A white savage…cut through a plank, over their heads, and perpetrated that horrid action, while the soldiery were employed like warriors, against the enemy.” Adair continued: “to excuse his baseness, and save himself from the reproaches of the people, he, like the wolf in the fable, falsely accused them of intending to poison the wells of the garrison.” The truth remains lost to history. 46 The hills high above Fort Prince George, though out of range of gunfire, overlook the fort. Did Cherokee observers see what really happened? If so, one can only imagine how they and their compatriots felt.

“By this Massacre,” Milligen observed, “for I can give it no softer Name, most of the Head-Warriors lost Relations and Friends, which fired them with an implacable Desire of Revenge.”47 Three of the dead were suspected murderers. Before the “massacre,” five had died of illness, and three more had escaped to tell of their mistreatment. But soldiers killed fourteen Indians in cold blood and mistreated the others.

Historians have echoed the physician’s charge, arguing that the massacre brought a new level of unity to the Cherokee people. But this interpretation falls short in one regard. Cherokee unity arose not so much from the slaughter at Fort Prince George as from the events that led up to it. Thanks to runners carrying news far and wide on mountain trails, the villagers shared a determination to crush the British before the grim


47 Milligen-Johnston, *A Short Description*, 86.
action of February 16. The massacre merely confirmed decisions made in town-house discussions weeks before.

On February 25, two months after the Treaty of Fort Prince George, Lieutenant Coytmore succumbed to his wounds. Several soldiers buried the fallen commander in a shallow grave outside the fort’s southwest bastion.48 Three days later, a musket ball from the hills ripped through a sentry’s jaw, killing him immediately. Only two artillery pieces worked. “By Death and Sickness we are really very weak, and in a very bad situation for the want of Wood,” Miln wrote. He had a porthole cut out for one massive iron piece. Lacking a better plan, soldiers sought to weaken Cherokee unity and spiritualism. Gunmen “fired through” the Keowee “Town House, and particularly thro the Conjurers House,” dispersing the few remaining villagers to the hills.49

As Miln and the garrison braced for the worst, they had no idea that the carnage and panic at Fort Prince George paled in comparison to events in the white settlements. Attakullakulla hid in the woods with his family and later took refuge in Fort Loudoun, dissociating himself from events at Fort Prince George and from Oconostota in general. His own people had cast him aside. The hostages’ families “threatened his life as the Instrument of their confinement,” Captain Stuart wrote from Fort Loudoun. “And he lost


all his Authority,” because he still “strenuously opposed” the “Violent measures” that most Cherokees supported, the Captain continued.50

Meanwhile, affronted Cherokee warriors took to the offensive. They hoped to inspire both the Creeks and the French to come to their aid. They hoped to catch their enemy off guard. They aimed to avenge the death of their kin, drive off encroaching settlers and to replenish their population through adoption. Drawn together by the hostage crisis, they hoped to steady a world careening out of control.
Chapter 8: “The Tourrant hath been so Great”: The Cherokee Offensive of 1760

In 1760, smallpox and other diseases swept through the Lower and Middle Towns. The carnage at Fort Prince George incensed the hostages’ families. If warriors took scalps, male prisoners, and women and children for potential adoption from the South Carolina backcountry, they could bring social and spiritual relief for their grieving kin – warriors and civilians alike.¹

In light of the recent Cherokee population decline, taking captives constituted a major priority. Not only did captives augment Native populations, but they also assuaged survivors’ grief and symbolically replaced the fallen. Thus when Cherokees took to the frontier, they did so in part to replace their dead. In lieu of holding prisoners as bargaining chips, natives assimilated them. Indian warriors preferred, rather than exempted, women and children. Through proper ritual and ceremony, anyone, regardless of race or cultural heritage, could in time become a full-fledged Cherokee – even outsiders who willingly sought Cherokee citizenship. Prisoners sang songs and danced with their captors. Captives were washed, dressed, and “made over” in the Cherokee fashion through hairstyle, dress, and jewelry. And they learned the ways of their new people. Captives often bridged gaps between people in their new and former worlds.

¹ Richard Coytmore to William Henry Lyttelton, January 8, 1760, FPG Journal, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3; SCG, January 8-12, 1760, p. 1, 2, January 12-19, 1760, p. 4.
Sometimes women and children became slaves first. But for slaves, adoption and equality was possible. Connecorte’s son was an escaped African American slave.²

As in 1758 and 1759, the Cherokees who took up the hatchet in 1760 sought male scalps. They may have hoped to torture a few prisoners too. Both scalp-taking and ritualized torture of the enemy freed a dead Cherokee’s soul and lifted the grief of the community. As Adair put it, “when that kindred duty of retaliation is justly executed, [the dead] immediately get ease and power to fly away.” According to Cherokee belief, scalping and torture prevented the Cherokee dead from haunting and harming the living. Generally, Indians took male captives and tortured them when a clansman’s death was particularly heinous. Indians tied their enemies to a tall pole. The entire community contributed by poking, burning, beating, and eventually scalping and dismembering the captive. Cherokees believed that through torture, they drew power from an enemy and transferred it to themselves. Torture also occurred if a clan refused to adopt a prisoner. The community-based nature of ritual torture shocked British observers. Britons saw torture as a state-sanctioned and state-administered punishment for crime. But for Cherokees, the people and the state were synonymous.³

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Raids on the frontier, as they always had, also offered opportunities for ambitious young men to prove their masculinity and gain social standing. In 1760, the frontier offensive served other purposes too: it vented Indian rage over corrupt trade, and it attempted to reclaim Cherokee hunting grounds. The Indians did not wish to inflict senseless violence. Nor did they carelessly sacrifice the lives of their warriors. But with all these goals weighing heavily on them, they sometimes suffered larger-than-expected casualties.

From February 1 to April 1, eight hundred Cherokee warriors attacked the southeastern frontier. At the end of February, the action paused briefly as some warriors returned to their villages. Others, seeking revenge for the massacre at Fort Prince George, launched additional assaults in March. At least fifty Cherokees died in these campaigns. Several were captured. But Cherokees killed two hundred white and black South Carolinians and kidnapped between fifty and one hundred more. In the process they sowed still more political dissension in South Carolina.4

Contemporary and secondary accounts make the Cherokees seem like indiscriminate, unprovoked, bloodthirsty marauders. Archibald Simpson, a Presbyterian


preacher in coastal Jacksonboro, heard of nothing “but house burning, women & children left helpless in the woods, murders, ravages, and devastation.” He heard too of “the most horrid cruelties committed” upon the living and the dead. Another eighteenth-century observer noted that the land “once settled, is now a wilderness; some killed, others scalped, others drove far from their habitations, others carried captive, and some put to death in the most cruel manner.” Historians too detail Cherokee violence in a macabre way, all written from a non-Cherokee perspective. For the Indians, scalping conformed spiritual realities and cultural necessities. White men scalped Indians in order to collect bounties. Due to cultural taboos, Cherokee Indian warriors did not rape civilians. And the quick-strike nature of native warfare left little time for senseless destruction. Instead, the damage inflicted was premeditated and deliberate. Conventional characterizations thus obscure the Cherokees’ understanding of events and neglect to consider the motivations that underlay Indian strategy.

The Cherokees accomplished some of their objectives in early 1760. In the process, they also widened the chasm between backcountry farmers and coastal elites. The farmers and their supporters saw the dearth of support from the colonial government as evidence of classism and indifference. Elites criticized the incompetence of British colonial governance. Cherokees gained the upper ground in the conflict. They failed, however, to draw the French or the Creeks to their assistance. French Quebec fell to the

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5 William Richardson to John Forfitt, Waxhaw, May 6, 1760, in Letters from the Rev. Samuel Davies, and Others; Shewing the State of Religion in Virginia, South Carolina, &c., Particularly Among the Negroes (London: J. and W. Oliver, 1761), 21; Archibald Simpson Journals and Sermons (ca. 1748-1784), CLS, fiche card 30:3:1 (February 6, February 12, 1760); Meriwether, The Expansion of South Carolina, 222-25.

British in September 1759. But French soldiers and civilians did not flee to the South to rally to the Cherokees. Without supplies from the French in Louisiana, Creeks focused instead on hunting and waited for a better opportunity.

Motivated by clear and consistent cultural imperatives, on January 29, warriors from the Middle and Lower Towns reached the uppermost South Carolina settlements. The warriors first targeted the squatters and encroachers at Long Canes. They also eyed Fort Ninety Six. The strategic trading post and military outpost lay in a field just off the Cherokee Path. A nineteenth-century story claims that Cateechee of Keowee rode to warn Ninety Six, where her white lover, trader Allan Francis, resided. One version of the tale has her riding into Long Canes. Even if this is not pure fantasy, as most historians suspect, scouts from Ninety Six captured two warriors who might have leaked what they knew. And two traders arrived from the Lower Towns, revealing information about Cherokee plans. Ninety Six braced itself for an attack and alerted Long Canes.

Settled in 1756, Long Canes was a Presbyterian enclave in western South Carolina populated by Scots-Irish migrants and African slaves from Virginia. The white migrants had come in search of free land and space to practice their religion without coercion. But their settlement violated the 1746 Treaty of Ninety Six. They also hunted

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thirty or forty miles into Cherokee lands. The squatters altered the environment by damming the Little River and fishing it heavily. They raised cattle in the salt licks used not long before by deer and buffalo. They also peddled liquor and household goods as unlicensed traders to the Cherokees. By 1760, 250 black and white settlers carved out a living in the region called Long Canes. But they did so at the Cherokees’ expense.

Harmonious coexistence was far from possible. Connecorte had addressed complaints about the land incursions to the Presbyterian missionary William Richardson in 1759. Wawhatchee, a Lower Towns warrior, shared Cherokee concerns with Georgia authorities the same year. South Carolina’s Governor Lyttelton also knew of the Indian grievances. In December 1759, Cherokee hunters cancelled their plans to break up the Long Canes settlement when Lyttelton marched towards Fort Prince George. British authorities took no action despite these developments.

As a result, Cherokees directed their first attack on the South Carolina frontier, then, on the Long Canes squatters. An old historical marker and an iron bridge lie hidden

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11 William Richardson, “A Diary of my Proceedings…” William Richardson Davie Papers (1758-1819), Manuscripts Department, Wilson Library, UNC-Chapel Hill, #1793, folder 1, box 1 of 1, p. 49-50 (Tuesday, January 30, 1759); William Henry Lyttelton to the Board of Trade, September 1, 1759, *BPRO-SC*, 28:211; *SCG*, January 8-12, 1760, p. 1.
in the piney woods off of an old dirt road three miles from the tiny hamlet of Troy, South Carolina. Nestled in the trees on the far side of the bridge is a mass grave dubbed “Indian Massacre Site.” Buried in the heavy clay soil are the remains of twenty-three settlers. A stone that Patrick Calhoun erected in memory of his mother and twenty-two others still stands.  

12 This site marks the beginning of the 1760 Cherokee offensive.

Figure 19: Catherine Calhoun gravestone, 2009.

On February 1, a group of 150 settlers fled their homes when messengers from Ninety Six revealed rumors of an impending Cherokee attack. The refugees camped east

of Long Cane Creek. Safety lay sixty miles away at either Tobler’s Fort or Fort Moore, both below Augusta on the east bank of the Savannah River. A hundred mounted Cherokee warriors emerged suddenly and opened fire. Long Canes surveyor Patrick Calhoun later recalled, according to his son John C. Calhoun, that the refugees were soon “overpowered and scattered in every direction.”13 The entire skirmish lasted thirty or forty minutes. White and black men, each defending their families, died in the first volleys. Aware of Anglo-American leadership structure, Cherokees killed community patriarch James Calhoun in the initial moments of the battle. Warriors converged. Women, children, and men scattered. Cherokees took what scalps they could. The warriors also took thirteen prisoners, mainly women and children. The captives included future South Carolina politician John C. Calhoun’s cousins, Ann, age 4, and Mary, age 2. And they killed and scalped the elderly and the infants. To carry them back home would have been too difficult and time-consuming. After half an hour, their ammunition expended, three Calhoun brothers and the other men fled. The engagement soon ended.14

Content with the scalps and prisoners they had taken, the Indians burned the woods after the struggle. By clearing the underbrush they hastened the return of deer and

turkeys to hunt. And they removed cover for enemies who might ambush them in those hunting grounds.\textsuperscript{15}

The fight proved costly for the Cherokees: twenty-one reportedly died, including two headmen. The next day, Patrick Calhoun and a party of militiamen returned to the scene. They recovered twenty-three Long Canes inhabitants’ bodies and interred them in the mass grave. The Cherokees reported that they killed fifty-six settlers.\textsuperscript{16} In the days and weeks that followed, fifteen children were found wandering in the woods, wounded and disoriented. One teenage girl cowered in a canebrake. Others remained missing. And still other refugees regrouped and made it to Fort Moore.\textsuperscript{17}

In search of more scalps and adoptees, Cherokee warriors ambushed settlers fleeing Stevens Creek settlement not far away from Long Canes. The community’s leader survived. But twenty-three settlers and two Cherokees died. The rest, 170 in all, crowded into Fort Moore with the Long Canes survivors.\textsuperscript{18} White and black inhabitants of neighboring eastern Georgia “crammed” into Fort Moore, Fort Augusta, the Anglican Church, Macartan’s trading house, “& every other House of Security” in Augusta. Atkin

\textsuperscript{15} Edmond Atkin to William Henry Lyttelton, February 16, 1760, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.

\textsuperscript{16} White Outerbridge to William Henry Lyttelton, February 2, 1760, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3; \textit{SCG}, February 2-9, 1760, p. 2, February 16-23, 1760, p. 2; Edmonds, \textit{The Making of McCormick County}, 17-19; Alexander Miln and John Bell to William Henry Lyttelton, journal at Fort Prince George, February 8-24, 1760 (February 14), Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.


\textsuperscript{18} \textit{SCG}, February 9-16, 1760, p. 2; Larry Ivers, \textit{Colonial Forts of South Carolina, 1670-1775} (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1970), 74.
lamented that “All things round here now wear a wretched Aspect.” He feared “The Terour will spread…far into the Settlements.” It already had.

War parties from the Lower Towns, led by Seroweh, arrived at the headwaters of the Saluda River on February 2. They soon fanned out along the Saluda and its tributaries. Some targeted the small trading post and garrison at Ninety Six. Capturing it would accomplish two things. First, it would diminish the capacity of the colony to protect the settlements nearby. Second, it would serve as a symbolic gesture of disgust toward the deerskin trade. But two Cherokee spies fell into the hands of trader Robert Goudy and several white scouts up the path from Ninety Six. This gave the fort’s defenders some warning. Soon after, forty warriors led by Seroweh fired on members of cowboy Andrew Williamson’s family fleeing from their home a mile from Fort Ninety Six. “We had a struggle to save them,” Captain James Francis, the post’s commander, wrote. Though the Williamsons escaped injury and got inside the fort, the Cherokees captured the two slaves in the party.

The next day, February 3, the same forty Indians reappeared in view of Fort Ninety Six. The garrison’s men were busy demolishing all free-standing structures outside the fort in order to remove cover for the expected attackers. The warriors converged, forcing the frontiersmen back into the enclosure. Thirty-three white and

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19 Henry Ellis to William Henry Lyttelton, March 5, 1760; Edmond Atkin to William Henry Lyttelton, March 5, 1760; White Outerbridge to William Henry Lyttelton, February 6, 1760, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.

twelve black South Carolinians defended the fort, working side by side as they often did in the deerskin trade. The warriors torched the two buildings that still stood outside the fort: Goudey’s home and an outbuilding. Their efforts in vain and their ammunition expended, they withdrew two hours later with two dead. One white man was slightly wounded. Captain Francis subsequently begged the Governor to send the weakened fort “an immediate relief.”

On the same day – February 3 – a similar scene played out at Turner’s Fort, where the Saluda and Little Saluda meet. Here, thirty-six miles southeast of Ninety Six, another Cherokee war party “fired incessantly” on occupants for four hours, the *South Carolina Gazette* reported. The Indians lost seven and wounded one settler behind the still incomplete stockade. Looking for a less risky way to take scalps and captives, the warriors pressed southeast. They attacked several houses. They kidnapped children. From February 1 to February 6, twenty settlers lost their lives along the Saluda and Bush Rivers. By February 9, warriors had “destroyed” the Saluda River settlements “all below” Ninety Six. The Cherokees stayed in the area for two more weeks.


23 Edward Musgrove and Samuel Aubrey to William Henry Lyttelton, February 6, 1760, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.


227
Cherokee warriors then struck along South Carolina’s Broad River and its tributaries, driving two hundred settlers away from their homes, livestock, and possessions. Warriors killed and captured nine on the Tyger River. They claimed over a dozen lives in the Enoree settlements nearby. Afterwards, thirty poorly armed men and 125 women and children huddled fearfully in “a little post called Fort Enoree.” They “Cant subsist Long in this Station,” Militia captains Samuel Aubrey and Edward Musgrove wrote. Some fled “with all their familys into some other Province with an Intention never to Return and we must infailably follow them,” the captains said. Musgrove could recruit only seven men to scout, as the Indians were “very numerous.” Aubrey rushed to Charles Town for help.25

From his fort twelve miles above the mouth of the Broad, John Pearson captured the panic and frenzy of the backcountry farmers on February 8. “In Short,” he wrote, the Indians had “burnt & Distory’d” everything. “How long wee may continue in Safety…I know not for the Tourrant hath been so Great.” Of all the refugees, “hardly One Stops att the Congarees so that I may say wee Are now the back Inhabitants.” Pearson begged for scalp bounties. He also sought Ranger units to “pursue and Kill & Destroy” Cherokee warriors and to stop “the Tourrant” of frontier-fleeing whites and blacks.26

25 Edward Musgrove and Samuel Aubrey to William Henry Lyttelton, February 6, 1760, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3. The death toll may have been higher than recorded. George Howe, The Scotch-Irish, and Their First Settlements on the Tyger River and Other Neighboring Precincts in South Carolina…(Columbia, SC: Southern Guardian Steam-Power Press, 1861), 18.

26 John Pearson to William Henry Lyttelton, February 8, 1760, Lyttelton Papers; Ivers, Colonial Forts, 66. For more on Pearson, see Meriwether, The Expansion of South Carolina, 156.
In the area called the “Dutch Fork,” between the Broad and Saluda, Cherokees carried off “severall” people. “All the Settlers above the Congrees are hourly coming down with their family’s,” Henry Gallman wrote from Congaree Creek on February 12. He saw “the road all along crowded” with refugees. He fenced in his house and yard as a fort for his neighbors. But less than a quarter of the 215 destitute people Gallman sheltered could fight. Gallman feared “the people wil be obliged by want of Subsistance to go down and be troublesome to the Settlements.” Without assistance, those settlers clustered in the more populated hubs of shipping and trade in the backcountry might follow them, Gallman feared, leaving the frontiers “entirely Desolate.”

Less than one hundred miles from Charles Town, warriors killed or captured four men and women along Beaver Creek, a Congaree tributary northwest of St. Matthews. Inhabitants were frightened. “Instead of their obeying my Command,” militia captain Peter Crim reported, local men “Beat me and Abused me with the Rest of the officers in a Very Grose manner.” But the upstarts were right. Until the government issued Crim an official commission, he could not compel them to fight the Cherokees. While he waited for word from Charles Town, he built a small fort and took in what few settlers he could, leaving others to escape on their own or perish trying.

Rather than attack the Georgia or South Carolina frontiers in a unified front with warriors from the Middle and Lower Towns, Overhill warriors targeted other areas, beginning on February 10. The strategy reflects the way the Cherokees coordinated their

27 Henry Gallman to William Henry Lyttelton, February 12, 1760, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
28 Peter Crim to William Henry Lyttelton, February 11, 1760, Ibid.
efforts by village clusters. Fort Dobbs, located in present Statesville, offered little protection for widely dispersed settlers in the North Carolina piedmont. Thus the farmers on the Yadkin and Catawba rivers made easy targets for warriors who wished to defend their clans, avenge their dead, and capture new members for adoption. By February 19, refugees streamed into the fledgling Moravian settlements “telling of great Alarm on the Yadkin.” Two days later reports told of “the country about Salisbury much disturbed.” Bethania mill braced itself for a Cherokee attack.29

Cherokees scouted and planned an attack on Fort Dobbs for several days. On February 27, the warriors gathered along a spring a few hundred yards below the fort to make their move. Between 8 and 9 PM, the garrison’s dogs began to bark. The commotion lured Colonel Hugh Waddell, Captain Bailie, and eight others out of the fort and down the hill toward the spring to investigate. It unfolded just as the Cherokees had planned. Sixty or seventy Setticos opened fire and advanced “either to tomahawk or make us Prisoners,” Waddell said. Three of his men fell dead. The Colonel ordered his troops, twelve paces from the Setticos, to return fire. The volley stunned the Cherokees and bought time for Waddell’s detachment to retreat back up the hill. But as they did, gunfire shattered Waddell’s gun barrel. And another party of warriors attacked the fort. The garrison repulsed the Cherokee attack. But one of the wounded men was scalped. Waddell guessed that his men killed “not less than 10 or 12” Cherokees. The next morning, the soldiers “found a great deal of blood,” and they recovered one dead

Cherokee.30 Waddell’s men lacked the numbers to engage the numerous and apparently well-armed Indians. Nor could they leave the fort to protect or rescue North Carolina settlers.

Overhill warriors, among them Chotas and Tellicos, also lay siege to Fort Loudoun in what is now Tennessee. The warriors “attacked this Fort, if Firing at about 300 yards Distance for 4 days can be called an Attack,” Captain John Stuart wrote to his brother. Ostenaco directed the Cherokee siege. The captain apparently misinterpreted the Indians objectives. The siege was a ploy to lure soldiers out of the fort for an ambush. When the attempt failed, the Indians “Dessisted, neither side having received any Dammage.” But Fort Loudoun was surrounded.31

Cherokees sought scalps and prisoners on the Georgia frontier, too. From February 6 to 15, Indians killed at least ten Georgians in the settlements above Augusta. They wounded several others and took several captives. The fate of another fourteen backcountry Georgians remains unclear. At least two or three of the war gangs hailed from Estatoe in the Lower Towns.32

Recognizing its weak situation and affirming the authority of its colonial governor, the Georgia assembly, unlike its South Carolina counterpart, immediately

30 A black slave was among the Fort Dobbs casualties. Hugh Waddell to Arthur Dobbs, February 29, 1760, CRNC, 6:229-30; SCG, April 7-12, 1760, p. 2. The Gazette drew on letters from Waddell and Dobbs.
31 Another party of Overhill men headed to Fort Toulouse to negotiate with the French. The results of that mission would be unknown for several weeks. John Stuart to Allan Stuart, May 15, 1760, Grant Papers, Box 32 (DLAR reel 31, frame 00023).
funded the construction of log forts in exposed areas and the subsistence of two hundred militiamen. Ellis moved Ranger troops and Independent Company troops to protect the frontier. Volunteers fortified public buildings in Augusta. Traders and settlers retreated into private forts. Nearly all of the six hundred white and black inhabitants in northeast Georgia found shelter at James Germany’s trading post fourteen miles up the Broad River from Augusta. Cherokees took just five more scalps in Georgia in mid-February.

Cherokee strategy changed as a result. With settlers secure in forts, warriors targeted African American slaves employed in the deerskin trade. The Cherokees made no distinction between white and black. They saw them as partners complicit in exacerbating Cherokee grievances, namely the corruption of trade and the expansion of settlement. The Indians killed, tortured, or assimilated blacks and whites alike according to gender, age, and the clan mothers’ wishes. Because their labor left them in the open and exposed, black workers made easy targets. The Indians killed a horse and wounded a black Georgian as several bondsmen ferried corn across the Savannah for trader Lachlan

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34 Henry Ellis to William Henry Lyttelton, February 4, 1760, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.

McGillivray.36 On the South Carolina side of the river opposite Macartan and Campbell’s trading post, Cherokees shot a slave, cut his throat, and took his gun on February 23. Throat-cutting was a tell-tale sign of Creek warfare. The Cherokees may have been trying to frame their Indian neighbors, deflecting retaliation away from themselves. If they made it seem that Creeks had broken out against the English, maybe some Creeks would believe it and would take arms in kind. Either way, the action aimed to strengthen the Cherokee military situation.37

Most Creeks insisted on neutrality. They had no love for the Cherokees, with whom they had warred until the mid-1750s. The Creek confederacy was a loose, decentralized medley of diverse peoples and disparate languages. The French protected the western Creek villages from British-allied Chickasaw raiders without encroaching on Indian lands. Thus pro-Creeks and anti-British Creeks were rare. Georgia Governor Henry Ellis extended £1,000 of his own fortune to Indian agents for Creek gifts. He offered £5 sterling to any Indian bringing in a Cherokee scalp. He slowly won over a handful of warriors in the Lower Towns, where French influence was weaker.38

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Ellis and Indian agent Edmond Atkin begged Lower Creek warriors to attack the Cherokees. But the Indians refused to allow Atkin to manipulate them into action. And they would not strike against the Cherokees without first reaching a broad consensus among themselves. Atkin threatened to withdraw the Creek traders. He was bluffing, but the Creeks did not know it. Alleck of Cussitah and other Lower Creeks rushed to Savannah to meet Ellis. 39 Ellis found shelter for Creek women and children and sent supplies and presents to the Lower Creek villages. Most Creeks failed to buy into Ellis’s plan, but several war parties agreed to take Cherokee scalps in the settlements. 40

39 Edmond Atkin to William Henry Lyttelton, Fort Moore, February 13, 1760, to the Creeks, February 5, 1760, Henry Ellis to William Henry Lyttelton, February 4, 1760, Edmond Atkin to William Henry Lyttelton, February 13, March 5, 1760, Lyttelton Papers; Henry Ellis to the Board of Trade, February 15, 1760, CRG, 28, pt. 1:227; Henry Ellis to the Creeks, February 9, 1760, Telamon Cuyler Collection, box 38, folder Ellis 35, document 1, Hargrett Library, University of Georgia.

More might have joined if not for Atkin’s antics. The Superintendent paraded to Coweta in the Lower Creek towns. There on February 21, he “did not ask their help, but required it.” Atkin alienated Creek leaders with his threats and demands. The Cowetas resolved that if the agent persisted in his machinations, they would attack the British garrison at Fort Augusta. Atkin quieted after that.41

By the end of February, the Cherokees halted their operations. Warriors returned home with at least fifty prisoners. They had avenged their dead and taken enough

41 Lachlan Shaw to William Henry Lyttelton, March 6, 1760, Edmond Atkin to William Henry Lyttelton, February 13, 1760, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
captives to fulfill social and spiritual needs. They burned some prisoners and sent others
to the French in a sign of sympathy for French dead and in an attempt to build an
alliance. It seems that smallpox still plagued warriors and civilians alike. Then they
learned that the soldiers at Fort Prince George had killed the Cherokee hostages. ⁴²

The news was galvanizing. It meant that the respite from violence was short-lived, a week or two at most, not much longer than the waiting period required for
warriors to reenter society and then prepare again for war. Hundreds of Cherokees
returned to the South Carolina frontier to avenge the death of the hostages. This time
they were less successful. They arrived first at the smallpox-riddled garrison of Fort
Ninety Six. “We put ourselves in the best Order we were able for their Reception,”
Captain Francis wrote. Two thirds of the garrison was ill. At least fourteen had died in
the previous month, leaving just twenty-five men to fight. After sunrise the next day,
March 2, more than three hundred warriors appeared in view of Fort Ninety Six. One
hundred marched for the settlements. Another 240 or 250 “run up within 60 yards of the
stockade,” Francis recalled. Unable to lure anyone out or to find a low-risk way to
capture the fort, the Cherokees withdrew after a brief engagement. Two white men were
wounded. ⁴³

⁴² Indian and white reports indicated that in late February, Cherokees brought at least fifty prisoners to
Cullasatchee, Estatoe, Nequassee, Watauga, Settico, and Keowee, and others to Fort L’Assomption in an
attempt to induce the French to assist. SCG, April 12-19, 1760, p. 1.

⁴³ The London Magazine, Or, Gentleman’s Monthly Intelligencer, April 1760, 219-20; James Francis to
William Henry Lyttelton, March 6, 1760, DRIA, 2:504; SCG, March 1-8, 1760, p. 3. Goudey rushed to
Fort Prince George. Francis begged Lyttelton for reinforcements. John Chevillette to William Henry
But “We had the Pleasure,” Francis gloated, to kill six Cherokees and to wound “many” others. The high casualty count suggests that the Cherokees desperately wanted to capture the post in order to affirm their military prowess and avenge their unsuccessful assault the month before. And it shows that they recognized the strategic and symbolic purpose of the fort. “We have now the Pleasure Sir,” Francis boasted, “to fatten our Dogs with their Carcases, and to display their Scalps, neatly ornamented on the Tops of our Bastions.”

The display licensed the Cherokees to exact blood revenge. The Cherokees believed that the public desecration of scalps degraded them, damaging the soul. Revenge released the lingering souls of the Cherokee departed to complete their journey to the afterlife. Ironically, in their efforts to drive off the Cherokees, Francis’s black and white militiamen and traders caused the opposite to happen. The Captain noted soon after that the grim spectacle seemed to “irritate them, as to collect their whole Force, and make a stronger Effort if they possibly can to seek Revenge.”

The 350 Cherokees went to the Saluda River settlements and approached the farms and communities they had targeted in February. Finding few settlers nearby, they burned and destroyed cabins and “all the Grain and Fodder they could meet with.” The warriors likewise “called up all the hogs in to the houses, and burnt them also,” the

44 As Wayne Lee observes, very few casualties, and sometimes the first letting of blood, sufficed to end battles. Some battles “only served to uphold their collective prestige. It was, in short, a face-saving measure, if perhaps also a kind of test of strength.” Lee, “Peace Chiefs and Blood Revenge,” 727.

Gazette reported. And they killed “all the large Cattle near” the road. This was more than an attempt to lure refugees from the forts. It was more than a rare “scorched earth” tactic. Cherokee men despised hogs and saw cattle as “white mens’ deer,” Tom Hatley has pointed out. Moreover, by killing these animals, Cherokee men aggressively attacked whites’ means of making a living and their humanity. This was payback for poaching Cherokee deer. And Cherokee warriors intended it as a demoralizing blow not only to the Carolina frontier economy, but also to the provincial psyche.  

The hideous violence continued. In an action reminiscent of the second battle at Fort Ninety Six, militiamen killed and scalped two Cherokees at a fort on Bush River. The Gazette alleged that the backsettlers had gone mad in the wake of the recent Cherokee assaults. “The Bodies of the Savages,” according to one report, “were cut to Pieces and given to the Dogs, so much are the Back-Settlers exasperated at their Perfidy and Barbarity.” This was psychological warfare once more. The frontiersmen sent a clear message: you are unworthy and your dead and living are now doomed. The message and the treatment were consistent treatment with the way that most white South Carolinians saw Cherokees.

Cherokee warriors also returned to nearby Turner’s Fort, another private stockade, where their February 2 assault had failed. This time they killed two men and captured two others outside the enclosure. As the war party moved on, a group of Rangers engaged them in battle. Seventy Cherokees drove them back inside the fort. The Indians

47 A white man missing since February 9 was found murdered a week later. SCG, March 15-22, p. 2.
fired “from all Sides within 50 Yards.” Soon, Ranger Captain John Grinnan counted “at least 100” Indians present. But, the warriors did not fire or approach the garrison. Siege warfare was difficult and thus undesirable unless it fit a specific strategic objective, such as luring men out of the fort, capitalizing on a numerical advantage, seeking revenge, or saving face. Instead they went on “burning and destroying every Thing in their Way.” As always, the Cherokees strove to limit casualties to their own troops.48

More warriors struck along the Broad River, just as they had in February. But they met an energized militia no larger charged with helping refugees flee. The Cherokees lost thirteen men. In the Congarees, the warriors either killed or carried off just one man, caught “going out to hobble some Horses” near his home a mile from Gallman’s Fort. A day later in Saxe-Gotha Township, they killed and scalped two farmers. If reports are credible, warriors may have taken twenty-five scalps in the Forks of the Edisto, less than one hundred miles from Charles Town.49 But with the frontiers largely emptied, and the forts defensible against Cherokee attack, few easy targets remained. Cherokees had largely obtained their objectives in South Carolina. They had to return so that women perform the necessary welcoming festivities, torture of prisoners, and induction rites for new adoptees before the planting season began. By late March, they withdrew to their home villages.

The Cherokees soon ceased their attacks on Georgia as well. The presence of Georgia’s Indian allies served as a powerful deterrent. By mid-April, fifty New

49 SCG, March 15-22, 1760, p. 2.
Savannah Chickasaws joined the Georgia Rangers in search of Cherokee warriors. Eventually, half a dozen British-allied gangs operated on the Georgia-South Carolina border. They soon brought in several Cherokee scalps. The last thing the Cherokees wanted was a war with the fierce Chickasaws or the populous Creeks. It would expose their southeastern and western borders to enemy Indians and their eastern flanks to South Carolina provincials or British troops. With this in mind they withdrew permanently from Georgia.

North Carolina was a different matter. Overhill warriors resumed their campaign in the piedmont in March. Skirmishes took place almost daily. From February 10 to Easter Sunday in April, Cherokees killed a dozen Moravians and fifteen non-Moravians along the Yadkin. Half of North Carolina’s frontier settlers fled for the coast or for the fortified Moravian settlements of Bethabara and Bethania. Here, as in South Carolina, Cherokees sought initially to kill and capture settlers. When it became too risky to do either, they tried to kill stragglers, to intimidate, and to forestall resettlement and recovery.51

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50 SCG, March 15-22, 1760, p. 2; Henry Ellis to William Henry Lyttelton, February 27, 1760, Lyttelton Papers; Henry Ellis to William Pitt, March 5, 1760, April 16, 1760, Pitt Correspondence, 1:259, 277; Henry Ellis to the Board of Trade, April 16, 1760, CRG, 28, pt. 1:246. On Creek war parties, see Henry Ellis to William Henry Lyttelton, March 7 and 13, 1760, Lyttelton Papers; Pennsylvania Gazette, April 3, 1760, p. 2; SCG, March 8-15, 1760, p. 2, March 15-22, 1760, p. 2. Ellis prepared for a medical leave. Ellis to Lyttelton, March 14, 1760, Lyttelton Papers; Cashin, Henry Ellis, 139-40.
The initial success of the Cherokee offensive and the continued Cherokee presence on the frontier triggered a massive refugee crisis. If the attacks abated, fear, destitution, and despair remained. Nowhere was the crisis worse than in South Carolina. Settlers entrenched themselves in hastily constructed stockades “all filled with most wretched people, destitute of every thing.” At least thirty scattered backcountry fortifications accommodated more than 1,500 people. But when they fell ill of smallpox and measles and began to starve, the evacuees fled for communities closer to the coast. Some set out for Charles Town. Hundreds of Scots-Irish arrived at the Presbyterian enclaves of Williamsburg, Jacksonboro, and the Waxhaws. Hundreds more Germans and Swiss from Saxe-Gotha and the Congarees fled to Ebenezer, Savannah, and Purrysburg. Others retreated, ironically, to Virginia, from where they had come just a few years earlier.

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The Cherokees had pushed the frontier more than one hundred miles southeast. Cherokee warriors appeared at Peter Rowe’s fort near Orangeburg – 173 miles from the Lower Towns, and just 76 miles from Charles Town. Colonel George Pawley marched half of the coastal unit of George Town militia twenty miles up the Black River to
respond to a panicked letter that “the Indians is now upon us.” 55 As long as coastal elites took no action to either raise troops or protect and assist the colonists, the Cherokees would claim success.

The consequences rippled deeply through South Carolina society. The growing export trade was crippled. Without frontier settlers to hamper them, the Cherokees brought their assaults ever closer to the coast. This hampered the plantation economy and imperiled the lives of the rich. As long as Cherokee violence – or the threat of it – drew off coastal militiamen, black Carolinians might also take action to improve their lot. “We have but a handful of white men and 70,000 negroes,” Alexander Garden wrote. “None of the Northern Provinces have negroes, but are almost all Whites. We know not whether our Indians or negroes be our greatest enemies.” Underscoring their fear of black insurgency, and perhaps shaken by the foiled Philip John conspiracy several months earlier, white residents of Colleton County had a new fort built on the upper Ashepoo River specifically to defend themselves against a slave revolt. The stockade was just forty miles inland from Charles Town. 56

Cherokee successes also turned backcountry settlers against elites. The slow response of British authorities and the coastal aristocracy further convinced backcountry settlers of the neglect and indifference that they had dealt with for years. Not even the

55 Christopher Rowe to William Henry Lyttelton, February 8, 1760, Benjamin Waring to William Henry Lyttelton, February 15, 1760, George Pawley to William Henry Lyttelton, February 27, 1760, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.

56 Milligen-Johnston, A Short Description, 25; Alexander Garden to John Ellis?, June 1, 1760, in James Edward Smith, ed., A Selection of the Correspondence of Linnaeus, and Other Naturalists, from the Original Manuscripts, 2 vols.[hereafter Linnaean Correspondence] (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1821), 1:493; Ivers, Colonial Forts, 37.
rumors that Frenchmen had been among the Cherokee contingent at Long Canes spurred action from the authorities. George Milligen, the surgeon on Lyttelton’s campaign, recalled that “Many who fled into the Woods, for Safety lost themselves and miserably perished.” And “the luckiest, who escaped the Indians and gained the lower Settlements,” he continued, “were reduced, from Affluence, Plenty, and Independence, to Poverty, Beggary, and Want.” Though “the unhappy Sufferers” were “calling aloud for Assistance and Support,” they got none from colonial elites and British officials.57

On February 23, the Presbyterian Pastor Archibald Simpson of Jacksonboro reflected on the “poor desperate familys present with us, without habitation or dwelling place.” Simpson’s own congregants were “melancholy, amazed and overwhelmed with terror,” fearing that they were next in line for Cherokee hatchets and bullets.58 More than six weeks later, “poor families in droves” still fled “in the most melancholy circumstances,” Simpson wrote. They met “with but too little sympathy or support, among those who are safe in their habitations.” The Scots-Irish “dissenter” observed that all signs “of pity, and compassion to the distressed seem shut up.”59

Fort Augusta’s commander, Lieutenant White Outerbridge, wealthy enough to have bought his commission more than twenty years earlier, took a less sympathetic view. He did not blame the death toll on the government’s failure to respond. Instead he attributed it “in some measure to the Impudence of the White People, who go out in small

57 Milligen-Johnston, A Short Description, 85; Edmond Atkin to William Henry Lyttelton, February 16, 1760, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
58 Simpson Journals, fiche card 30:3:1 (February 13, 17, 23, 1760).
59 Ibid., fiche card 30:3:5 (April 15, 1760).
Parties, & unhappily differ among themselves & divide in yet smaller Partys…which
give the Savages a good Opportunity of Destroying them.” Outerbridge ascribed their
fate to disciplinary lapses, disrespect for authority, and lack of military training.60

Cherokee success also turned the provincial ruling class against the Crown. The
public confidence that Lyttelton had once enjoyed turned to disdain. Elites blamed him,
and by extension, British colonial governance, for the colony’s predicament. Lyttelton
had unwisely “brought upon us a war,” Dr. Milligen, the Independent Company’s
surgeon, recalled. The province, saddled with the costs of that campaign and plagued by
smallpox, “was unable of itself to manage [that] War,” he continued. Lyttelton checked
out of public life altogether by March 1760. He was, according to Alexander Garden,
“embarrassed and taken up in settling his private affairs.” He sailed to England to receive
instructions and to settle personal matters. Then he headed for Jamaica.61

But the governor’s departure did not quell the public critique. Lyttelton had,
Garden lamented, “laid a design to conquer them [the Cherokees] very ill, and executed it
without judgment or discernment.” The doctor continued: “Never was there a man more
outwitted; never was there a province more abused. We have lost our money, our friends,
and our character. All a sacrifice to ambition and undiscerning pride.”62 Lyttelton’s
mismanagement, Milligen and Garden noted, also triggered a financial crisis. To make
matters worse, the Province felt neglected by the metropole. “You will laugh at me for

60 White Outerbridge to William Henry Lyttelton, February 15, 1760, Lyttelton Papers, reel 3.
61 Garden to Ellis, March 21, 1760, Linnaean Correspondence, 1:479; George Milligen-Johnston, A Short
Description of the Province of South-Carolina (London: John Hinton, 1763), 85.
62 Alexander Garden to John Ellis?, April 12, 1760, Linnaean Correspondence, 1:484.
spending so much paper on politics,” Garden wrote to his friend John Ellis across the
Atlantic. But “I wish they could be seriously thought of at home. War is at our door, and
when I consider the general ignorance of our people of the country, where the seat of the
war must be, I tremble,” he said. “At present our situation is very critical.”63

But for the Cherokee Indians, the spring campaigns brought optimism and relief.
By following “Governor Lyttelton at the heels, with fire, sword, and devastation,” as
Garden put it, the Cherokees returned home with scalps and adoptees. They could grieve
and move forward. They regained their hunting grounds and drove back the South
Carolina frontier. They began to restore their world and the mood in the villages. And
they did so in time for the spring planting to begin. Soldiers remained among them at
Fort Loudoun and Fort Prince George. Cherokee grievances were still unresolved. But
the time seemed right for a peaceful settlement. Unfortunately for the Indians it did not
come. South Carolina authorities sought British troops instead of negotiations.

63 Alexander Garden to John Ellis, March 21, 1760, April 12, 1760, Linnaean Correspondence, 1:480, 485.
Chapter 9: “A Peace…Cannot Be Too Soon Made”: Cherokees Defeat Montgomery and Capture Fort Loudoun

On March 20, Ostenaco led a large party of warriors against Fort Loudoun. The Indians, reported the South Carolina Gazette, “surrounded the fort, and fired against it 4 days and nights.” They cut off the garrison from all outside communication. By April, food ran low. By May, the beef was spoiled. There was no salt. The people shuttered inside survived only on the corn, “pease pumpkins potatoes &ca,” smuggled in by Cherokee women, Stuart reported. In traditional matrilineal Cherokee society, women were the arbiters of justice. They often called for revenge and instigated war. But when revenge was accomplished and captives taken, they could call off war too. In the three years since the fort’s completion, Cherokee women had gained economic power through their ability to barter surplus crops at the outpost. “Their Women are so much used to our Commodities, Ribbands, Paint, etc,” Augustine Prevost, an officer at Fort Prince George wrote in 1764, “that they soon feel the want of it.” Prevost claimed that in 1760, Cherokee women pressured their men to end the war and to reopen the trade.¹

Cherokee women had also taken husbands and started families with the soldiers at Fort Loudoun. They had done the same with the traders who took refuge with the garrison. Those men were now part of their clans, thus under their protection. Writing in

1762, one white observer noted that Willenawa, a Toqua warrior organizing the siege of Fort Loudoun, “threatened death to those [women] who would assist their enemy.” But the abettors of the beleaguered garrison “laugh[ed] at his threats, boldly told him, they would succor their husbands every day.” They pledged that if he killed their white husbands, “their relations would make his death atone for theirs.” Willenawa wisely did not “put his threats into execution.” Women had nothing to gain by prolonging the war. Warriors had taken scalps and captives, and it now became harder to take more. Now, women wanted peace, and Cherokee warriors would not listen to them. By acting as intermediaries between the villages and the fort, women tried to convince the soldiers and traders inside to agree to favorable peace terms and to address Cherokee complaints. But since whites did not recognize the social and political equality of Cherokee women, these efforts may have been in vain.2

Like the women, though apparently independent of them, Attakullakulla too advocated peace with South Carolina. Many Cherokees despised him for that. As Captain Stuart noted, “his Life was threatened and he was obliged to Fly to the woods.” By mid-March, Attakullakulla moved his family to Fort Loudoun. His status was that of an exile. He “holds no manner of Communication with any of his own people,” wrote Stuart. Attakullakulla hoped the British would purge his rivals, the Captain reported,

“and then he hopes to reestablish his Authority by becoming a mediator.” Attakullakulla had his political future at stake.³

Only isolated skirmishes occurred near Ninety Six in April and near Orangeburg and the Forks of the Edisto in early May. Nearly all the warriors stayed home. They had their scalps. They had 150 prisoners, which gave them comfort and leverage. Smallpox lingered in the Cherokee Towns, putting war on hold. Villagers regrouped, resupplied, hunted, planted corn, and integrated their new members into Cherokee life. The struggle was almost over. Many women wanted peace. But many Cherokee men ignored the Overhills women. They wished to remove the soldiers from their midst. To do so would rid them once and for all of the cultural, physical, and economic abuse that had become so widespread since the construction of the forts. And beyond that, they wished to send a message in the process. So warriors continued to choke off Forts Loudoun and Fort Prince George. A small minority – Overhill warriors especially – wished to no longer deal with the English at all. To make peace with the British was to risk Creek and French attack from the south and southwest.⁴

At the same time, some British authorities sought to end hostilities. In April 1760, former South Carolina Governor James Glen, still hoping to restore his reputation, offered to broker a peace with the Cherokees. He hoped that “matters may be honorably

³ SCG, April 26-May 3, 1760, p. 2; John Stuart to Archibald Montgomery, May 2, 1760, Grant Papers, Box 32 (DLAR reel 31, frames 00018-19).

⁴ SCG, May 3-10, 1760, p. 2.
accomodated” and called for an assimilation campaign afterward. General Jeffery Amherst rejected the proposal.⁵

Instead, Amherst had responded to Lyttelton’s panicked letter. The General dispatched 1,312 battle-tested British troops, flush with recent victories over the French at Ticonderoga and Crown Point, to South Carolina. Amherst placed Colonel Archibald Montgomery to lead this army of Scottish Highlanders (77th Regiment) and Royal Scots (1st Regiment), in whatever manner “shall occurr best to You for the future Protection of the Colony, the Lives and properties of the Subjects, and the present punishment of those barbarian savages for their Inhuman acts of Cruelty.” Amherst ordered Montgomery to “Act against them [the Cherokees] Offensively by Destroying their Towns, and cutting up their Settlements.” He instructed him not to remain for defensive operations or garrison duty unless absolutely necessary.⁶

Montgomery was skeptical of the South Carolina assembly’s expectations. The assemblymen “are for putting all the Cherokees to Death, or making Slaves of them,” Montgomery wrote. “Those Indians are Rogues, as they all are,” he continued. “But I fancy they have sometimes been hardly dealt by and if they would tell their own story I doubt Much if they are so much to blame as has been Represented by the People of this Province.” The colonel sympathized with the Cherokees. Foreshadowing British

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⁵ James Glen to [Jeffery Amherst], April 28, 1760, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 11r-v; Jeffery Amherst to James Glen, May 31, 1760, Amherst Papers, WO 34/48, fol. 25.

⁶ William Henry Lyttelton to Jeffery Amherst, February 2, 9, 1760, Amherst Papers, WO 34/35, fols. 148, 155. For Amherst’s Orders, see Jeffery Amherst to Archibald Montgomery, February 24, March 6, and to James Grant, March 3, 1760, Amherst Papers, WO 34/48, fols. 1, 2, 4-6, 3; Jeffery Amherst to William Pitt, March 8, 1760, Pitt Correspondence, 1:260. On Montgomery (1726-1796), see McCulloch, Sons of the Mountains, 2:51-52.
sentiments in future years, Montgomery blamed the province for creating and exacerbating the crisis on the frontier. Moreover, he believed that the province was using his army, on Crown expense, to do their dirty-work. Cherokee resistance emboldened slaves and drew off militiamen from the Province. It also disturbed the colony’s economy by halting farming and ranching on the frontier. And it threatened to drive off backcountry settlers. The settlers were an indispensable cog in the provincial economy. They also buffered coastal elites against Indian attack and deterred runaway slaves and maroons. South Carolina’s Lowcountry merchants and planters – who made up the provincial assembly – bore the tax burden. Their economic well-being, if not their lives, depended on British protection.7

The tension between calls for annihilation and accommodation furthered the divide between, and among, British and Cherokees. Ultimately, as the war escalated instead of diminished, many colonial elites called for a harsh policy toward the Cherokees. Such policy put them at odds with British authorities who predicted the outcome of Cherokee retributive justice.

“Tis my Opinion,” Montgomery wrote, “if there were no troops in the country…A dozen of Indians might go to Charles Town.” Cherokees sparked fear in merchants and planters. Elites needed the British to protect them. But as Colonel Henry Bouquet had observed two years earlier, they would “spare no inconveniences” for that protection. Only after repeatedly threatening to leave the colony did Montgomery and his second in command, Lieutenant Colonel James Grant, finally get the carriages, wagons, and

7 Archibald Montgomery to Jeffery Amherst, May 24, 1760, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 12v.
supplies they needed. Montgomery’s army spent three weeks at Monck’s Corner and did not reach the Congarees until May 1.  

From May 1 to May 8, peace-seeking Indian emissaries daily arrived near Fort Prince George from the Overhills. But Ensign Alexander Miln, the fort’s commander, had other plans. On May 9, the officers at Fort Prince George lured several Cherokee leaders to dine with traders and soldiers under a canvas tent at the fort’s entrance. At the dinner table, on a sudden, the traders and soldiers overpowered the Cherokee visitors. “And they were put in Irons immediately.” Miln released the Wolf of Settico with a message for the Standing Turkey, Connecorte’s successor. Miln told the chief that he intended to hold the headmen until the captives the Cherokees had taken in recent months “were brought up to him.” Another hostage crisis was underway. Lieutenant Governor Bull condemned Miln’s actions: “A Confidence in public Faith” must be observed “even among Enemies,” he opined, “or War could never be ended, but by compleat Victories.” And Bull did not want “compleat Victories.” Miln bought time for British troops to arrive. He slyly saved the Fort; Cherokees knew what would happen to their hostages if they attacked.  

8 SCG, April 2-7, 1760, p. 1, 2, 3; Archibald Montgomery to Jeffery Amherst, April 12, 1760, May 24, 1760, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fols. 4-5, 12r, 12v; James Grant to Jeffery Amherst, April 17, 1760, Grant Papers, Box 48 (DLAR reel 47, frames 00140-41); Archibald Montgomery to Jeffery Amherst, April 22, 1760, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 7; Col. Henry Bouquet to the Earl of Loudoun, August 25, 1757, in The Papers of Col. Henry Bouquet [hereafter Bouquet Papers], Series 21631-64; James Grant’s Order Book of the Montgomery Expedition, April 3, 1760-June 1760, Grant Papers, Box 32 (DLAR reel 31, frames 00138-60).  

9 On Fort Prince George from February 28-March 28, see SCG, April 12-19, 1760, p. 1; SCG, May 3-10, 1760, p. 2, May 10-17, 1760, p. 2; William Bull to Archibald Montgomery, May 23, 1760, Grant Papers, Box 32 (DLAR reel 31, frames 00029-30).
Montgomery rendezvoused at the Congarees with a meager detachment of provincial soldiers. On May 17, Montgomery finally marched toward Fort Ninety Six. Rain and mud rendered sections of road impassable. Forty Catawbas – and Indian superintendent Edmond Atkin – joined the troops along the way. After a one-week journey, all saw the stockade at Ninety Six “and a great number of miserable people, chiefly women and children, cooped up in it,” one soldier wrote. Montgomery’s men waited for cattle and flour.

At Ninety Six, Abram, the slave messenger promised his freedom by Captain Demere four months earlier, carried letters to Montgomery telling of the siege at Fort Loudoun and the second hostage crisis at Fort Prince George. Montgomery’s provincial troops and rangers were in disarray. For some unknown reason, the Provincial commander, Colonel Richard Richardson, resigned and went home. That left a rag-tag army of backwoodsmen under Captain John Morrison and his second in command, Long Canes survivor Lieutenant Patrick Calhoun. Montgomery grumbled: “about eighty [Provincials,] the half of those good for nothing.” In fact, he decided, “We have not a single man with us that is of any consequence in the provincials.”

On May 28, 1,200 British regulars, 295 Rangers, forty provincials, and forty Catawbas, with packhorsemen and some guides, left Fort Ninety Six. As Montgomery

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10 “Camp at Ninety-Six, May 27,” in Philopatrios [Christopher Gadsden], Some observations on the two campaigns against the Cherokee Indians, in 1760 and 1761. In a second letter from Philopatrios [hereafter Philopatrios] (Charles-Town: Peter Timothy, 1762), 76.

11 SCG, May 24-31, 1760, p. 2; Archibald Montgomery to [Jeffery Amherst], May 24, 1760, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 12r; “Camp at Ninety-Six, May 27,” Philopatrios, 76; William Bull to James Grant, April 29, 1760, Grant Papers, Box 32 (DLAR reel 31, frame 00015). The enlisted men came mainly from Long Canes, the Saluda settlements, and Amelia.
put it, they marched “to burn a few Indian Towns and Punish some of the Most guilty, and make A treaty with them.” On June 1, they traveled twenty miles, crossing the Twelve-Mile River. They rested for a few hours. Then, leaving a small detachment behind to guard the cattle and carriages, Montgomery led the rest of his men through the woods “to surprise Estatoe,” twenty-five miles away. Little Keowee was on the way there.  

Sixteen miles into the march, the sound of barking dogs pierced the night. Indian scouts fired two guns. Montgomery’s light infantrymen crossed a log bridge over Crow Creek, cleared a trip wire, and charged up a steep hill. Dividing into six platoons, they “immediately rushed in upon” the Cherokees in the town. The soldiers seized a white woman and a girl. They bayoneted Cherokee men and seized women and children. Cherokee defenders killed three privates and wounded two officers.

Then the army proceeded to Estatoe. All but ten or twelve Cherokees had fled the village just minutes before. Those “who had not time to escape, were killed,” wrote one soldier. The troops plundered and burned the town, and destroyed its two hundred houses, its corn, and other necessaries. “I know for certain,” Grant said, that some Cherokees “perished in the flames.”

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13 Lieutenants Marshal (chest) and Hamilton (elbow) of the Royal were wounded. Two grenadier privates died. Packhorseman James Jones and guide Cormick Boyle were wounded. “Camp near Fort Prince George, June 4, 1760,” Philopatrios, 78, 79. SCG, June 10-14, 1760, p. 4.

14 “Camp near Fort Prince George, June 4, 1760,” in Philopatrios, 79. One soldier suggested that those who stayed behind and were burned alive were near death from smallpox. SCG, June 10-14, 1760, p. 4.
The troops pressed on, burning “every house and town in the Lower nation,” Grant reported. They proceeded to Toxaway, Qualatchee, and finally the newly-fortified village of Cullasatchee. “The surprise was compleat,” a soldier wrote, “and the Indians so terrified” that they offered but “trifling” resistance. Cherokees killed three, but for the most part the Indians watched helplessly from the mountaintops. Flames consumed ammunition, “astonishing” storehouses of corn, and Cherokee homes full of wampum, clothes, skins, and other items. Then, the army turned back. On June 2, the troops returned to Fort Prince George with their mission accomplished in thirty-six hours.15

More than fifty Cherokees lost their lives in thirty six hours. Thirty to thirty-five were British prisoners.16 The Cherokees “are in our power,” Grant wrote, and “we are ready to give them peace.” Montgomery released Tiftoe and the Old Warrior of Estatoe. The British officers sent Tiftoe with letters to the Middle and Overhill Towns, pledging to destroy them “if they did not acquiesce, and give a satisfactory answer, in ten days.” They also sent an express to Demere urging him to send Attakullakulla and John Stuart to negotiate. Edmond Atkin prepared for parleys at the fort. Optimism in the soldiers’ camp ran high.17

By the time the troops returned to Fort Prince George, Lieutenant Governor Bull had already sent Montgomery the peace terms proposed by the South Carolina Council.

15 “Camp near Fort Prince George, June 4, 1760,” in Philopatrios, 79, 80. Usher Jones, one Hickman, and Edward Gilmore were killed. SCG, June 10-14, 1760, p. 4.
16 Grant reported “60 to 80 Cherokees killed, with about 40 prisoners.” SCG, June 10-14, 1760, p. 4.
17 “It’s thought a peace may be made on our terms, as the Indians never were more suprized and roused than now”: SCG, June 10-14, 1760, p. 4; “Camp near Fort Prince George, June 4, 1760,” Philopatrios, 79, 80; SCG, June 10-June 14, 1760, p. 4; Supplement to the SCG, June 14-21, 1760, p. 1.
They called for the execution of “the principal incendiaries” of the Cherokees, among them Seroweh. They required the Cherokees to deliver at least five “of the sons of the principal headmen of the Cherokee nation not under 20 years of age” to South Carolina authorities “as Hostages” to be “sent to Charles Town.” After “one year at least,” another five would replace them “until this Government be fully satisfied of the good Disposition of the Cherokee Nation…and of their having given Proof of their Loyalty and Subjection to His Majesty.” The Cherokees were to deliver “All Prisoners” and “all the Frenchmen” before Montgomery left. Only then could real negotiations begin, the council said. Forty or fewer headmen – “chosen & regularly Deputed by the whole nation” – must travel to Charles Town “to enter into a Solemn Treaty” with the Lieutenant Governor. Then, the Governor and Council would restore the trade on the same footing as before the war started.18

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Cherokee villagers refused to treat for peace. The terms were far too harsh. The idea of hostages was as foreign and incomprehensible to them in 1760 as it was the year before. As Montgomery put it, “the unlucky affair of Hostages…not only prolongs the war, but in some measures makes a Peace impracticable.” Fort Loudoun’s fall seemed imminent. Only Tomatley, Attakullakulla’s home town, stood for peace.19 Emboldened by recent events, Lower Townsmen attacked

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18 The terms allowed five or fewer Cherokee headmen twice yearly visits with the hostages. SCCJ, 1757-1762, Unit 3, p. 125-26 (May 24, 1760); William Bull to Archibald Montgomery, May 23, 1760, Grant Papers, Box 32 (DLAR reel 31, frames 00029-30).

19 “Camp at Fort Prince-George, July 2, 1760,” Philopatrios, 81; Archibald Montgomery to William Bull, June 23, 1760, SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 3, p. 149 (June 30, 1760). Grant said: “it appears to me that those savages cannot be convinced that a white man is honest.” “Col. Grant’s second letter,” Philopatrios, 87.
Rangers, packhorsemen, and soldiers. They killed four, wounded five, and captured one. As a sign of good faith, Montgomery released four more of the Cherokee hostages, including the Raven of Estatoe, one of the warring towns. The Cherokees refused Montgomery’s overtures and prepared to repulse his invasion.20

Peace looked unlikely. As a consequence, Montgomery got ready to invade the Middle Towns. From Virginia, the retired colonel George Washington expressed doubts about the prospects of the enterprise. Montgomery should “be wary,” he said; “he has a crafty, Subtil Enemy to deal with that may give him most trouble when he least expects it.”21 Short on guides and scouts and low on provisions, he had little chance of reaching Fort Loudoun. The quartering crisis two years earlier, the meager South Carolina Provincial regiment, and the delays and frustrations he met with did not help matters. The colonel wished to fight elsewhere. “I long much to get out of this Indian War and to Return to the Army,” he wrote to Amherst.22

Virginia failed to mobilize quickly enough to reach the Overhills and lift the Cherokee siege of Fort Loudoun. Since Colonel Washington had recently retired, Fauquier called on Colonel William Byrd III. According to the journals of the Virginia

20 Supplement to the SCG, June 14-June 21, 1760, p. 1; SCG, June 28-July 5, 1760, p. 2.


22 Archibald Montgomery to William Bull, June 23, 1760, SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 3, p. 149 (June 30, 1760); Archibald Montgomery to Jeffery Amherst, June 23, 1760, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 16.
Council, Byrd asked Fauquier to excuse him from the command. He called the plan “ill-concerted.” Indeed, it took the entire month of June for the Virginia Burgesses to recruit, clothe, arm, and supply the soldiers for the expedition. No one expected much from cash-poor and politically contentious North Carolina.23

On May 14, Warriors in several Lower Creek towns killed fifteen white traders.24 Word reached Charles Town on May 30, sparking fear that the Creeks would join the Cherokees in an offensive against the southeastern British frontier. Bull prepared to lead an army against the Creeks. He placed half of the militia on marching orders. He ordered Major Lachlan Shaw to abandon Fort Moore and to reinforce Fort Augusta. The Cherokee offensive had made South Carolina’s military situation desperate.25 The Commons House raised additional provincial troops. And they discussed a motion to arm five hundred slaves, and to manumit any slave who killed and scalped two enemy Indians. Speaker Benjamin Smith cast the decisive vote to defeat the measure.26


25 Supplement to the SCG, June 14-21, 1760, p. 1; Archibald Simpson Journals and Sermons (ca. 1748-1784) [hereafter Simpson Journals], CLS, fiche card 30:3:8 (June 7, 1760); William Bull to Jeffery Amherst, June 12, 1760, Amherst Papers, WO 34/35, fol. 170r; William Bull to the Board of Trade, June 17, 1760, BPRO-SC, 28:359-60; SCG, July 5-12, 1760, p. 2; William Bull to James Grant, June 2, 1760, Grant Papers, Box 32, (DLAR reel 31, frames 00037-38).

26 JCA, 1757-1761, 747-48, 750 (August 1). Slaves served in militia units, and they had fought during wartime. In 1742, South Carolina funded at least 185 slaves for the expedition to Georgia’s relief, some as
Though no Creek-British rift actually took place, the specter of a war with Creek Indians still loomed in the minds of Lowcountry elites. The war drew off militiamen. Slaves might seize the opportunity to rise up against the further outnumbered coastal white minority. “In this Province there are not more than thirty one or thirty two thousand white, and about fifty two thousand black People,” Bull reported. Alexander Garden captured the situation of white colonists directly: “in all, about 13,000 external enemies. About 70,000 negroes in our bowels! Our strength consists of 1200 men with Col. Montgomery, gone against the Cherokees; and we muster about 8 or 9000 men in the province. This is our happy situation!” White South Carolinians had done little to cultivate allies. “We know not,” Garden said, “whether our Indians or negroes be our greatest enemies.” Legislators also feared the influence of free blacks over other African Americans. John Pendarvis, Philip Johns’ co-conspirator in 1759 had proven that. If Montgomery could swiftly secure peace, he limited the possibility that Creeks might join the Cherokees to rout the British, and he stabilized the internal situation in South Carolina.27

As Montgomery marched toward the frontier, news of a massive slave uprising in Jamaica reached Charles Town. The rebellion became known as Tackey’s War. Could

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27 Henry Ellis to Jeffery Amherst, May 30, 1760, Amherst Papers, WO 34/34, fols. 216-217; SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 3, p. 131 (June 2, 1760); Garden to Ellis, July 16, 1760, Linnaean Correspondence, 1:495-98; William Bull to the Board of Trade, May 29, 1760, BPRO-SC, 28:352-54, 356 (quote on 348). If the Creeks joined the Cherokees, “These will no doubt pour down, like a torrent, on Georgia and our Southern settlements.” But invading Mobile and New Orleans “can save Georgia and the two Carolinas from utter destruction.” Garden to Ellis?, May 26, 1760, June 1, 1760, Linnaean Correspondence, 1:488; 492-93.
something similar also happen in South Carolina? Black colonists surely hearkened to the possibility. If the Cherokees were “exterminated,” a vast, mountainous territory beckoned anyone who dared slip the bonds of slavery. “Those fertile Vallies, surrounded by Mountains,” Lieutenant Governor Bull opined, “afford a secure and plentiful Refuge to the run away Negroes from this Province and Virginia, who might be more troublesome and more difficult to be reduced than the Negroes in the Mountains of Jamaica.” The construction of remote communities by runaways or so-called “maroons” – had done much to fuel the Jamaican rebellion. And it was a recurring dream for South Carolina slaves. Bull hoped merely to “chastise” the Cherokees. They “should be received into our favour again,” he believed. He hoped that if he accomplished his goals, marronage, and African American resistance in general, would wane.28

Back in the Overhills at Fort Loudoun, Cherokee women continued to procure food and intelligence to protect their white husbands. Attakullakulla still faced frequent death threats. He occasionally ventured out to find provisions and collect intelligence. But “the Indians hide every thing from me, & say that I am the white people’s Friend.” Women swayed public opinion in Toqua and Tomatley, but the other Overhill Towns supported the ongoing siege.29


29 Supplement to the SCG, June 14-21, 1760, p. 1; Archibald Montgomery to William Bull, June 23, 1760, Paul Demere to William Bull, June 6, 1760, SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 3, p. 149-50 (June 30, 1760).
To seek revenge for the new hostage crisis at Fort Prince George, a party of Overhills came to Fort Loudoun on June 3. The garrison, tipped off by some Cherokee women, foiled the warriors’ attempt “to surprise our horse-Guard.” The warriors then hid in the bushes. When Lieutenant Maurice Anderson of the Independents and packhorseman Thomas Smith “walked not about 50 yards,” Stuart recalled, “they killed them both Dead, Scalped and mangled them.” Fifty soldiers “Sallied out” but retreated hastily back inside when they found the Cherokees “very numerous.” The only casualty was a soldier “shot thro’ the arm.”

Attakullakulla left the fort and followed the warriors back to Tomatley Town House. There, risking his life, he begged them to cease hostilities, reported Captain John Stuart. But “they Insulted” him. They taunted the peace-minded Cherokee, asking “where the Army was he had sent for.” And they “wanted to see how he would cry for his Friend,” the now-dead Maurice Anderson. The disgraced headman “boldly” shouted back, Stuart noted, that the warriors were cowards and that they had killed “a man who had allways been good and kind to them.” The headman returned to Fort Loudoun, where he informed Stuart of what happened and confessed that he longed “anxiously” for Montgomery’s arrival.

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30 John Stuart to James Grant, June 6 and 9, 1760, Grant Papers, Box 32 (DLAR reel 31, frame 00039); Paul Demere to William Bull, June 6, 1760, SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 3, p. 149-50 (June 30, 1760).
31 John Stuart to James Grant, June 6 and 9, 1760, Grant Papers, Box 32 (DLAR reel 31, frame 00039). Attakullakulla ventured out the next day. He returned with accounts of Montgomery’s June 1-2 action in the Lower Towns. And he said that he declined a French invitation to visit Fort Toulouse. Ibid., frames 00039-40.
Oconostota planned to attack the fort at night, “to burn down the Puncheons, and put us every one to death.” A soldier wrote from Fort Loudoun that Ostenaco “openly repeated, that if peace was made even 7 times,” whether “thro’ necessity or convenience…he would always disregard and break it.” Demere complained on June 6 that the Indians “about the fort” continued to keep intelligence and foodstuffs from reaching the garrison.  

Early on June 24, the army of about 1,600 departed Fort Prince George. Over the next two days, those who remained traversed dangerous mountain passes. On June 26 the army reached “The Dividings” at Stecoe Old Town (present Clayton, Georgia) at 4 a.m., crossing Rabun Gap. The trail forked. One treacherous road led northwest to the Valley Towns. Another followed the Little Tennessee River north to the Middle Towns. Echoe, the southernmost village in the Middle Settlements, lay eighteen miles north. Echoe was a beloved town, one of the original seven Cherokee towns in the southeast. As such, it was also place of refuge and of peace. That was about to change. Six miles outside the town, 630 Cherokee warriors awaited the invaders. Some hid in the dense thickets that lined the road to the east. Others positioned themselves atop the steep cliffs that overlooked from the west. Lower and Middle Townsmen comprised most of the

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32 Paul Demere to William Bull, June 6, 1760, SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 3, p. 149-50 (June 30, 1760); Supplement to the SCG, June 14-21, 1760, p. 1.
33 SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 3, p. 150 (June 30, 1760); SCG, July 12-19, 1760, p. 2; “Camp at Fort Prince-George, July 2, 1760,” Philopatrios, 81.
force, the largest Cherokee army ever recorded. A handful of Creeks and Choctaws were there as well. Seroweh, the Raven of Estatoe, and Tiftoe of Keowee led the army.\textsuperscript{34}

At 7 a.m. on June 27, Montgomery’s guides encountered four Cherokee scouts and captured one. He feigned ignorance. The army proceeded with caution. By 9 or 10 a.m. the advanced guard reached Echoe Pass, five or six miles from Echoe village at Tessentee Old Town. To the east was a hilly, brushy area “so thick that one could scarce see three yards distance in some places,” and a steep muddy river, curving to the right, with no crossing nearby. To the west was a steep mountain. The path was swampy.\textsuperscript{35}

From the cover of the hilly thicket, Cherokees opened fire, dropping Provincial commander Captain John Morrison. British troops charged forward into a shower of Cherokee bullets. Several redcoats fell dead or wounded. Heavy firing and hand-to-hand combat ensued. Then, from the steep cliff to the east, Indians fired down on the invaders with rifles. These shot farther than the redcoats’ “Brown Bess” muskets. Thus they inflicted heavy casualties. While British troops flanked the Cherokees and gained the hilly ground to the east, some of the Indians escaped. They crossed the river and helped save the Cherokees on the mountain to the west. Both armies then faced each other and fired repeatedly.\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{34} Ostenaco and Oconostota remained near Fort Loudoun, directing the siege there. Grant believed that some Overhill warriors journeyed to Echoe Pass. \textit{SCG}, July 12-19, 1760, p. 2; “\textit{Camp at Fort Prince-George, July 2, 1760},” “Col. Grant’s second letter,” \textit{Philopatrios}, 81-82, 86. Cherokee accounts confirmed that 630 warriors were present. \textit{SCG}, August 13-20, 1760, p. 2. The Mankiller of Nequasee said 617 warriors were present. \textit{SCG}, August 16-23, 1760, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{35} \textit{SCG}, July 5-12, 1760, p. 2, July 12-19, 1760, p. 2; “\textit{Camp at Fort Prince-George, July 2, 1760},” \textit{South Carolina Weekly Gazette}, July 16, 1760, p. 1.

\textsuperscript{36} \textit{SCG}, July 5-12, 1760, p. 2; “\textit{Camp at Fort Prince-George, July 2, 1760},” \textit{Philopatrios}, 83. Cherokees mistook Williams for Montgomery, see \textit{SCG}, August 13-20, 1760, p. 2.
The fighting lasted four or five hours. Seroweh urged the Cherokees to “fight strong.” In a form of psychological warfare, Indians whooped and jeered in English. The Cherokees believed that any display of fear fed the enemy’s power. By showing bravery, and by inspiring fear in the hearts of the opposing army, they believed that they diffused any power the enemy had over them. Warriors occasionally chattered in the Muskogean tongue. It is not clear whether this was a psychological stunt or if Creeks were actually present.37

Montgomery’s army pushed through the narrow pass towards Echoe village. At the same time, the Cherokee army regrouped and attacked Montgomery’s rearguard.38 As unarmed packhorsemen and slaves scattered, Cherokees attacked “from all quarters,” dividing the soldiers into smaller units. The Indians fired from cover, “in their usual way,” while the British lined up in squares and fought in platoons. The Cherokees killed dozens of horses. They shot through bags of flour. Redcoat reinforcements relieved the beleaguered rear guard, forcing the Cherokees to withdraw. British troops buried the dead under a full moon. Then they limped into Echoe unmolested as the sun rose the next morning.39

37 SCG, July 5-12, 1760, p. 2, July 12-19, 1760, p. 2. “Parties often challenged one another with belittling insults, reminding each other of previous successful acts against one another and how they intended to avenge previous injuries.” Susan Marie Abram, “Souls in the Treetops:’ Cherokee War, Masculinity, and Community, 1760-1820,” (Ph.D. diss., Auburn University, 2009), 31, 31n; Adair, History of the American Indians, 381.

38 SCG, July 12-19, 1760, p. 2.

39 “Camp at Fort Prince-George, July 2, 1760,” Philopatrios, 84; SCG, July 5-12, 1760, p. 2, July 12-19, 1760, p. 2.
At least nineteen troops and some packhorsemen and Rangers lay dead. Sixty-six were wounded, some gravely. Those who “got to the Places of greatest Safety as fast as Possible” saved themselves.\(^{40}\) Fifty Cherokees lost their lives. But only a few were wounded.\(^{41}\)

Afraid that the insides of Cherokee huts contained smallpox, the army pulled boards off of Indian houses and made tents. The Indians fired several rounds on the camp but did no damage. The following day, British troops nursed the wounded. Some Cherokees returned to the battlefield and interred their dead in three mass graves. And they exhumed and mutilated the British dead. At 5 P.M., Cherokee warriors attacked the camp in Echoe. They wounded two or three soldiers, suffering no casualties themselves, and withdrew when a large detachment of Highlanders engaged them.\(^{42}\)

With the Cherokees continuing their attacks, the officers debated their options. All agreed that it would be “inhumane to Abandon” the wounded. Yet, with so many horses killed and so much flour destroyed, the British officers deemed it “impossible to Proceed.” The Cherokee assault on the rear guard proved decisive. To destroy additional

\(^{40}\)Return of the Killed and Wounded...,” Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 19; Archibald Montgomery to Jeffery Amherst, July 2, 1760, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 16r; McCulloch, Sons of the Mountains, 2:39, 62-63, 67, 73; “Camp at Fort Prince-George, July 2, 1760,” Philopatrios, 84; SCG, July 5-12, 1760, p. 2. For reports of the dead and wounded, see Mante, History of the Late War, 293; William Bull to the Board of Trade, July 20, 1760, BPRO-SC, 28:373; “Col. Grant’s second letter,” Philopatrios, 86.

\(^{41}\)John Stuart to James Grant, October 17, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frame 00334). See also: Archibald Montgomery to Jeffery Amherst, July 2, 1760, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 17v; “Camp at Fort Prince-George, July 2, 1760,” “Col. Grant’s second letter [July 3],” Philopatrios, 85, 87; SCG, July 5-12, 1760, p. 2.

\(^{42}\)SCG, July 5-12, 1760, p. 2; Echoe was deserted, “save for some poultry, pigs, and forty or fifty bushels of corn.” SCG, July 12-19, 1760, p. 2; James Grant’s Order Book of the Montgomery Expedition, April 3, 1760-June 1760, Grant Papers, Box 32 (DLAR reel 31, frame 00160); “Camp at Fort Prince-George, July 2, 1760,” Philopatrios, 84; Archibald Montgomery to Jeffery Amherst, July 2, 1760, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 18r.
villages, “we must have lost Men in getting to it.” As one Provincial put it, “we had not force enough to attempt the relief of fort Loudoun.” The soldiers had only traveled sixty miles from Fort Prince George. They had another ninety miles to go. Montgomery decided to leave for New York as soon as possible. “Tis impossible for this detachment to extirpate” the Cherokees, he wrote to General Amherst, “and they will not treat with us for fear of being made Prisoners.” Grant echoed Montgomery’s sentiments in a letter to William Bull. And he rather dubiously boasted that “we have succeeded in every thing we have attempted.”

Montgomery scuttled flour and corn into the river to free up horses to carry the wounded. Then, leaving the fires in the village burning, he ordered a silent midnight retreat. The dispirited army trudged over the battlefield, past the scalped, stripped, and mutilated body of Captain Manly Williams. Other carcasses lay strewn about the scene. The men marched twenty-five miles without stopping. At War-Woman’s Creek, they camped for the night.

The next morning, near Oconee Mountain, a party of warriors went into battle when several soldiers’ rain-soaked weapons discharged accidentally. Montgomery’s cousin, Lieutenant Hugh Montgomery, and fifty Highlanders fired on sixty Cherokees atop a high hill. More soldiers emptied a volley of shots into a group of Indians perched


44 SCG, July 12-19, 1760, p. 2.
on another hill and about to fire on the rear guard as it forded a river. British estimates
placed the Cherokee dead at anywhere from “four or five” to “at least A Dozen.” One
Highlander was wounded. Given these casualties, and a paucity of ammunition, the
Cherokees withdrew, and the army reached Fort Prince George uncontested.45

The army reached Fort Prince George on July 1. As fear mounted, dissension
made life tense in the garrison. Rangers and Provincial soldiers deserted in droves. The
demoralized Independents threatened to return to Charles Town. Montgomery left two
sergeants and two dozen British regulars “to strengthen the garrison and to keep the
others in order.” With Atkin – who would not be negotiating a peace treaty after all –
and with all the sick – the retreat resumed. The day after Montgomery’s departure, four
Cherokees killed and scalped “one Jefferson,” a Provincial soldier stationed at Fort
Prince George. It was an ominous sign to the British.46

On July 10, Abram reached Charles Town with accounts of the battle at Echote
and of Montgomery’s retreat. Cherokee villagers had scored an amazing coup.
Montgomery’s hasty departure “rather inflamed, than extinguished” tensions in the
Southeast. Cherokees stood poised to capture Fort Loudoun and Fort Prince George.47
They had so frightened the Members of the Council that some envisioned “the

45 SCG, July 5-12, 1760, p. 2; SCG, July 12-19, 1760, p. 2; Mante, A History of the Late War, 293; “Camp
at Fort Prince-George, July 2, [1760],” Philopatrios, 87-88; Archibald Montgomery to Jeffery Amherst,
July 2, 1760, Amherst Papers, WO 34/40, fol. 18r.
46 SCG, July 19-26, 1760, p. 2; Montgomery to Amherst, July 2, 1760, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 18;
“Camp near Fort Prince George, June 4, 1760,” “Col. Grant’s second letter,” Philopatrios, 80, 87. After
Montgomery departed, Cherokees killed a Provincial soldier, one Jefferson. Chickasaws and Rangers
scouted, skirmishing occasionally with Cherokees. Much corn still stood in the Lower Towns. SCG, July
47 SCG, July 5-12, 1760, p. 2; William Bull to the Board of Trade, July 20, 1760, BPRO-SC, 28:374-75.
destruction of the British Southern Colonies.” And they turned British elites against each other. Montgomery, the councilmen said, could not abandon the Cherokee country without first establishing peace. Burdened by rising costs (£50,000 Sterling in just nine months) and the impracticable chore of raising troops, the assembly agreed. Bull sent Abram back to the army with dispatches. Bull begged the Montgomery to invoke the discretionary powers in his instructions and to stay.48

Abram returned with the commander’s reply on July 23. Montgomery was determined to leave South Carolina. He left four companies of the 1st Regiment, Royal Scots, at the Congarees for defensive operations. Montgomery fired a parting shot at the council and assembly: “those Gentlemen might have…Exerted themselves a little more in forwarding the Publick Service.” And the legislators should have seen the incompetent Rangers and Provincials in action, he continued. They would have seen the devastation he inflicted upon the Cherokees. Moreover, they would have realized – as Montgomery saw it – that the French posed little threat. They had “enough to do at home,” he said, and they were “not in a Situation to the Southward to think of making Conquests.”

Amherst told Montgomery to “not think of Coming away ‘till You have most Effectually punished these Scoundrell Indians,” or else it would “begin again.” Then, and only then, “a Peace…cannot be too soon made,” the General believed. Had the colonel brought them “so low,” according to Amherst’s wishes, to guarantee that “they

48 SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 4, p. 5 (July 11, 1760); JCA, 1757-1761, 690-92 (July 12); William Bull to Archibald Montgomery, July 12, 1760, BPRO-SC, 28:381-87.
cannot hurt the Province again soon”? The Assembly doubted it. Pastor Archibald Simpson agreed. “We are to be exposed to the barbarous Indians enraged with loss of their people,” he wrote in an unusually long journal entry. But “this is much owing to our own Inability,” the “troops not having been properly supported by the country.” Now, “the poor men in Fort Loudoun…will in all probability fall a prey to that horrid enemy.” Montgomery later explained that “Had I continued there nothing more could have been done.” Besides, the Rangers, unpaid for fourteen months, had “all dispersed.” The “few Provincials,” unpaid and dressed in rags, “seemed determined Not to serve.” The Province “would never have raised a man or taken any Step for their own Security.” Montgomery resented the colonials’ sense of entitlement. His carriages were broken. His horses were exhausted. The wounded suffered. And the “Sickly Season was fast come on.” Transports waited in Charles Town harbor to take his men northward. There the British readied to capture all of Canada.

On August 6, South Carolina assemblymen again pressed Montgomery to stay. “The Cherokees and their Abettors are not yet effectually punished,” they argued. Facing no threat of a British offensive, or defensive, the Cherokees had less reason to think of

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49 Archibald Montgomery to William Bull, July 19, 1760, Grant Papers, Box 32 (DLAR reel 31, frame 00210); Simpson Journals, fiche card 30:3:10 (July 13, 1760); Jeffery Amherst to Archibald Montgomery, June 18, 1760, June 29, 1760, Amherst Papers, WO 34/48, fols. 26r-26v, 28r-28v. Bull later said privately that the Colonel had followed Amherst’s instructions. William Bull to Archibald Montgomery, July 30, 1760, Grant Papers, Box 32 (DLAR reel 31, frames 00062-63). Bull stationed Rangers on the frontier. He placed fifty men and four swivel guns at Ninety Six. He distributed ammunition and clothing to needy frontier settlers. William Bull to the Board of Trade, August 15, 1760, BPRO-SC, 28:390-91.

50 Archibald Montgomery to William Bull, July 19, 1760, Grant Papers, Box 32 (DLAR reel 31, frames 00056-60); SCG, July 19-26, 1760, p. 3; William Bull to the Board of Trade, July 20, 1760, BPRO-SC, 28:375-78; SCG, August 2-9, 1760, p. 3; Archibald Montgomery to Jeffery Amherst, September 11, 1760, Grant Papers, Box 48 (DLAR reel 47, frames 00144-45). Three men died on the trip from Keowee to the Congarees; SCG, July 26-August 2, 1760, p. 2, July 19-26, 1760, p. 3.
peace than before the campaign. On August 10 and 11, Montgomery’s army reached Charles Town and immediately boarded the transports. They left one Cherokee man and thirty-two women and children in the local barracks.51

Montgomery’s departure pushed the Cherokees one step closer to their goal of capturing Fort Loudoun. The Cherokee siege left 160 men, twenty women, and twenty children in an “excessively weekened” state. People ate horse flesh, scraps of pork and beans smuggled in by Indian women. And they plucked a few plums from trees errantly planted in a ditch. A white man named Samuel Terron, a former trader now living among the Cherokees, explained that Montgomery’s campaign had emboldened the Cherokees. “The troops were not to fight after their method,” the Cherokees observed. Instead the soldiers stood “in ranks” while warriors fired on them “from behind bush and trees.” The Indians admired the troops’ bravery. They held rank “with uncommon steadiness and resolution.” But “instead of being intimidated,” Terron said, the Cherokees “were encouraged, and shot down the men (as they express it) like turkies.” The Indians viewed Montgomery’s retreat “as the effect of fear, and not a compliance with orders.” The British withdrawal imbued them with “fresh spirits in their attempt upon fort Loudoun.”

51 JCA, 1757-1761, 753 (August 6); SCG Extraordinary, August 9-13, 1760, p. 1. Montgomery never made it to fight in the conquest of Canada. His six companies were rerouted to Halifax. Citing rheumatism, he secured an extended leave to return to Britain. Politician Isaac Barre wrote that “Montgomery is pushing, & (in Companys whose credulity is adapted to such tales,) wants to pass for the Conqueror of the Cherokees.” He won a seat in Parliament later that year. Archibald Montgomery to Jeffery Amherst, September 11, 1760, Grant Papers, Box 48 (DLAR reel 47, frames 00144-45); Archibald Montgomery to Jeffery Amherst, September 21, 29, 1760, James Napier to T. Barr, September 29, 1760, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fols. 20-21, 26, 27; Isaac Barre to Jeffery Amherst, January 10, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/86, fol. 23; McCulloch, Sons of the Mountains, 2:51-52.
The Indians “are afraid of no other troops than Virginians, who, they say, know how to shoot and fight them in their own way.” But Virginians were nowhere to be seen.52

Cut off from incoming correspondence since June 4, Demere and his men renounced “every prospect or hope of seasonable deliverance from any quarter.” On June 27, the Captain represented the “situation of that garrison as miserable beyond description.” One soldier felt “abandoned and forsaken by God and man.” By July 10, the bread was gone. Only horse flesh remained. Soon, an express confirmed Montgomery’s defeat. The officers more than once proposed peace, but Oconostota refused. Parties of soldiers deserted on August 1, 4, and 5 and headed for Virginia.53

Could Cherokees capture the fort before Colonel William Byrd and the Virginians might reach it? Byrd collected soldiers, weapons, and supplies very slowly. He built forts every twenty-five miles along his march. He delayed. On July 5, he reached Augusta County Court House. He was still almost four hundred miles from Chota. Two weeks later he camped on the Roanoke River. He found “every article, except provisions, vastly deficient.” “The mob I command,” he said, was inadequately supplied. Virginia assemblymen differed. They charged him with unwarranted caution.54


53 SCG, August 13-20, 1760, p. 2; “Destruction of Fort Loudoun by the Cherokees, 1760,” Draper MSS. 2DD12-13. The Indians told the soldiers “that they had beat the army back, taken two drums, one horse load of ammunition, flour, &c. and had killed and scalp’d so many their hands were sore; and told other such tales “Extract of a letter from fort Prince-George, Keeohwee, July 16, 1760,” SCG Extraordinary, August 9-August 13, 1760, p. 1; SCG, August 16-23, 1760, p. 2.

54 William Byrd III to Francis Fauquier, [July 4, 1760], to Robert Monckton, July 18, 1760, Byrd Correspondence, 2:694, 695n, 697-98. Fauquier defended Byrd from charges that he delayed
Byrd had little desire to make war on the Cherokees. As a long-tenured member of the Virginia Council, his real goal was to draw off the Cherokee trade from South Carolina. Personal experience may also have contributed to his reluctance. Seroweh had saved the Virginian’s life during the 1756 treaty negotiations. Byrd’s 1758 service in Forbes’ campaign left him with enduring respect for Cherokees. But beyond this, Byrd wished to return to his private affairs. His estranged wife had just committed suicide. His finances were a mess. His over-indulgent mother fussed and fretted and urged him to resign his commission. The acerbic Indian trader James Adair, who led Chickasaw raids on the Lower Towns in July, put it best: “The Virginia troops kept far off in flourishing parade, without coming to the assistance or making a diversion.” North Carolina appropriated funds for an expedition in June. Governor Dobbs, sensing that it was too late, initially vetoed the bill. In June, he signed “An act for granting an aid to his Majesty.” The legislation incentivized the capture of enemy Indians. Any Indian captive taken was to become the slave of his captor. The law also offered a £10 scalp bounty to private citizens, and £5 to provincial soldiers.55

unnecessarily. Francis Fauquier, Speech to the General Assembly, Ibid., 2:608; Francis Fauquier to the Board of Trade, September 17, 1760, Fauquier Papers, 1:411.

On August 6, with desperation and starvation at their apex, the officers at Fort Loudoun unanimously agreed to surrender. Captain John Stuart and Lieutenant James Adamson of the Provincials negotiated terms in Chota. The next day, Demere, Cunne Shote, and Oconostota signed the “Articles of Capitulation.” Demere expected the war to end. He expected the British to release all their Cherokee prisoners. And he expected to lead his people safely to Fort Prince George. On August 9, the garrison left Fort Loudoun. They brought their arms, drums, personal effects, and the ammunition they needed for hunting. The officers surrendered fourteen one-pounder guns, one thousand pounds of powder, two thousand pounds of ball, and eighty guns to the Cherokees. Indian escorts guided them on the march.

Oconostota and the Overhill warriors proposed to use the artillery, powder, ball, and firearms to capture Fort Prince George. If they took the fort, perhaps the British would come to terms. They would address Cherokee concerns, at least until French or Creek aid arrived.

The parolees from Fort Loudoun camped sixteen miles from the fort in a meadow, where Cane Creek flows into the Tellico River. The Indian escorts scattered that night. They were just two miles from Great Tellico. Here, in 1757, Demere and some Tellicos

56 SCG, August 16-23, 1760, p. 2; Kelly, “Fort Loudoun,” 89. “Our commanding officer is and always has been most heartily hated by the Indians. Nor is he greatly Esteemed by any white man here.” John Stuart to Allan Stuart, Fort Loudoun, May 15, 1760, Grant Papers, Box 32 (DLAR reel 31, frame 00023). “Council of War,” Paul Demere to William Bull, Fort Loudoun, August 8, 1760, in The London Magazine, Or, Gentleman’s Monthly Intelligencer, November 1760, 605.

57 For “ARTICLES OF CAPITULATION... August 7th, 1760,” see SCG, August 16-23, 1760, p. 2, 3; William Bull to the Board of Trade, August 31, 1760, BPRO-SC, 28:394.

58 SCG, August 16-23, 1760, p. 3, August 30-September 6, 1760, p. 3, September 6-13, 1760, p. 2.
had engaged in a verbal altercation. The warriors had killed a white woman straggling behind the column. But what was about to happen paled in comparison to the 1757 incident.59

What really happened the morning of August 10, 1760 remains shrouded in myth, contradictory accounts, and conjecture.

Oconostota and seven hundred young warriors escorted the troops and their families. Some of the firsthand accounts suggest that Oconostota dropped his match-coat like he did when he waved the bridle to order the killing of Richard Coytmore in February as an order for Cherokees to attack the encamped Fort Loudoun parolees.60 Overzealous young warriors may have sought scalps and prisoners without Oconostota’s consent. Thomas Hawkins, a white man living among the Cherokees, claimed that Setticos clashed with Chotas “on account of an unequal distribution of plunder” from Fort Loudoun. And he said that Demere had violated the articles by taking six kegs of gunpowder with him. A soldier from the fort later added that Demere had ordered his soldiers to bury “12 bags of the garrison’s powder” before evacuating the fort. Thus, the theory implies, warriors lashed out against the garrison as it marched off for violating the terms of capitulation. Perhaps the warriors wanted to avenge the deaths of the hostages six months earlier.61 This is the view that many at Fort Loudoun State Park teach today.

59 “Destruction of Fort Loudoun by the Cherokees, 1760,” Draper MSS, 2DD18; James C. Kelly, “Fort Loudoun,” 89.
60 Some sources suggest that Oconostota dropped his match coat as a signal to the warriors to begin their attack. See SCG, September 13-20, 1760, p. 3; SCG, September 20-27, 1760, p. 1.
61 SCG, September 13-20, 1760, p. 3; SCCJ, 1757-1762, Unit 4, p. 43 (October 22, 1760); William Bull to Jeffery Amherst, October 19 and 24, 1760, Amherst Papers, WO 34/35, fols. 174r, 174v; “Fort Prince 274
More likely, warriors sought revenge for the deaths of family in the June 27, 1760 battle against Montgomery. Though this involved many Lower and some Middle Towns, Cherokees had clan and family connections that spanned the village clusters. We will never know for sure what triggered the events that happened next.

Apparently, after beating the reveille, Demere issued orders to his officers. The *South Carolina Gazette* reported: “A soldier from the advanced guard discovered many Indians and gave the alarm.” Captain Stuart “called to the men to stand to their arms.” Two Cherokees fired from the woods. Lieutenant Adamson returned the fire, wounding a Cherokee. Private Samuel Simmons offered further details. “Upon this the war-whoop was immediately set up, and vollies of small arms with showers of arrows poured in upon them from every side,” he recalled. Seven hundred Indians “surrounded the whole garrison, and put them into the greatest confusion.” Simmons said the Fort Loudoun people tried to surrender, but “the Indians rushed on them with such impetuosity.” Middle Townsmen later reported at Fort Prince George that the Setticos wished only to capture the people. The warriors intended to wipe out the garrison’s leadership for symbolic, cultural, and practical purposes, and then to adopt the rest. “Had they not attempted to run away, none would have been hurt.”

George, Keeohwee, Sept. 12, 1760; *SCG*, September 20-27, 1760, p. 1, October 11-18, 1760, p. 2; Kelly, “Fort Loudoun,” 89.

62 *SCG*, September 27-October 4, 1760, p. 2. For Simmons’ account, see *SCG*, October 11-18, 1760, p. 2. Bull had just promoted Adamson to Captain. William Bull to James Grant, June 11, 1760, Grant Papers, Box 32 (DLAR reel 31, frame 00043).

Historians seem to miss that it was the Round O’s brother, Onatoy of Toqua, who whisked Stuart across the creek to safety during the fighting. The married Stuart not only had an Indian wife. He also had a close bond with many Cherokees. Perhaps Onatoy intended to have the women adopt Stuart to take the place of the late Round O, the most prominent Out Town headman and emissary of peace. A warrior darted in and lifted Demere’s scalp. Others forced him to dance. They stuffed dirt down his throat, and sneered, “Dog, since you are so hungry for land, eat your fill.” Then they chopped off his
limbs one by one. What Anglo-American observers from the coast viewed as a senseless act of violence had a rationale behind it. It gave Cherokees much pleasure to eliminate an inveterate enemy, particularly an influential elder warrior. Demere was certainly both. When taken captive, Indians generally sang and danced as they recalled their martial deeds. By making Demere do this, the Indians completed a familiar ritual. And, singling out a powerful leader like this sent a message that intended to deter future villains like Demere. It also could have minimized the need for further torture and violence because of its representative and symbolic example. According to Stuart, Ostenaco next “ran to every part of the Camp, and ordered the Indians to stop their hands for that they had got the man they wanted, meaning Capt. Demere.”

When the fighting ended, several white women and twenty five soldiers – most of them officers – lay dead. A few more men from a party led by Ensign John Bogges were never heard of again. The number of Cherokee dead remains unknown. The Indians stripped the living and carried them to the various Overhills towns, waving the scalps in the survivors’ faces to reassert that the deaths of Cherokee warriors had been avenged. It

64 SCG, September 27-October 4, 1760, p. 2; Jean-Bernard Bossu to the Marquis de l’Estrade, January 10, 1760 [actually 1761], Jean-Bernard Bossu, Jean-Bernard Bossu’s Travels in the Interior of North America, 1751-1762, ed. and trans. by Seymour Feiler (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962), 183-84; SCCJ, 1757-1762, Unit 4, p. 43 (October 22, 1760); Stuart gave a similar account of Demere’s demise. Byrd III to James Abercromby, September 16, 1760, Byrd Correspondence, 2:705.


66 Ensign John Bogges and ten others took to the river. Seven drowned, three others got to Hiwassee. “Two of them burst with eating, but the officer had not been heard of.” SCG, September 13-20, 1760, p. 3.

appears that Fort Loudoun became a temporary settlement, possibly hosting warriors, refugee Cherokees, or both. Indian men moved the Fort’s weapons – cannon, coehorn mortars, guns, powder, and ball from Fort Loudoun to Chota.68

Onatoy of Toqua, brother of the late Round O of Stecoe, brought Stuart back to Indian-occupied Fort Loudoun. Stuart related the news to Samuel Terron and asked him to intercede with Attakullakulla, then hiding in the woods. Oconostota threatened to torture Stuart and to burn the soldiers if he did not help them use the “great guns.” But Stuart refused.69

On August 27, Attakullakulla ransomed Stuart and a few others. He secretly carried them towards Byrd’s army on September 3. The group of soldiers who had deserted Fort Loudoun just before its capitulation reached Byrd ahead of the Cherokee and his charge. Unaware that the fort had fallen and of the incident at Cane Creek, Byrd, then at Reed Creek, sent Major Andrew Lewis and three hundred men to look for other deserters. A few days later, they found Attakullakulla and his party. On September 14, Stuart and the others told Byrd about the Fort’s surrender and the attack at Cane Creek. They also reported that the Cherokees aimed to take Fort Prince George next.70

68 SCG, October 11-18, 1760, p. 2. Cherokees gradually ransomed the prisoners to show peaceful intentions or out of necessity. Some prisoners escaped. Still others died in captivity. Some assimilated into Cherokee society. Many of the men already had Cherokee wives and children.

69 SCCJ, 1757-1762, Unit 4, p. 43 (October 22, 1760); Hewatt, An Historical Account, 2:240.

70 SCG, September 20-27, 1760, p. 1; September 27-October 4, 1760, p. 2; October 4-11, 1760, p. 3; Andrew Lewis to William Byrd III, [September 9, 1760], BPRO-SC, 28:405-6; William Byrd III to Francis Fauquier, September 10, 1760, to James Abercomby, September 16, 1760, Byrd Correspondence, 2:702-3, 702n, 703-5; Patricia Givens Johnson, General Andrew Lewis of Roanoke and Greenbrier (Christiansburg, VA: Johnson, 1980); William Bull to Jeffery Amherst, October 19 and 24, 1760, Amherst Papers, WO 34/35, fol. 174v.
The incident at Cane Creek convinced Byrd to seek peace. Meeting with Attakullakulla on September 16 and 17, the Virginian proposed a flexible and open-ended treaty. Byrd promised the Indians “His Majesty’s Pardon,” the return of all Cherokee prisoners in British custody, and the resumption of the deerskin trade. The Cherokees were to return Fort Loudoun, to be garrisoned only by General Amherst’s orders. They were to deliver all white prisoners. And they were to recognize Attakullakulla as “Emperor.” Presumably, Virginia would supplant South Carolina in influence. Byrd left other terms unenforceable or open ended.71

Attakullakulla fooled Byrd – and possibly himself – into believing he had “300 men under his command.” He promised to “put the French to death,” and he offered to send warriors against the Creeks. And he made one more promise he could not fulfill. He would bring in all the headmen, all the English prisoners, and all the Cherokees accused of murder. He hoped to purge his rivals. Promising to return in three weeks, Attakullakulla then headed home.72

He carried with him a letter from Byrd to “the Standing Turkey, Oconostota, and the other Cherokee Headmen.” The French could offer them nothing, Byrd said. He knew of their economic dependence on the British. If he did not find the white prisoners safe, he would “not leave one Indian alive, one town standing, or one grain of corn, in all your country.” They must “come in directly” to discuss peace. “You shall meet with

71 “Articles of Peace proposed to the Cherokees Septr. 17th 1760,” Amherst Papers, WO 34/37, fols. 54-55; William Byrd III to Francis Fauquier, [September 19, 1760], Fauquier Papers, 1:412, 414-15.
72 Byrd to Abercromby, September 16, 1760, Byrd Correspondence, 2:704-5.
good usage, and not a hair of your heads shall be hurt, for I do not want to destroy your people.”

It was a tough sell. Most Cherokees treated Attakullakulla with contempt. Seroweh and others still believed that the French, or other Indian tribes, would rally to aid the disaffected Cherokees. Attakullakulla himself admitted to Byrd that the English must “beat them into” a peace, “for [the Cherokees] are much flush’d with success,” the Colonel reported. Cherokees had Fort Loudoun’s artillery, gunpowder, and ball. They had Fort Prince George in their sights. They stood on the cusp of driving British soldiers from their country once and for all. They needed, if not Creek or French assistance, time to regroup and resupply.

Byrd’s threats were a ruse. He had no plans to attack the Cherokees. The Cherokees delayed the attack on Fort Prince George as they pondered a prisoner exchange and waited for French assistance from Fort L’Assomption. Perhaps the threat would bring them to terms quickly and would save the fort, Byrd thought. Byrd’s proposed treaty also had little in common with the terms South Carolina’s council unveiled before Montgomery’s retreat. And it had little in common with Seroweh’s plan, conceived in August. To save the Lower Towns from extermination and from further humiliation, Seroweh called for British troops to withdraw permanently from Cherokee

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73 William Byrd III to the Standing Turkey, Oconostota, and the other Cherokee Headmen, [September 16, 1760], SCG, October 11-18, 1760, p. 3.

74 Byrd to Abercromby, September 16, 1760, Byrd Correspondence, 2:705; William Bull to the Board of Trade, September 9, 1760, BPRO-SC, 28:402; SCG, September 6-13, 1760, p. 2.

75 Rather, Colonel Byrd recommended another two thousand men to join his Regiment by late March 1761 for the task. Byrd III to Abercromby, September 16, 1760, Byrd Correspondence, 2:704-5.
territory. He and the Mankiller urged residents of Fort Prince George to evacuate before Cherokees and a massive number of Indian allies took the post by force. Seroweh wished for Bull to release one of the accused murderers held in Charles Town. Seroweh had Fauquier’s support. The governor wished to “make them our Friends” by treating them with “Justice and Humanity.”

Many Cherokees proved receptive.

When Lieutenant Governor Bull of South Carolina learned of the Virginian’s plan, he worried about making threats without the ability to follow through on them. By the time Byrd determined to attack, it would be too late in the year. And on top of that, his soldiers’ enlistments would expire.

White observers viewed the independent proposals for peace with skepticism. But peace-minded Cherokees were probably sincere. Byrd offered generous terms that upheld Cherokee dignity while showing respect for Cherokee military culture. The effective Cherokee army had dwindled by more than a third since 1758, to just 1,400 men. Many Cherokees were tired of war, nakedness, and starvation. The prospect of recruiting allies faded. Smallpox now incapacitated the Upper Creeks. In the Lower Creeks, the Mortar of Oakchoys raised just fourteen warriors to assist in the reduction of Fort Prince George. The corn of the Lower Towns had been depleted. And warriors in the Middle and Lower Towns had expended ammunition in June against Montgomery’s army. On September 22, the Wolf of Keowee, the Corn Tassel of Toqua, and two half-

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76 SCG, August 16-23, 1760, p. 2, September 6-13, 1760, p. 2, SCG, September 20-27, 1760, p. 1; Francis Fauquier to Jeffery Amherst, October 5, 1760, Fauquier Papers, 1:418.

77 William Bull to the Board of Trade, October 21, 1760, BPRO-SC, 28:414-16: Bull feared the “pernicious Effects” of “threatening such Vengeance and failing in the Execution of it” (416).
Cherokee traders and messengers visited Charles Town. They agreed to a prisoner exchange as a preliminary to peace negotiations. Bull and the Council agreed to send up the Cherokee prisoners to the Congarees to await an exchange at Ninety Six. Still, colonial officials made plans to re-supply Fort Prince George and continued their efforts to raise a new provincial regiment.  

Voices in the Overhills called for peace as well. Oconostota, Ostenaco, and several other warriors journeyed from Chota to Nequassee. They brought white prisoners with them – either seven or ten, according to different sources. Oconostota sent a runner through the Cherokee Towns calling for a ban on torture. Villages recalled warriors gone out against the settlements. On September 26 in Nequassee, they flew the British flag “day & night.” In the evening, two thousand Cherokees, 1,400 men and six hundred women, gathered for speeches by Oconostota and Ostenaco. The crowd affirmed the warriors’ message of peace. The two warriors sent an account of their proceedings to Fort Prince George on the twenty-ninth. On October 1, they repeated the same speeches at Cullasatchee. The crowd there concurred. And they agreed to allow English people to move freely among the Lower Towns.

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78 SCG, September 20-27, 1760, p. 2, September 27-October 4, 1760, p. 2, October 11-18, 1760, p. 1, 2, October 18-25, 1760, p. 2; JCA, 1757-1761, 770-71 (October 10), 774-75 (October 13). Fort Prince George’s commander urged the British to invade the Lower Towns. Despite the peace-minded headmen, “the young men…are all mad and giddy with their late successes.” SCG, September 20-27, 1760, p. 1.

79 SCCJ, 1757-1762, Unit 4, p. 43 (October 22, 1760). On September 29, Oconostota and Ostenaco wrote from Nequassee. “All my brother-towns as I came along are well agreed, and inclinable for a peace.” They offered to negotiate at Fort Prince George. “The Great Warrior to the Commanding Officer of Fort Prince George,” “From Judd’s Friend, to the commanding officer at Fort Prince George,” September 29, 1760, and “The Great Warrior to Lieut. Miln, &c.,” [ca. September 20, 1760], SCG, October 11-18, 1760, p. 3.

80 Samuel Terron escorted the warriors. They were hungry, naked, and “sincerely inclinable for a Peace.” SCCJ, 1757-1762, Unit 4, p. 44 (October 22, 1760); SCG, October 18-25, 1760, p. 2. Tuskeegi-Tahee of 282
From September 16 to October 4, a stream of Cherokee men and women came to Fort Prince George. Some brought beef, venison, and corn. The presence of so many women indicated peaceful intentions and a desire to restore the trade. Old Caesar of Chatuga delivered two provincial soldiers from the Fort Loudoun garrison: James Holmes and James Hosfield. He said Oconostota would bring all the white prisoners. The Mankiller of Nequassee and his wife frequented the fort. Visitors from Chota smoked the peace pipe with the soldiers. To keep faith with their visitors, the soldiers hid Chickasaws paid by the colony to raid the Lower Towns.81

The soldiers at Fort Prince George remained skeptical. For one thing, the visitors brought just eight prisoners. Most British saw prisoners as bargaining chips to be released during peace negotiations. But most Cherokees saw prisoners as adoptees or potential adoptees to absorb population losses and assuage familial and community grief. This was more crucial than ever. Overhill, Valley, and Middle townspeople “die very fast,” Holmes and Hosfield reported, “of a violent disorder in their stomach and a flux.” Second, Holmes and Hosfield told the Fort Prince George soldiers of Fort Loudoun’s fate. The skeptical garrison, left with only horse flesh, and unsure of what really

Settico (a Creek adoptee?) ransomed John Stephens, fort Loudoun architect and carpenter. SCG, October 11-18, 1760, p. 2. Stephens recalled the Cane Creek incident and the torture of former Fort Prince George soldier Luke Croft.

81 Visitors included Coosah-Ekah, Tuskegee-Tahee, Nancy, Old Caesar of Chatuga, and Scoh-Cunnaluski of Tomatley. The Standing Turkey sent his son. Several Nequasssees visited the fort. Cappy also expressed goodwill. SCG, October 11-18, 1760, p. 2-3.
transpired at Cane Creek and why, envisioned its own demise.\footnote{Hosfield and Holmes reported that sixty women and children died in Joree, thirty-five in Settico. And Nottely “was almost depopulated by it.” The Gazette later questioned these numbers. Reports also indicated that Rangers killed two Lower Townsmen while on a scout. SCG, October 11-18, 1760, p. 2, 3.} On October 11, Major William Thomson and 268 hand-picked rangers set out from Ninety Six. They delivered flour and salted beef to Fort Prince George four days later and returned without incident. Thomson enabled Fort Prince George to hold out longer.\footnote{SCG, October 18-25, 1760, p. 2, November 22-29, 1760, p. 1; William Bull to the Board of Trade, October 21, 1760, BPRO-SC, 28:419-20.}

From August to October 1760, events unfolded quickly in multiple arenas. They did so without coordination, as individuals as well as groups representing various perspectives lobbied to get their way. While Thomson and the Rangers marched from Ninety Six to Fort Prince George, Bull sent the thirty Cherokee prisoners to The Congarees under military escort. Here they awaited the exchange at Ninety Six. On October 13, another massive meeting took place in the Lower Towns. Ostenaco and Oconostota rushed back to the Overhills a week later to raise an official delegation of men for diplomatic talks with Colonel Byrd instead of Lieutenant Governor Bull. What happened next shocked everyone. And it triggered an unnecessary panic on the part of British and colonial authorities.\footnote{SCG, October 4-11, 1760, p. 3, October 18-25, 1760, p. 2.}

In late October, Antoine Lantagnac, ten French soldiers, and a handful of Shawnee Indians traveled by river from Fort L’Assomption to Chota. The officer distributed goods. He invited the Cherokees “to take up the War Hatchet” against the English and to keep all of the plunder. Oconostota refused. The delegation set out for
Byrd’s camp. Seroweh arrived from Estatoe and “took up the Hatchet.” As a soldier from Fort Prince George reported, the Indians “began the War Dance, and sent Runners to Call back the Indians who were gone on their way to Negotiate with Colonel Byrd.” Lantagnac left the ten French soldiers in Chota. He promised to return in three weeks with men and cannons to take Fort Prince George. As Atkin put it, “The long flattering Hopes” of peace had “entirely vanished.” On the surface, this is absurd. The panicked, pessimistic reports from Fort Prince George lacked corroboration. And, if Seroweh “took up the Hatchet,” he represented just one Cherokee town out of more than thirty.

Attakullakulla and Willenewa reached Byrd’s camp on November 3, each with a group of followers. They delivered ten Fort Loudoun captives. They promised to return to negotiate in the spring if Byrd called off an attack on the Overhills. A weary Byrd, his troops’ enlistments about to expire, accepted. He sent the Cherokees home with trade goods. Byrd discharged the Virginians on November 22. He resigned his command on December 3, and traveled to New York for the winter. There would be no winter

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85 Extract of William Bull to Jeffery Amherst, November 18, 1760, Grant Papers, Box 32 (DLAR reel 31, frames 00084-85); William Bull to the Board of Trade, November 18, 1760, BPRO-SC, 28:434-36. Lantagnac said that Byrd would kill the diplomats, and “insisted on the English prisoners being carried to fort L’Assomption, but the Indians refused.” SCG, November 15-22, 1760, p. 2, November 22-29, 1760, p. 1, November 29-December 6, 1760, p. 2, December 16-23, 1760, p. 2.

86 Atkin criticized Bull and Ellis. He called for expeditions against the Overhills and Mobile. Feeling ignored, he resigned his Council seat and planned to resign as Indian superintendent. Edmond Atkin to Jeffery Amherst, November 20, 1760, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fols. 218-21 (quote on fol. 218r.)

87 SCG, November 29-December 6, 1760, p. 2; William Byrd III to Francis Fauquier, [November 3, 1760], Fauquier Papers, 1:431.
invasion from Virginia. Perhaps Cherokees hoped that things would just blow over. Cherokees saw peace not as a formal state, but as a temporary cessation of hostilities.\textsuperscript{88}

But, the melodramatic soldiers’ reports from Fort Prince George and the news that Seroweh had taken up the hatchet convinced Lieutenant Governor Bull that any peace – declared or not – seemed unlikely. Thus, the thirty Cherokee prisoners would not return home. Instead, Bull ordered Captain Peter Gordon, who commanded the British troops at the Congarees, to bring the Cherokee prisoners to Charles Town. And he begged General Amherst for a new supply of redcoats. Amherst immediately obliged. He readied 1,200 troops. He transferred James Grant to a different regiment but detached him to lead the new campaign.\textsuperscript{89} As 1760 drew to a close, Bull sent the meager Provincial Regiment to winter at the Congarees. He hoped to give the Cherokees “some apprehensions” and keep them away from the frontier. Recruiting proceeded slowly, as Lieutenant Francis Marion and other officers traversed South Carolina and North Carolina.\textsuperscript{90}

Major Thomson, this time with 470 Rangers, again resupplied Fort Prince George on December 3. He delivered a ten-week supply of flour, clothing, salt, and cattle, providing a further disincentive for Cherokees to stray from their peaceful intentions. Rangers cut and delivered firewood, “the major setting his men the example.” Morale


\textsuperscript{89} William Bull to Jeffery Amherst, October 19 and 24, November 18, 1760, Amherst Papers, WO 34/35, fols. 174-78, 182-83; \textit{SCG}, November 8-15, 1760, p. 3; William Bull to the Board of Trade, \textit{BPRO-SC}, 28:436; \textit{SCCJ}, 1757-62, p. 56 (December 2, 1760); extract of Jeffery Amherst to William Bull, November 27, 1760, Grant Papers, Box 32 (DLAR reel 31, frame 00089).

\textsuperscript{90} William Bull to Jeffery Amherst, October 19 and 24, November 18, 1760, Amherst Papers, WO 34/35, fols. 176v, 183r.
skyrocketed. “Both officers and men” were now “determined to stand or fall together.” Thomson threatened Seroweh to keep his townsmen calm, or “the governor would be angry” and would destroy the Lower Settlements. Thomson left Fort Prince George just a few days later, this time with forty kegs plus seventeen bags of powder and 120 guns for the provincial arsenal. He met no opposition whatsoever.91

The Mankiller of Nequassee came to Fort Prince George on December 8 with a dozen warriors. He bore beads from seven Lower and Middle Towns. He swore that “they are tired of the war; that they love the English and want peace.” Only the English could supply their needs. Yet the Mankiller could not gather any prisoners. The garrison was skeptical. But to Cherokees, returning prisoners made little sense: “They would lose the chance to both grieve and exult, and their enemies would live to fight them again,” James Adair explained.92

The visits of friendly Cherokees stopped. Cherokee men were hunting. The soldiers speculated that these Cherokees went to the Overhills to prepare for war. It is true that Estatoe warriors remained bitter. At the same time, two Overhill delegations, intrigued by the promises of Lantagnac, went to French forts to investigate further. Oconostota led one party. The Seed of Settico led the other.93 Despite these limited exceptions, Cherokee support for peace was now overwhelming. Yet the British demanded the call to be unanimous. This was nearly impossible among the decentralized

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93 SCG, December 16-23, 1760, p. 2.
Cherokee people. They desired a formal, signed peace, something alien to Cherokees.

And paranoid soldiers at Fort Prince George, fresh off the misunderstood episode at Fort Loudoun, continued to stir up sensationalized reports. So the war continued.
Chapter 10: “The absolute necessity of suing for pardon”: The Grant Campaign Brings Destruction and Ruin to Cherokee Country

On February 11, two Cherokees came to Fort Prince George with a white flag. They bore the messages of Overhill leaders Standing Turkey, Ostenaco, and Attakullakulla. Standing Turkey and Ostenaco indicated that the Cherokees wanted hostilities to end. Attakullakulla promised as much. Stalling in hopes of gaining more popular support, he claimed that he wished for the Overhills to meet with Virginia Colonel William Byrd. Antipathy toward the British waned further with an unforeseen accident among a Francophile faction. The Seed of Settico, with four of the six men accompanying him to a French fort, sickened and died on the way. And Oconostota returned from his visit to New Orleans with only a beautifully embellished French captain’s commission. It was small consolation. And French military strength dwindled without reinforcements. A personnel change at Fort Prince George also calmed many Cherokees. Grant replaced the inexperienced, unpopular, and corrupt Ensign Alexander Miln with Lieutenant Lachlan McIntosh. McIntosh arrived on February 20 with a Ranger detachment and assumed command the next day. He was “much esteemed by the Indians.” The Rangers faced no Cherokee resistance delivering cattle, hogs, flour, and firewood to Fort Prince George. Desperate, starving and homesick, Lower Townsmen – their villages destroyed and empty for the previous year – settled under Tiftoe of Keowee
in a refugee camp east of Fort Prince George, set aside by McIntosh.\textsuperscript{1} Food and clothing remained scarce after yet another year’s disruption in the deerskin trade. Worse, the winter of 1760-61 had been exceptionally harsh throughout the Cherokee town clusters.\textsuperscript{2}

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\textbf{Figure 23: Louis [Billouart, Chevalier] de Kerlerec Agreement with Cherokee Chief Okana-Stoote. Courtesy of the National Archives.}

\textsuperscript{1} SCG, January 24-31, 1761, p. 2; February 28-March 7, 1761, p. 2; May 2-9, 1761, p. 1; June 20-27, 1761, p. 2; William Bull to Jeffery Amherst, January 24, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/35, fol. 189v; James Grant to Jeffery Amherst, March 15, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 54v. Miln was later transferred to Fort Augusta when Lieutenant Lachlan Shaw fell ill. SCG, April 4-11, 1761, p. 3.

Now, Cherokees faced another invasion. On December 15, 1760, British commander Jeffery Amherst dispatched 1,200 British Regulars to Charles Town under the command of Lieutenant Colonel James Grant. Demanding “the most Exemplary Vengeance,” Amherst ordered Grant, Montgomery’s second-in-command the previous year, to “destroy their towns and cut up their crops” in order “to reduce them to the absolute Necessity of suing for Pardon.” Amherst’s hatred for Indians, like that of many British elites, was palpable. He called the Cherokees “perfidious and inhuman,” a “Race of Barbarians.” He mandated that Grant force them to sue for a written peace and then “Effectually put it out of their power” to take up arms again. Indeed, as retired Virginia provincial commander George Washington noted, the Cherokees “are the only People that disturbs the repose of this great Continent.” With the French threat seemingly neutralized in North America, incapacitating the Cherokees – peaceful though they were – and punishing them for their success in 1760 – remained a key goal for Amherst and for

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3 Grant commanded 1,200 men: two battalions of Independents from England (formed into Burton’s 95th Regiment), and two light infantry companies each of Monckton’s & Whitmore’s (17th and 22nd) Regiments. The four companies of the 1st Regiment of Foot (Royal Scots) already in South Carolina, later joined. Jeffery Amherst to James Grant, December 15, 1760, Amherst Papers, WO 34/48, fols. 39-44 (quotes on fols. 39r-v, 42r, 42v); Jeffery Amherst to James Grant, February 13, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/48, fols. 60-61. Some Highlanders under Captain Duncan McKenzie briefly joined the army in April, but Amherst requested that they return to New York. Major Alexander Monypenny, “Diary of March 20-May 31, 1761,” Journal of Cherokee Studies 2, no. 3 (Summer 1977):321 (April 4, 6); Jeffery Amherst to James Grant, April 3, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/48, fols. 72-73; James Grant to Jeffery Amherst, April 12, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 59r. See also Alistair Grant, General James Grant of Ballindalloch, 1720-1806 (London: A.G. Grant, 1930); Paul David Nelson, General James Grant: Scottish Soldier and Royal Governor of East Florida (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1993). Amherst ordered Grant to stay on the frontier until peace was “entirely Settled & Concluded.” Jeffery Amherst to Francis Fauquier, Albany, July 2, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/37, fol. 234.

South Carolina. In doing this, Grant brought destruction. Cherokees ran out of options other than to look for a formal declaration of peace.

By late 1760 most Cherokees had pacific intentions. Writing on January 17, 1761, shortly after landing his troops, Grant observed that the war “chiefly” existed “in the heated Imaginations” of a few men – specifically, Independent Company Ensign Alexander Miln and two Provincial officers at Fort Prince George. Spurred on by hawkish Charles Town elites, these men “alarm[ed] the Province & the Continent with ridiculous Representations of Danger,” the Scotsman opined. Moreover, Grant said, the officers’ history of rape, murder, and treachery had, “in a great measure occasioned the Disaffection of the Indians.”

Grant gathered horses, wagons, and cattle. The colony raised fifty slave “pioneers.” But it took ten weeks. The officer fretted over the “sickly” state of the Royal Scots. Five hundred Rangers “were scattered up and down the face of the earth.” The colonists, he sarcastically noted, “will never have any share in the war and are therefore very desirous to promote it; peace is a very unfashionable topick.” Grant, like Montgomery, had some sympathy for the Cherokees’ plight. “If both Parties were heard,” he wrote to General Amherst, “I fancy that the Indians have been the worst used…the greatest part of them are sorry [sic] for what has been done, & would be glad to make Peace.” It did not matter. His orders called for him to be ruthless.

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5 James Grant to Jeffery Amherst, January 17, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 37r.
6 Ibid, fols. 36-38. The Cherokees must be “punished…severely too, before Peace is Granted them.” Jeffery Amherst to James Grant, February 13, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/48, fols. 60-61 (quote on 61r.)
A swift campaign on the Carolina frontier could quell the growth of radical millenarianism in the backcountry. As Grant’s men marched to the Cherokee Country, authorities captured the leader of a religious cult led by a Swissman named Jacob Weber. Weber fashioned himself as the messiah. His wife Hannah was the Virgin Mary. The “Weber Sect” practiced free-love and ritualized murder, hoping to bring about the apocalypse. Millenarianism spread anti-Anglicanism and class conflict. And it encouraged slaves to slip their bonds and overthrow their masters. In April, Lieutenant Governor Bull would execute Jacob Weber and pardon his co-conspirators. But the Cherokees had destabilized the frontier. Settlers’ isolation, neglect, and vulnerability of the settlers to Cherokee attack fueled the growth of radical spirituality.7

With the grass tall enough to serve as forage for the cattle and horses, the British Regulars left Charles Town on March 20. Grant augmented his army with Indian auxiliaries, including five Iroquois. Other Indians deemed the Iroquois “the greatest Warriours in the world,” Carolina planter Eliza Lucas Pinckney wrote. Silverheels, a Seneca Mingo, was the most feared and most admired. He fought at Great Meadows, Braddock’s Defeat, Crown Point, and Ticonderoga. Encamped thirty miles northwest of Charles Town at Monck’s Corner, Grant’s army drilled, organized, captured deserters, and added reinforcements for three weeks.8

7 Peter N. Moore, “Religious Radicalism in the Colonial Southern Backcountry: Jacob Weber and the Transmission of European Radical Pietism to South Carolina’s Dutch Fork,” Journal of Backcountry Studies 1, no. 2 (Fall 2006):1-19; SCG, April 18-25, 1760, p. 2, May 9-16, 1760, p. 3; William Bull to the Board of Trade, April 26, 1761, BPRO-SC, 29:80-82.
8 SCG, April 11-18, 1761, p. 3. Troops first arrived on January 6 and landed January 12. Christopher French, “Journal of an Expedition to South Carolina,” Journal of Cherokee Studies 2, no. 3 (Summer 1977):276 (January 6, 9, 12); Eliza Lucas Pinckney to Mrs. King, April 13, 1761, in Eliza Lucas Pinckney, 293
In February, two Middle Townsmen brought in the scalps of two Carolina Rangers that they had taken, for a proper burial. And Cherokee peace overtures escalated. Starvation, despair, and a desire to move on fueled the impulse to conciliation. Within six weeks of McIntosh’s arrival, Cherokees had delivered 67 prisoners in exchange for food and clothing. Ransoming prisoners, though not unheard of, shows Cherokee desperation. Attakullakulla visited and spent ten days at the fort in late March. Even Seroweh talked of peace. On April 1, the Estatoe war chief visited Fort Prince George. He had journeyed as far southeast as Ninety Six in search of sustenance. But he did not attack the white people he saw. Disrespect and ill treatment at the fort had driven his young people “mad,” he said. Now, the embodiment of Cherokee resistance told McIntosh that “my heart is straight and will continue so.” He kept a meager amount of beef for his starving people and delivered the rest of the cattle he had rounded up in the South Carolina settlements to commander McIntosh. Ostenaco also appeared contrite. In an April 19 message to Grant, he begged for the restoration of the trade. White Carolinians, on the other hand, were less sanguine. From Ninety Six, a correspondent to the South Carolina Gazette – perhaps Provincial Lieutenant Thomas Bell – hoped that

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“whispers here about peace” were unfounded. The Cherokees, the writer believed, should “first receive the proper reward of their perfidy and cruelty.”

While Ostenaco, Attakullakulla, and Seroweh made overtures to Anglo-Carolinians, other emissaries approached Virginia. In early April, Willenawa of Toqua led eighty Overhill Cherokees northward. General Amherst had ordered Virginia provincials to invade the Cherokee towns. The Toqua headman wished to stall the colony’s troops and to negotiate a more favorable, separate peace on the terms proposed in November 1760. He delivered sixteen Fort Loudoun prisoners to Major Andrew Lewis’s advance post at Fort Chiswell. Soon, however, tragedy struck. Governor Fauquier and his agents, acting on Amherst’s orders and imperial protocol, refused to negotiate the peace that Willenawa sought. Under the cover of darkness, Indian enemies from the northward assaulted the starving and discouraged Cherokee camp. They killed six and wounded “a great many.” Willenawa’s survivors placed their women and wounded under Lewis’s care and then rushed off in a fruitless search for the assailants. Eventually, Lewis sent the heartbroken Cherokees home with fourteen horse-loads of blankets, food, and other supplies. Despite the disaster, Willenawa still believed the Virginia troops posed no immediate threat to the Overhills. Indeed, the colony’s shifting command probably bolstered his views. Colonel William Byrd, griping that his force

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9 SCG, February 14-21, 1761, p. 2; April 4-11, 1761, p. 3; A Talk from the Young Warrior of Estatoe [Seroweh] to Mr. Mackintosh, April 1, 1761, Lachlan McIntosh to William Bull, April 2, 1760, From Ostenaco of Tomot[e]y, April 19, 1761, James Grant to William Bull, April 11, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frames 00099, 00100-1, 00130, 00405).
was inadequate and his supplies insufficient, once again headed the regiment. As in
1760, the colonel had little faith in a Virginia-based invasion of Cherokee country.10

On April 14, Grant marched his men northwest from Monck’s Corner. But
violence erupted near Eutaw Springs. “In a fit of Drunkenness,” a British officer recalled,
Silverheels tomahawked “a Man & Two Women Indians living in a Plantation near the
camp, Two of them was thought mortally wounded.” The attack was apparently
unprovoked. Grant’s second in command, Major Alexander Monypenny “wish’d, he had
been shot” for this “outrage.” Grant, however, chose not “to have it done.” Silverheels
was “our favorite Indian,” the Colonel confessed.11 The incident was an omen of the
brutality to come. And it was emblematic of the way the British utilized their Indian
allies.

Grant’s army arrived at the Congarees on April 22. There it joined a desertion-
ravaged South Carolina Regiment of Foot as well as a battalion of Royal Scots.
Lieutenant Jacob Farrington signed on too, with four Rogers’ Rangers, ten Stockbridge
Indians, and one Mohawk. These were not Cherokee enemies, but rather professional
soldiers in the British Army in all but rank and title.12 A day later, the army set out for

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10 Monypenny, “Diary,” 321 (March 23-24); SCG, May 13-16, 1761, p. 3; June 13-20, 1761, p. 2; Francis
Fauquier to the Commissioners to the Cherokees, [ca. April 13, 1761], Amherst Papers, WO 34/37, fol. 66;
“Extract of a Letter from Winchester, May 26, 1761,” SCG, June 27-July 4, 1761, p. 2; Francis Fauquier to
Jeffery Amherst, April 17, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/37, fols. 63-65; William Byrd to Jeffery
Amherst, April 19, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fols. 262-63; “Extract of a Letter from Colo. Byrd,”
April 22, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 92. See also John Robinson, Address from the Burgesses
to Major General Amherst, [March 12, 1761], Amherst Papers, WO 34/37, fols. 49-50.

11 French, “Journal,” 277 (March 20-April 14); Monypenny, “Diary,” 320 (March 20-April 14); James
Grant to Jeffery Amherst, April 25, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 64v.

12 Monypenny, “Diary,” 323 (April 15); French, “Journal,” 278 (April 22); SCG, April 25-May 2, 1761, p.
1; Duane H. King, “A Powder Horn Commemorating the Grant Expedition Against the Cherokees,”
Ninety Six. Indian allies from the South also streamed in. Lured by the excitement of battle and the promise of financial reward, Upper Chickasaws from villages on the Mississippi and Lower Chickasaws from towns on the Savannah arrived under mixed-race trader James Colbert. They had a score to settle against the Cherokees; in the previous year, Cherokees seeking to impress the French had attacked the Chickasaws and a conflict ensued. Three Yuchis from the Creek Confederacy joined too. And Catawbas under hereditary monarch King Hagler and war chief Colonel Ayres also came to fight. Monypenny mocked these brave and steady allies. The Major overlooked their faithful service against Fort Duquesne. And he failed to consider their struggles against land encroachment, war, disease, and broken promises from Charles Town. Instead, he labeled them “drunks and beggars.”

Meanwhile, other British allies acted independently. A party of Chickasaws saw an opening when Tiftoe left his starving followers at the Fort George refugee camp in order to get corn from the Middle Towns. The Chickasaws’ attack was brutal. They

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Journal of Cherokee Studies 1, no. 1 (Summer 1976):30; James Grant to Jeffery Amherst, April 25, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 64r. Stockbridges scouted at Crown Point and at Ticonderoga with Rogers’ Rangers, raided farms and supplies, and liberated English prisoners. They later served the British in Pontiac’s Rebellion, 1763-4.

13 SCG, May 16-23, 1761, p. 3; May 23-30, 1761, p. 2; June 13-20, 1761, p. 2. Grant had 1,300 Regulars. Middleton’s Provincials numbered 520 privates. Four hundred Rangers assembled at Ninety Six. “The South Carolina Weekly Gazette, from Wednesday, April 29, to Wednesday, May 6, 1761, p. 2,” in CO 5/377, fol. 76; Catawbas served with Forbes in 1758 and with Montgomery in the Cherokee Lower Towns in 1760. Chickasaws had a fierce reputation. In the 1740s they defeated French armies in open fields. They raided the Lower Towns in 1760. They sought revenge for a wave of Overhill raids against them prompted by the French.
entered Tiftoe’s home, where they killed a woman and wounded a boy. “This is exactly True Indian Assistance,” Monypenny noted proudly.14

The march to Ninety Six bolstered the enthusiasm of Britain’s Indian allies. With time to socialize, they bonded across tribal lines. On May 6, Silverheels “desir’d he would dance” with the Chickasaws, “which, after some difficulty He did.” In the evening, British Regulars and a Chickasaw interpreter tried to “make a good understanding between them.”15 They arrived at Fort Ninety Six eight days later.16 There they found a small detachment of British regulars and two hundred more provincials, including the black pioneers. The Rangers were also assembled there. Grant and Monypenny thumbed their noses at these uncouth frontiersmen. British officers disrespected their white allies – not just in New England as Fred Anderson has demonstrated – but in the South as well. Grant and his subordinates, through their elitist and highly professionalized and precise lens – saw Rangers as overpaid and unreliable. “This might be a most useful Body of Men,” Monypenny wrote, “were their officers Men of spirit & integrity. But the shameful abuses in the Corps” – drunkenness and lack of discipline among other things – “are not to be believ’d.” Such biases contributed to a postwar lack of affinity toward the British on the part of frontiersmen.17

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14 Monypenny, “Diary,” 324 (May 3); SCG, May 2-9, 1761, p. 1; “The South Carolina Weekly Gazette, from Wednesday, April 29, to Wednesday, May 6, 1761, p. 2,” in CO 5/377, fol. 76.
16 SCG, May 2-9, 1761, p. 1; May 16-23, 1761, p. 3; French, “Journal,” 279 (April 30). For troop strength at Ninety Six, see SCG, May 16-23, 1761, p. 3.
17 Monypenny described the Fort as “a true American Fort, a pitiful Palisade thrown round a Barn.” Monypenny, “Diary,” 325-326 (May 14, 16); SCG, April 4-11, 1761, p. 3; James Grant to Jeffery Amherst, March 30, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fols. 57v-58r; James Grant to William Moultrie, March 27, 1761, John Moultrie to James Grant, April 10, 12, 1761, [sketch of renovations to Fort Ninety Six], April 298
At Ninety Six, camaraderie between the Indians continued. They “danc’d the War Dance” around a great bonfire, as British officers looked on, and shared other ceremonies “peculiar to themselves.” The Indians also joined forces with a handful of white soldiers. On May 18, Monypenny and Grant formed an elite unit commanded by Captain Quintin Kennedy. The lowland Scot, a survivor of Braddock’s defeat, had led small ranger operations for five years. Now, he took charge of ninety Indians and four dozen white men dressed and painted as Indians. That night, the Indians danced again around a bonfire underneath a full moon.

As the campaign siphoned white manpower inland, the racial imbalance in coastal areas only grew. White fears resurfaced, with tragic consequences.

In April, the Commons House finally debated what to do about Demere’s promise of freedom to Abram, the slave messenger who played so prominent a role in 1760. Upon Bull’s recommendation, the assemblymen purchased Abram’s freedom. He became the last of fifteen or sixteen slaves to be freed by the provincial government during the colonial period. A “mulatto slave” from Berkeley County, Joe Fleming, was

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1761, Grant Papers, Box 32 (DLAR reel 33, frames 00392-93, 00109, 00117-18); Fred Anderson, A People’s Army: Massachusetts Soldiers and Society in the Seven Years’ War (Chapel Hill: Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, by the University of North Carolina Press, 1984).


not so lucky. Forced to fight in a Ranger company during the Montgomery campaign, he
had killed and scalped a Cherokee in battle. But heroism got Fleming nowhere. The
Commons cited budgetary constraints and refused to free him.\textsuperscript{21} The decision sent a
clear message to slaves that there was no escape through meritorious service – that
putting your life on the line for white South Carolinians meant nothing.

Indeed the already high costs of the war concerned lawmakers. In May, the
busiest time of year on Carolina plantations, the Commons House debated a bill
addressing “the pernicious Consequence of too free an Importation of NEGROES into
this Province.” When an additional duty effecting “nearly…a Prohibition” seemed
possible, the \textit{Gazette} printed the proposed bill in full. It would have levied an additional
40-pound tax in Carolina currency on each slave imported into the colony. The bill
passed the Commons House but fell to defeat in the Council.\textsuperscript{22}

White anxieties soared. On the evening of June 15-16, a newly created watch
company in Charles Town took thirteen African Americans in custody “in a Disorderly
house in Rapers Alley Union Street.” Surely blacks were aware of the situation on the
frontier and hoped to use the opportunity to their benefit. The troops apprehended men
“in the Streets and upon the Wharrfs,” some after lengthy chases. Two blacks unable to
produce papers showing they could be out late fled on horseback at 2 a.m.. One escaped,

\textsuperscript{21} John Donald Duncan, “Servitude and Slavery in Colonial South Carolina 1670-1776,” (Ph.D. diss.,
Emory University, 1971), 391-93; JCA, 26 March 1761 to 9 July 1761; 13 July-26 December 1761, p. 45,
49-50, 57 (April 23, 29, 1761).

\textsuperscript{22} Duncan, “Servitude and Slavery in Colonial South Carolina 1670-1776,” 172-73; SCG, May 23-30,
1761, p. 2; June 4-6, 1761, p. 1; “A LETTER from the Country,” SCG, June 6-13, 1761, p. 2.
but the other was captured, carrying a bayonet. All were jailed in the guardhouse. Their fate remains unknown.  

African American resistance did not subside. Instead, throughout 1761, it increased. War again brought crisis for whites and Cherokees, but opportunity for African Americans. But few could capitalize on the absence of so many Carolina troops. A rash of poisonings was reported on Wadmalah Island, southwest of Charles Town, in early 1761. Ten slaves ran away from Colonel Thomas Middleton’s plantations alone. Some bondsmen fled coastal South Carolina for Spanish St. Augustine where freedom awaited. One Christopher from Horse Shoe Plantation near Jacksonboro and Peter from coastal St. Helena Parish appear in the documentary record. Reflecting recruiters’ desperation to enlist men and the generous enlistment bounties and pay that the province offered, a “mulatto” runaway named Jack reportedly enlisted in the Rangers. For still others, like a runaway, one Philip, 16, the British lines provided an alternative to life on the plantation. For Philip and other black laborers in the army, high pay and adventure awaited. While the work was hard and the danger was great, the pay was high. But for meritorious service, freedom did not await as it had in wars past.  

23 JCA, 26 March 1761 to 9 July 1761; 13 July-26 December 1761, p. 112 (May 28, 1761); SCCJ, 1757-1762, Unit 6, 132 (June 17, 1761); SCG, June 13-20, 1761, p. 3.  

Meanwhile, thirty prominent Cherokees passed through the ruins of once-bustling Keowee village on their way to Fort Prince George. Among them was Oconostota, hoping “that things might be settled, & no more Wars betwixt us.” At Fort Toulouse, the French had strung the Indians along, urging them to wait a little while longer. Oconostota told his people to live in peace with the English “or to Separate from us.”

Oconostota and Attakullakulla, who was also in the party, hoped the troops would go no farther than Fort Prince George. Attakullakulla clung to the belief that “The English did not design to destroy their Nation.” The headman apparently had no inkling of Amherst’s orders. As always, he was conciliatory. “There were Faults on both sides, & he believ’d all would be adjusted,” wrote Monypenny. He begged for time to return

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25 James Grant to Jeffery Amherst, May 5, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fols. 66-67. Forty Cherokees visited Fort Toulouse. Lantagnac escorted them to Chota with eight or nine “horse-loads of powder and ball, a little salt, some brandy, and a few shirts, but no goods.” They arrived in late May. William Bull to James Grant, May 29, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frames 00168-69); William Bull to Jeffery Amherst, June 6, 1759 [actually 1761], Amherst Papers, WO 34/35, fol. 201; SCG, June 13-20, 1761, p. 2; A Talk from Oconostota, & the Little Carpenter, to Lieut. Mackintosh, May 22, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frame 00164).
home to inform others “what we resolv’d to do,” the major wrote. Oconostota offered to escort the British officer through the Cherokee towns “that he may see how their hearts are disposed, & that they are good.” This was a generous offer to promote goodwill and understanding. Grant declined. Fearful for his safety since he had orchestrated the killing of Lieutenant Coytmore and possibly the Fort Loudoun soldiers, Oconostota withdrew to the woods. Attakullakulla awaited Grant’s arrival. He hoped to hold off a British-led invasion. The disgraced leader may have hoped to restore his reputation too.26

In private, Grant vowed to prop up Attakullakulla’s authority yet to keep the Indians from “despair.” Publicly, the lieutenant colonel sent a letter ahead of his arrival to Attakullakulla demanding the return all the Fort Loudoun captives. His aim was twofold: to prevent the Cherokees from killing them in the event of a British invasion, and to use them in his army. “Ruin & Destruction hangs over your whole Nation,” Grant threatened, vowing to attack Cherokee country. The Virginians would march on their nation, he vowed. But Alexander Monypenny noted in his diary that “Such as remain’d quiet in their Houses” would “be protected.”27

26 Monypenny, “Diary,” 327-28 (May 23); The Little Carpenter’s Talk to Col. Grant, May 23, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 89; A Talk from Oconostota, & the Little Carpenter, to Lieut. Mackintosh, May 22, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frame 00164).

27 Monypenny, “Diary,” 328 (May 23); Lieut. Colonel Grant’s Talk to the Little Carpenter, May 23, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 88; William Bull to Jeffery Amherst, January 24, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/35, fol. 189v.
On May 27, Grant’s army arrived at Fort Prince George. All but six of the Cherokee leaders waiting there scattered, fearing for their safety. For two days, Attakullakulla spoke for them. He nearly disarmed the British with his warm smile and soft facial features. He “has the Character of being a Man of great Sense,” Captain French believed. The next day, with his formidable Indian allies present, Grant conferred with Attakullakulla. The message was clear. The Cherokees were isolated. To avoid further peril, it was time to make peace. Attakullakulla could not do so, and he certainly could not do so on the harsh terms Grant proposed. “No,” Grant retorted, remembering his orders from Amherst and the challenges of supplying and disciplining such a large army. “I will not lose half an hour waiting for your people.” Their excitement building, Grant’s Indian auxiliaries howled with the wolves nearby.

In Cherokee villages far and wide, most Indians wanted peace. Hopes of a French alliance had fizzled. The most impetuous warriors had nowhere to turn. The Cherokees had delivered 115 white prisoners, seventy of them Fort Loudoun soldiers, in exchange for foodstuffs and clothes. Another three to five dozen remained, some no doubt willingly. The Indians kept these additional captives because captives filled the place of Cherokee dead. “Many” from the Lower Towns streamed into the Fort Prince George refugee camp. Forbidden from hunting, they gathered acorns and berries until Grant

28 “Found it a tolerable stockage a Square with four bastions & two small guns 4 & 2 postioned in each bastion. Situated low, & commanded ev’n with Musquetry by the Hills round, the low Situation is on Account of the River.” Monypenny, “Diary,” 328 (May 27); SCG, June 13-20, 1761, p. 2.

provided peas and corn. Renowned anti-British townsmen the White Owl of Keowee and the Tail of Estatoe settled at the refugee village with a dozen others. Some Setticos fired on an express on May 24, but the Major Monypenny dismissed the matter. The Cherokees, he believed, were “much inclin’d to Peace.” They had not attacked frontier settlers since the February arrival of Lachlan McIntosh. The soldiers were safe. “A Scalp has not been taken as yet,” Monypenny wrote on May 30. Indeed, the Indians must have been tempted. Wagoneers and soldiers regularly defied orders and crossed the Keowee in order to “ramble all round the opposite Hills, picking strawberries unarmed.”

While Grant and his men settled in at Fort Prince George, an army of Virginian provincials under Colonel William Byrd III set out from Winchester toward Chota, a march of 450 miles. They were supposed to join up with North Carolina troops and together attack Chota. Observers thought that a Virginia-based campaign would effectively bring the Cherokees to their knees. Yet Byrd opposed the idea. On several occasions, he advised Amherst that such a campaign was impracticable and ill-advised. He lacked men and provisions. And he lacked the heart to do it. North Carolina’s assembly took until April 26 to fund a regiment of five hundred men. To raise and arm it was another matter.

30 French, “Journal,” 280 (May 29); “The South Carolina Weekly Gazette, April 29-May 6, 1761, p. 2,” in CO 5/377, fol. 76; James Grant to William Bull, June 2, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 32 (DLAR reel 33, frame 00418); James Grant to Jeffery Amherst, June 2 and 5, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fols. 81-83; Monypenny, “Diary,” 329 (May 27, 28), 330 (May 30); SCG, June 13-20, 1761, p. 2.

Virginia Governor Francis Fauquier was also against the campaign. Attakullakulla had not rejected Byrd’s 1760 terms. “We cannot enter their Country with Fire and Sword, without a most notorious and infamous Breach of Faith,” he wrote to Byrd. But the governor felt trapped. If the Virginians refused to act, he concluded, “we shall with Justice be represented at home by Carolina, as having deserted them and made a separate peace for ourselves.” He believed the Cherokees could “be brought to reason without much bloodshed.” Violence was imprudent. “Revenge,” he predicted, “will never let them rest” from “taking blood for blood…on the back settlements.” Instead, he proposed that “We must make it their convenience to live at peace with us, for we have nothing else to trust to.”

At Fort Prince George, Grant determined to press on. On June 7, the largest force assembled by the British on the southern frontier began a thirty-three day foray into the Cherokee settlements. From the seventh to the tenth of June, Grant’s army marched...
through western South Carolina and northeastern Georgia. The Indian Corps scouted ahead along the steep hills, twice deterring Cherokee ambushes. Grant believed “it was next to a certainty” that the army would face an attack on June 10 as it marched north from the Dividings toward the Middle Towns via Echoe Pass. He ordered the men to load their weapons. He reinforced the provisions and packhorses. “Our march was conducted with all the precaution that could be taken against a surprise,” he said.

Sure enough, Cherokee riflemen, cognizant of their success the year earlier, targeted the cattle guard at the back of Grant’s train. But the shots had little effect over such a distance. And they did not distract Grant’s invaders from the Indian force that lay in ambush in the narrow pass ahead. The lieutenant colonel reinforced the rear guards.

The invaders continued north for a few miles. Encroaching ridges and hillocks squeezed the men ever closer to the rivers’ edge, funneling them into a two mile-long trap at “The Narrows.” The Cherokees lay in wait a mile south of where they had engaged Colonel Montgomery’s army.

33 “A Return of His Majesty’s Forces in South Carolina commanded by Lt. Coll Grant…,” June 1, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 85; French, “Journal,” 282-83 (June 7-8); “Journal of the March and Operations of the Troops…,” [hereafter Grant Journal], Florida Historical Quarterly 12, no. 1 (January 1933):26-27. For the original, see Journal of the March & Operations of the Troops…, Grant Papers, Box 29 (DLAR reel 28, frames 00005-8); Scots Magazine, August 1761, 429-30. The column stretched two miles long. King, “Powder Horn,” 32.

34 “American Affairs: Charles-Town, July 15,”; “Col. Grant’s head-quarters, near Fort Prince George, July 10, 1761” The Royal Magazine, 1761, 153; King, “Powder Horn,” 32; James Grant to Jeffery Amherst, July 10, 1761, Amherst Papers WO 34/47, fol. 94; Grant Journal, 27 (June 10).

35 French called the engagement the “Battle of Cowhowee,” French, “Journal,” 283 (June 10); Grant Journal, 27 (June 10).

36 A steep brushy hill lay to the right of the road. To the left was the Little Tennessee River, and across it, a grassy hill. French, “Journal,” 283 (June 10).
Between 8:30 and 9:00 a.m., Kennedy’s Indian Corps detected Cherokees in dense brush on a hill to the east. Grant’s men trained their already-loaded weapons. The Cherokees let out the war whoop. It echoed down the line. On Kennedy’s command the Indian Corps burst up the hill. Grant ordered Captain William Moultrie’s Provincial light infantry, which reportedly included Lieutenant Francis Marion – to help. The Cherokees gave way, leaving one man killed and scalped. However, taking the high ground meant very little; in large battles the Indians simply regrouped and reorganized.³⁷

Meanwhile, Indians on the opposite side of the river fired briskly on the troops, mostly South Carolina Provincials. Kennedy’s Corps and the light infantry pressed on, forded the river, and helped others to do the same. A Frenchman among the Cherokees taunted Kennedy. But Cherokees were sorely disappointed if they expected a greater French turnout. Spotty evidence suggests that no more than a dozen agents or soldiers based out of Fort Toulouse or Fort L’Assomption and led by Antoine Lantagnac the former Overhills trader. With Kennedy’s Corps out of firing range, the Cherokees who had been driven from the hillock in The Narrows reorganized. They returned “with redoubled ardour.” Just as in 1760, they targeted the supply convoy. If they could knock out cattle, horses, and flour, they could lessen any potential blow Grant intended. As in

1760, Cherokee shots pierced bags of flour, startled and toppled horses, and scattered packhorsemen as the pack train now entered The Narrows.\(^{38}\)

Without Grant’s fiercest combatants to oppose them, the reorganized Cherokees wounded four officers and many soldiers and packhorsemen. Grant rebuffed his eager Indian allies’ offer to go back to assist the rear.\(^{39}\) After the army had marched through the defile, they reached an open savannah. Both British and colonial sources indicated that Provincial soldiers cleared a hillock of Cherokees and rescued the pack train and drove it through the narrow pass. Sources do not indicate who gave the orders – Middleton or Grant – and precisely what happened.\(^{40}\)

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\(^{38}\) French, “Journal,” 283-84 (June 10); *Scots Magazine*, August 1761, 429; Bull to the Board of Trade, *BRPO-SC*, 29:114-28; *Grant Journal*, 28 (June 10); Hewatt, *An Historical Account*, 2:249, 250-51.

\(^{39}\) “KEOWEE, Sept. 3d, 1761,” *SCG*, September 5-12, 1761, p. 2.

For three hours, Cherokee warriors peppered the invaders with “an irregular and incessant fire” that trickled off by 2 PM. As the trader and ethnographer James Adair put it, “had the Cheerake been sufficiently supplied with ammunition, twice the number of troops could not have defeated them.” The warriors soon “disappeared” to alert the Middle Towns nearby. Cherokees fled to the hills. All hope of stopping Grant was lost.  

It is impossible to fathom the despair that many must have felt.

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Sixty British packhorses lay dead. Fifty-two British troops lay wounded, four of them officers. Eleven were dead, one of them a Catawba. To avenge the loss of his kinsman, a Catawba warrior viciously tomahawked and scalped a Cherokee prisoner, “then blew out his Brains.” Not stopping there, Captain French observed, he “cut open his Breast, & Belly, & cut off his privy parts, & otherways mangled him in a most shocking manner.” Using their Indian auxiliaries for the most brutal acts of the campaign, Grant’s men rubbed salt into the festering wounds that already typified intertribal relations. The Indian allies, seen by the British as brave but deranged, won no respect within the British army. Instead, they unwittingly contributed to native peoples’ collective decline within the Empire, sowing future divisions between tribes.

After the initial encounter with Montgomery in 1760, the Cherokees had persisted in their efforts to expel the invading Britons. But in 1761, after their initial encounter with Grant, the Cherokees offered no further resistance. Their situation differed from what it had been a year earlier. They had little ammunition. Grant’s invading force was twice the size of Montgomery’s. At the same time, the Cherokee army was smaller than in 1760, though still “not less than a thousand.” Many had died in the past year in battle, and of disease and starvation. By most accounts, no Overhill warriors were present. They

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42 Grant Journal, 29 (June 10); “Col. Grant’s head-quarters, near Fort Prince George, July 10, 1761” in The Royal Magazine, 1761, 153; Return of the Killed & Wounded on the 10th June 1761, Amherst Papers WO 34/47, fol. 97; William Bull to the Board of Trade, July 17, 1761, BPRO-SC, 29:125. A Provincial officer reported “ten killed, less than fifty wounded, a few horses and about fifty bags of flour.” “Extract of a Letter from an Officer in Col. Middleton’s Regiment, dated July 10, 1761,” The Royal Magazine, 1761, 154. By July 15, another three privates died. Scots Magazine, August 1761, 429. Ensign John Munro, seriously wounded the previous year, died. Ensign Knight (Royal Scots), Lieutenant Barber and Ensign Campbell of Burton’s, and Lieutenant Jeremiah Terry of the Provincials, were among the wounded. French, “Journal,” 284 (June 11, 1761); SCG, July 11-18, 1761, p. 2.

43 French, “Journal,” 283-84 (June 10).
were guarding the Overhill frontier and caring for refugees. Others, seeking peace, did not turn out at all. Nonetheless, Grant boasted of his army’s performance in foiling the Cherokees at “The Battle of Cowhowee.”

In the days and weeks that followed, Cherokee women mourned the dead, and the sounds of wailing filled villages. Grant’s Indian allies estimated that twenty-four Cherokees died and thirty-five suffered wounds that day. Attakullakulla reported that “some women” and twenty two men died in battle. But the Mankiller of Nequassee later put the number higher, saying that at least thirty-three Cherokees had lost their lives. We can attribute women in combat to Cherokee desperation, the desire of women whose authority seemed to be slipping to regain the respect they once had, and their traditional role of stepping in to assist their fallen husbands. Cherokee survivors piled “many vast heaps” of stones atop the graves of the dead. Those stones still stood in 1775 when naturalist William Bartram passed by.

Grant had orders to carry out. And he sensed the Cherokees faltering. Rather than retreat as Montgomery had the year before, Grant’s soldiers sunk their dead in the Little Tennessee River “to prevent their being dug up...and scalped.” They marched on to Echoe, reaching the village at midnight. Grant then sent a detachment “to surprise” and destroy Tassee village, two miles away. He marched everyone else twelve miles north to

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44 William Bull to James Grant, July 17, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frame 00206).

45 Most of the Cherokee casualties reportedly took place early that day. John Stuart to James Grant, September 25, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frame 00306); Theda Perdue, Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 38-40; French, “Journal,” 283-84 (June 10), 292 (August 31); SCG, July 4-11, p. 2, July 25-August 1, 1761, p. 2; Scots Magazine, August 1761, 431; Bartram, Travels, 348, 348n.
Nequassee. Taking over this Cherokee “mother town,” a center of peace, was a deliberate insult to the Cherokees. Arriving at 4 a.m., they converted the town house to a hospital. Grant had the Indian corps, “much fatigued,” to escort the army’s provisions. They completed the task at 1 P.M.\(^46\)

Over the next sixteen days, with the Indian corps at the lead, Grant’s troops burned fifteen Indian villages. The army destroyed Cherokee corn, fruit orchards, and beans, “to a great amount.” They pulled up 1,500 acres of corn. Grant “earned” the Cherokee sobriquet of “the Cornpuller.” Many of the residents of the Lower, Middle, and Out Towns had already fled to the Overhills or to the mountains. But others barely escaped the army’s wrath, decamping as the Indian Corps pillaged. Provincial Major John Moultrie was moved by the tears of a Cherokee woman as her home went up in flames. It “melted me and made me sorry,” he wrote just days afterward. Moultrie’s tears marked a change of heart. He had previously admitted “making free with the Cherokee squaws.”\(^47\)


Kennedy’s Indians twice wished to press on, but Grant refused. “It was too late,” Grant explained, “the mountains were too treacherous and he did not choose to risk a scout at so great a distance.” At Ellijoy, the corps scalped one Cherokee and captured another. Despite “a good many squaws and about ten men” nearby, Grant wished to press on to destroy more villages in haste. More survivors might be found. Grant wished not to leave “any body behind” in search of scalps and possibly separated from the main army as it attempted this task.48

48 SCG, September 5-12, 1761, p. 2; French, “Journal,” 288 (June 28); Grant Journal, 34 (June 28).
Finding few Cherokees still in their villages and unable to scour the woods, some Chickasaws and Catawbas departed. On June 16, Grant’s army reached the commercial hub and the largest of the Middle Towns, Cowee. Like a war leader calling villagers to the war path, Silverheels taunted Cherokees. “With a loud voice” he “three times summoned all the Cherokees, from all their towns and mountains to come and hear the news he had to tell them from the North.” Silverheels and Kennedy’s Indians, though a mishmash of British allies, some of them with no history of conflict with the Cherokees, gave Cherokees the impression that as long as they opposed the British they had Indian enemies in all directions. This comforted the South Carolina Provincials. When they did
not appear, Silverheels rallied the army by shouting that “since they would not come and hear him, he must burn and destroy their towns.”

On June 22, Grant’s Indian allies sought their Cherokee prey in separate directions, in scout parties that transcended tribal lines. In the evening, Chickasaws returned with a Cherokee headman’s scalp. The next day, the Mohawks, the Catawba Colonel Ayres, and his son returned with another warrior’s scalp. “They fell in with” three or four hundred Indians near Stecoe “& were oblig’d to run,” Captain French reported.

On June 24, Grant returned to the river opposite Cowee. The next day, he left Lieutenant Colonel Henry Laurens at Nequassee with one thousand men to care for the wounded, the provisions, and the camp. Grant and the Indian corps led the rest on a four-day, fifty-mile march of destruction. They destroyed the five vacant Cherokee Out Towns, including the “Mother Town” of Kittuwha. By Cherokee myth, this was the birthplace of the Cherokee people. Grant made a bold statement: times had changed. One soldier dubbed it “the most difficult road ever troops passed over.”

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49 Grant Journal, 30 (June 16); Scots Magazine, August 1761, 431; King, “Powder Horn,” 35.
50 Grant Journal, 31 (June 22); French Journal, 285 (June 22), 288 (July 7); King, “Powder Horn,” 40n; David Corkran, The Cherokee Frontier, 1740-1762 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962), 251-52.
In a final act of brutality, Grant’s “Mohawk” warriors thrust a stick down the throat of an old Cherokee, stabbed him in the neck and sides with arrows, and
tomahawked his head. The men were “so much fatigued, that they could hardly crawl.”

“Even our Indians were knocked up,” Grant admitted. 53

From June 10 to June 29, the invaders captured seven Cherokees and killed another seven. One of the dead was Kittuhwa headman Ocayula, a scout in the Fort Duquesne campaign. The Indian corps ambushed him with just a bow and arrow in his hands. Cherokees killed just one white packhorseman. They did so as the weary army headed back to Fort Prince George on July 3, its work of vengeance complete. 54 On July 4, the army reached “the Dividings” – where the trail forked, returning east to Fort Prince

53 Grant Journal, 34 (June 28); French, “Journal,” 288 (June 28).

54 Rations cut, soldiers’ energy flagged and exhaustion set in. On July 3, the Mankiller of Nequassee and three warriors ambushed and scalped a sentry. French, “Journal,” 288 (June 29).
George or west to the Valley Towns. Grant feigned toward the Valley settlements but for
some reason did not attack them. This was enough to scatter the townspeople to the
Overhills. 55 On July 9, the army limped into Fort Prince George with just two days’
provisions remaining. “Everything has succeeded,” the colonel boasted. “Nothing was
left to be done.” As Grant awaited peace negotiations, one overjoyed Provincial rejoiced:
“Heaven has blessed us with the greatest success…we have finished our business.” 56

Reflecting on the grueling campaign, Grant wrote to Amherst that “the
Provincials have behaved well.” The Rangers “who I had not so favorable an Opinion of,
have been very useful & alert, they never made a Difficulty.” Grant praised the Indian
corps in general, and lauded Captain Kennedy and the Upper (Western) Chickasaws in
particular. His comments secured the Indian allies generous compensation from the
colony. 57 Kennedy’s Indians danced together, scouted together, and fought together.
They played a major part in bringing Cherokee resistance to a halt. But they had not
secured their own people’s futures. And for the Cherokee Indians, survival depended
upon making peace on British terms.

In July, as Grant waited for Cherokee diplomats at Fort Prince George,
Attakullakulla noted that villagers were dying of starvation along the roadsides.

55 British sources do not agree on the numbers taken or killed. These numbers are estimates. French,
“Journal,” 283-289 (June 12, 14, 16, 22, 26-29, July 3); SCG, July 4-11, 1761, p. 2, July 25-August 1,
1761, p. 2; King, “Powder Horn,” 34.

56 James Grant to Jeffery Amherst, July 10, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 94r-v; Grant Journal, 35
(July 3). On the hardships the soldiers endured, see “Extract of a Letter from an Officer in Col.
Middleton’s Regiment, dated July 10, 1761,” The Royal Magazine, 1761, 154; “From the South-Carolina
Weekly Gazette, July 15,” Scots Magazine, August 1761, 430.

57 James Grant to Jeffery Amherst, July 10, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 94.
Survivors languished on horse flesh. He journeyed not to meet with Grant, but rather to Colonel Byrd. At Samuel Stalnaker’s on the Holston River, he proposed to revisit the Virginian’s November 1760 terms. On July 18, 180 miles northeast of Chota, Byrd learned that Cherokees were “ready to bury the hatchet.” Had Amherst allowed it, Virginia’s Governor Fauquier wished only to “secur[e] our own settlements from any future inroads” and block Cherokee commerce with the French. A peace, he continued, “without hard or oppressive terms…may almost probably be lasting,” producing security for the colonies and the Cherokee trade for Virginia. Despite what happened in 1758, Cherokees preferred such terms to South Carolina’s tyranny.\(^\text{58}\)

Byrd had no desire to attack Chota. Indeed, his army remained incomplete. Several hundred unarmed North Carolina Provincials and fifty Tuscarora Indians had not yet left the piedmont post of Fort Dobbs. But Byrd and Fauquier obeyed Amherst’s orders. The governor and provincial elites feared the political cost of alienating South Carolina. Byrd referred Attakullakulla to Colonel Grant and Governor Bull. He did so with a heavy heart. “I certainly must appear in a very despicable Light to them, as I real[y] do to myself,” the colonel wrote to General Amherst. On August 1, Byrd resigned. Attakullakulla returned home dejected and unsure where to turn. It would be months before the signing of a treaty.\(^\text{59}\)

\(^{58}\) Francis Fauquier to William Byrd III, July 1, 1761, Attakullakulla to William Byrd III, July 7, 1761, Byrd Correspondence, 2:741, 743-45.

\(^{59}\) Byrd still doubted his troop strength, William Byrd III to Jeffery Amherst, July 1, 1761, August 1, 1761, Amherst Papers, A General Return of the Virginia Regiment of Foot Commanded by the Hon. Wm Byrd Encamp at Stalnakers July 31, 1761,” Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fols. 268, 271-72 (quote on fol. 272v), 274; Maria Taylor Byrd to William Byrd III, June 29-July 2, 1761, August 25, 1761, Byrd Correspondence, 2:737-38, 752.
Chapter 11: “The Town of Lyes”: Negotiating a Peace Reveals Deep-Seated Tensions

In mid-July 1761, Lieutenant Colonel James Grant and his army camped near Fort Prince George opposite the Lower Towns. The Virginians, now under Colonel Adam Stephen approached the Cherokee Overhills from the Shenandoah Valley. Cherokee visitors streamed into Grant’s camp. On July 21, Caesar of Chatuga, a Cherokee warrior from Great Tellico, arrived with a white flag. “A very old man,” according to one British officer, Caesar had escaped slavery in coastal South Carolina in his youth. The Cherokee spoke English. He had been a long-time friend of South Carolina; he also carried letters from Oconostota. Grant insisted on negotiating only with Oconostota, Ostenaco, Standing Turkey, or Attakullakulla.

But the first three cited safety concerns. They were pessimistic about the terms Grant had unveiled in May before he invaded the Cherokee villages. They feared the whole process was a trap to lure them away from the Overhills so Virginia could attack. On July 31 and August 1, more Cherokees arrived with proposals of their own. They offered to join the British in a long-proposed war against the Creeks. Still others, like Tiftoe of Keowee and the Slave Catcher of Tomassee delivered wampum, a pipe, and some tobacco from the Warrior of Neowee. Grant refused to deal with these headmen. He ignored the decentralized nature of Cherokee leadership. Currying support village by

1 Christopher French, “Journal of an Expedition to South Carolina,” Journal of Cherokee Studies 2, no. 3 (Summer 1977):290 (July 21).
2 Lieutenant Colonel Grant’s Talk to Oconostota & the Standing Turkey, July 22, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 29 (DLAR reel 28, frame 00011); French, “Journal,” 290 (July 23).
village, by sending British or Provincial delegates on a goodwill tour, might have helped to achieve an accord that all sides could agree upon. But Grant dismissed creative solutions that frequently transformed mutual disgust into cooperative arrangements in traditional Cherokee diplomacy. Instead, the Cornpuller vowed only to negotiate with select headmen, and only on the terms he thought sufficient. As a result, many of the Indians felt trapped. Though bent on peace, they differed among themselves over the best strategy to achieve it. Only when Tiftoe requested it did Grant finally send Captain John Watts, a former trader turned South Carolina Ranger, with Tiftoe and the Slave Catcher to tour the Lower Towns. As a “resident alien,” Watts’s presence indicated that Grant sought peace. Still, the lieutenant colonel pressured the Indians to hurry back with his hand-picked leaders to negotiate a treaty.3

Cherokees had forced South Carolinians of all stripes into a corner, bringing latent disputes into the open. Cherokees hesitated to negotiate with Grant in the manner that he expected. Some Cherokees wished to hold out for French aid. Others sought an economic partnership with Virginia. South Carolina’s elites therefore questioned whether Grant had gone far enough in bringing destruction and ruin on the Cherokee people, and blamed the commander for ineptitude. The establishment of separate treaties with Virginia and South Carolina shows the differences between the colonies and highlights the challenge of intercolonial competition.

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3 “In short nothing but the fear of their Persons, can prevent their coming.” James Grant to William Bull, August 7, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 29 (DLAR reel 28, frame 00015); French, “Journal,” 291 (July 31, August 1, 9, 10); SCG, August 29-September 3, 1761, p. 3; Wayne E. Lee, “Peace Chiefs and Blood Revenge: Patterns of Restraint in Native American Warfare, 1500-1800,” *Journal of Military History* 71, no. 3 (July 2007): 737-38.
Grant’s actions on the campaign inflamed tensions between the colonial elites and the crown. When the army returned to Fort Prince George on July 10, Colonel Thomas Middleton, the provincial commander, invoked a March 31 letter from Lieutenant Governor Bull granting him permission to take leave if the service became disagreeable to him. He left in a huff without notifying Grant.\(^4\) Middleton reached Charles Town a week later. The incensed gentleman consulted with merchant Christopher Gadsden, his friend and colleague in the South Carolina Assembly. Rumblings about British authority soon began.

Befuddled and defiant, Grant blasted Middleton for leaving and criticized Bull for the “extraordinary” step of granting leave to the provincial commander. Grant, defending royal prerogative, believed he commanded Middleton. The colonel claimed that placing himself under Grant was “altogether a Voluntary Act,” and he needed only answer to his fellow provincials.\(^5\)

Court of Admiralty Judge John Rattray urged both parties to calm down, but to no avail. “I…think not that Envy will ever be silent,” Rattray wrote to Grant. “She already whispers. What[?] not gone to the Valley So few Indians killed Surely Colo. Grant will not make a peace with these wretches Now that their Corn is destroyed they will come down upon us like wolves.”\(^6\) Many believed Grant should have destroyed the Valley

\(^4\) Grant believed his authority superceded both Bull and Middleton. Thomas Middleton to William Bull, William Bull to Thomas Middleton, March 31, 1761, James Grant to William Bull, April 3, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frames 00091, 00093-94, 00402).

\(^5\) William Bull to James Grant, July 8 [actually 18], 1761, Thomas Middleton to James Grant, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frames 00200-1, 00202); James Grant to Thomas Middleton, [July 10, 1761], \textit{Ibid.}, Box 29 (DLAR reel 28, frames 00003-4).

\(^6\) John Rattray to James Grant, July 18, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frame 00208).
Towns and negotiated the peace from there. “It was supposed,” the *South Carolina Gazette* reported, that he would do so. To claim that such a move was unnecessary, Gadsden wrote, “is utterly unintelligible to me, and every of my neighbors.” Grant’s critics also grumbled that he had not inflicted enough suffering on the Cherokees. “When you consider what Indian Towns are, and how soon rebuilt,” planter Eliza Lucas Pinckney wrote, “you will think we need not be too much elated…unless we had killed more Indians.” An anonymous letter to the editor of the *South Carolina Gazette*, which contemporaries later attributed to Middleton, wondered “Whether our Frontiers are advanced” and whether “every Method was taken to hurt the Enemy.” Middleton argued that Wells’ *Weekly Gazette* mirrored British arrogance and disrespect. It misrepresented and minimized the actions of the provincial commander and his men in the June 10 battle. The aggrieved Middleton alleged that British orders “proved fatal to” many and “must reflect Dishonour somewhat.”

Over the next month, the war of words played out. Middleton and his spokesman, Gadsden, became heroes for colonists “slighted” by colonial rule. Middleton called Grant a “mean Spirited Pusillanimous wretch.” He continued: “You never once acquainted me with a Singular Plan you had form’d.” Then he raised the stakes. “I was told too before I left the Camp that you Intended to make a Serious Affair of it, which I Assure you Sir I

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8 SCG, July 4-11, 1761, p. 2, July 18-25, 1761, p. 2, August 1-8, 1761, p. 2; Peter Timothy to John Gray, July 29, 1761, John Rattray to James Grant, August 20, 1761, William Bull to James Grant, August 19, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frames 00229, 00268, 00265).
Grant fired back with a three-thousand-word letter. Developing seven points, he refuted Middleton’s claims. He blamed the provincial for failing to “observe Established Rules.” The words that followed foreshadowed conflicts to come. “I never do Consult any Body,” he said. A commander “should think for himself…the Sanction of the Advice & Opinion of a hundred People is not worth a Shilling.” If Middleton wished to make a “serious affair” of it all, Grant would make himself available “to Any body who calls upon [me]” when he reached town.  

Lieutenant Governor Bull was appointed by the Crown. Yet he had always been popular with the assembly. In fact, his late sister, Mary, had wed Middleton. He attempted to play both sides. He blocked the publication of inflammatory material in the city’s newspapers. Bull reminded Grant that the provincial officers were “gentlemen who had become officers of a season,” doing invaluable service to crown and province. They were “not gentlemen who followed war as a profession.” At the same time he assured Grant that the citizens of Charles Town were sympathetic to his own point of view. Bull sent Justice John Rattray to calm Middleton down. Rattray paid three visits to Middleton’s Charles Town home. He also attempted to talk to the ex-provincial officer on the floor of the assembly. But Middleton ignored Rattray every time. Instead,  

9 Thomas Middleton to James Grant, July 19, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frames 00215-16).  
10 James Grant to Thomas Middleton, July 30, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 29 (DLAR reel 28, frames 00012-14).  
11 William Bull to James Grant, July 25, 1761, August 19, 1761, John Rattray to James Grant, August 20, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 29, frames 00226, 00264-66, 00267-68).
he wrote yet another angry letter to Grant, a missive that rebutted the lieutenant colonel’s seven position points. Grant, he argued, “did not understand the meaning of ye word Concert.” Indeed, “you were worse than your word” and “you acted Hypocratically and Deceitfully,” Middleton wrote. Throwing down the gauntlet, he added defiantly: “I shall be in Town” upon your return, “and tho’ I will not be at home to Every body, yet I most certainly will be to you.” No closing salutation followed. The issue was not dead.12

By late August, “insinuations” in the provincial camp led to “an insidious report spread in Charles Town” that criticized Middleton’s second-in-command, the merchant and slave trader Henry Laurens. Laurens was a loyal Grant supporter. And in a pamphlet passed around Charles Town, Christopher Gadsden facetiously claimed that Grant’s troops could surely have survived for six months “upon strawberries, Chesnuts & Indian potatoes” in order to continue their assault on the Cherokee towns. Laurens remarked satirically, “I have inform’d them, that the Cherokee Country produces Walnuts & Acorns too.” Battle lines were drawn.13

It took four months – from late August to late December 1761 – to settle peace terms. First, Grant and Attakullakulla drafted preliminaries at Fort Prince George. Next, the Assembly and the Cherokee delegation reworked them at Ashley Ferry. Attakullakulla brought those revisions home. And then he journeyed to Charles Town to finalize the articles of peace.

12 John Rattray to James Grant, August 16, 1761, Thomas Middleton to James Grant, August 17, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frames 00255-57, 00258-63. Quote on frames 00259, 00263).
13 Henry Laurens to James Grant, October 1, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frames 00309-10).
On August 28, a number of Cherokee headmen came to Grant’s camp to treat for peace. None of them were from the Lower Towns. Nor were Oconostota, Ostenaco, and Standing Turkey – leaders who enjoyed the respect of a majority of Cherokees – among them. Instead, it was Attakullakulla and his deputies who smoked a peace pipe with Grant and his subordinates near Fort Prince George. The lieutenant colonel couldn’t have found a more pliable diplomat. The Tomatley headman presented strings of beads signifying the peaceful intentions of several villages. The beads could not stand in for the Cherokees as a whole. But Grant affirmed, as if saying it made it so, that the Cherokee came with the assent of “the whole Nation.”

On August 30, with “great Pleasure & Satisfaction to Brighten the Chain, & to make this Path Straight,” Grant presented the terms of peace. He struck an article proclaiming Attakullakulla as “emperor.” Influential headmen “would never come into it, and he neither has nor pretends to have Influence enough” to do anything without their assent. In the Cherokee Country, Grant wrote, “there is no Coercive Power.” But the lieutenant colonel ignored that Cherokee leadership relied on consensus, not dictatorship or force. He grumbled that “those head men are not good enough Patriots to Sacrifice their private Interest and Power to the publick Good.” Attakullakulla, he admitted, did not represent all Cherokees. But Grant would not wait – or work – to win the trust of the rest. Provisioning his troops was becoming difficult. Desertion among the provincials


15 William Bull to James Grant, April 14, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frames 00120-21); Col. Grant’s Talk To the Cherokee Deputies Aug. 30th 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/37, fol. 104r.
persisted. He wished to push a peace, however imperfect, and get out of Carolina. With this in mind, and with Bull’s assent, the redcoat struck an article constraining Cherokees to Twenty-Six Mile Creek (twenty six miles southeast of Keowee). The stipulation would have limited Indian hunting grounds and promoted white settlement, testing Cherokee pacifism.16

Attakullakulla did not accept all Grant’s terms. He did not want to turn over four Cherokees for execution. He believed that white murderers should face death in Cherokee custody for killing Cherokees. He asked to consult “the whole Nation.” The Cornpuller referred the delegates to the provincial capital to negotiate. As they packed, former Settico trader Charles McGunningham returned from Charles Town. He warned the Cherokees that South Carolina “wanted to kill them, that the small Pox and many other dangerous” and fatal “distempers” were raging. “If they went to Charles Town they would never come back,” McGunningham announced. Only six or seven Cherokees and their “attendants” set out for the city with Attakullakulla on September 2. Old Caesar of Chatuga, representing Oconostota, and the Young Raven of Hiwassee, perhaps speaking for young Valley townsmen, refused to go.17 The Cherokee negotiators represented fewer Cherokees than ever.

16 William Bull to James Grant, April 14, 24, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frames 00120-21. 00136); Col. Grant’s Talk To the Cherokee Deputies Aug. 30th 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/37, fol. 104r; Jeffrey William Dennis, “American Revolutionaries and Native Americans: The South Carolina Experience,” (Ph.D. diss., University of Notre Dame, 2002), 100-1; James Grant to William Bull, September 2, 1761, JCA, 26 March 1761-9 July 1761; 13 July-26 December 1761, p. 240-42 (September 15).

17 Willenawa of Toqua, Cappy of Chota, Halfbreed Will of Nequassee, Classati the Mankiller of Nequassee, and the Raven of Hiwassee went with Attakullakulla and the “attendants.” Journal of the Conferences with the Cherokee Deputies, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fols. 104v, 104v-105, 105; French, “Journal,” 291 (August 28); James Grant to William Bull, September 2, 1761, JCA, 26 March 1761-9 July 328
Five provincial officers, all of them assemblymen, escorted the Cherokees. Grant hoped that these loyal servants of the crown would sway hardliners in the Commons House. They did so with the hostile climate created by the Middleton-Grant dispute weighing heavily on people’s minds. One of the provincials, Major John Moultrie wrote to his future wife: “It is a naughty world, where falsehood pride & envy are too often much supported, & the best deeds & intentions, are slander’d, misrepresented & abused.” He continued, “As you are in Charlestown I imagine you can guess why I say this.”

Grant’s backers would not sway opinion without further drama. The delegation and its escort reached the outskirts of Charles Town after a twelve-day journey. They bypassed the yellow-fever infested capital and continued to Edward Legge’s house at Shem Town, also called Ashley Ferry.18

Attakullakulla met first with the South Carolina Council. Representing the “great distress” of his people, he flattered the gentlemen, reportedly calling the white people “superior to us,” appealing to their belief in “God almighty,” and proclaiming a desire to “live together as brothers.”19 Several days of fierce debate unfolded as the assemblymen

1761; 13 July-26 December 1761, p. 240-42 (September 15); James Grant to Messrs. Smith and Nutt, September 11, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 29 (DLAR reel 28, frame 00024).

18 John Moultrie, Jr., to Eleanor Austin, September 1, 1761, M.C.B. Gubbins, Transcripts and Abstracts of Moultrie Family Papers, 1746-1965, SCHS, 43/36; Henry Laurens to James Grant, September 9, 1761, William Bull to James Grant, September 11, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frames 00278, 00280-81); Dennis, “American Revolutionaries and Native Americans,” 101. Lieutenant Colonel Henry Laurens, Captains William Moultrie and John Ainslie, and Lieutenants John Lloyd and John Savage escorted the Indians. James Grant to William Bull, September 2, 1761, JCA, 26 March 1761-9 July 1761; 13 July-26 December 1761, p. 240-42 (September 15).

19 SCCJ, 1757-1762, Unit 5, p. 159-61 (September 15); Hewatt, An Historical Account (London: A. Donaldson, 1779), 2:253-54.
discussed peace terms. The conservative Henry Laurens and Grant’s loyal coterie of
Provincials fought for a moderate settlement and defended the redcoat commander. A
committee and a small minority led by Christopher Gadsden and Colonel Middleton
demanded the “head or Scalp” of each Cherokee “murderer.” But a two-thirds majority
overruled them. Nearly all the assemblymen, using a letter Bull showed them as proof,
excoriated the redcoat for not destroying all of the Cherokee villages. They blasted Grant
for disrespecting and ignoring provincial Colonel Middleton. The Cherokees, they said,
did not respect the British troops. Virginia was impotent. The Province had sacrificed
enough. Taxes were too high. Just get it over with and negotiate a treaty, they
grumbled.\footnote{JCA, 26 March 1761-9 July 1761; 13 July-26 December 1761, p. 240-42 (September 15), 243-46, 255-56 (September 15, 16, 18); William Bull to Jeffery Amherst, September 24, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/35, fol. 206.}

The contentiousness on the House floor previewed the debates that led to the
American Revolution. On the eighteenth, Laurens argued that Grant had gone far
enough. With some effect, he cited the “impassible” rivers, the barefoot, sick, and poorly
supplied provincials (insinuating that it was the assembly’s fault). He offered to debate
anyone on this “before 12 Impartial men.” As the session adjourned, Laurens and
Middleton confronted each other in a shouting match. On Bull’s orders, Captain John
Stuart, the Carolina officer who survived the Fort Loudoun siege, arrested and confined
the two bickering legislators. He made them pledge not to duel. Laurens continued to
back Grant. Stuart proclaimed publicly that “much pains have been taken to Blacken
Lauren’s Character.” With Gadsden on his side, Middleton and Grant continued with

their plans to square off in a duel of their own. Would-be mediator John Rattray contracted yellow fever. He died before the end of the month.21

Figure 30: Christopher Gadsden as a young man. After Sir Joshua Reynolds, 1903. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

On September 23, Attakullakulla accepted preliminary peace terms, modified by the assemblymen. These terms would do little to win him favor at home or to ensure a long lasting peace. The legislators declined to garrison Fort Loudoun. Yet they claimed the right to do so.22 The peace terms also blatantly violated Cherokee sovereignty and

21 JCA, 26 March 1761-9 July 1761; 13 July-26 December 1761, p. 237-39, 243-45, 247-56 (September 15, 16, 18); John Stuart to James Grant, September 18, 26, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frames 00287-89, 00306-7. Quote on frame 00288); SCG, September 26-October 3, 1761, p. 3.
22 SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 5, p. 162-66 (September 22), 167-169 (September 23); JCA, 26 March 1761-9 July 1761; 13 July-26 December 1761, p. 247-56 (September 18). On yellow fever, see Peter McCandless, 331
land rights. The treaty required the Cherokees to return the African Americans among them to British authorities. This reflects white fears of interracial mixing and military alliance, let alone that Cherokee Country might become a safe haven for blacks. The Cherokees also had to execute those who had killed British subjects. Twenty-Six-Mile Creek became the new Cherokee-Carolina frontier. The Indians could not hunt beyond it. Bull worried that “they may indeed think the new Limits…an encroachment on their Antient possession.” The Lower Towns especially faced the further effects of hunting limits: more starvation and the decline of the deerskin trade. The trade might shift to the Overhills, where Virginians, following the newly widened road toward Chota, would swoop in. Cherokees might have wondered if the British wished to exterminate them altogether, to pave the way for white settlers. By banning Cherokees from traveling across the border without a white escort, the terms discouraged the friendly, informal exchange between Cherokees and whites that often took place at Ninety Six. The terms Attakullakulla accepted also required Cherokees to deliver French and British incendiaries and to respect farmland and pasturage at British forts. These terms would no doubt lead to disagreements in the future.23

Attakullakulla promised to return British prisoners. Some, like carpenter John Stephens, wished to return. But others, like Fort Loudoun’s Corporal John Bench,

23 JCA, 26 March 1761-9 July 1761; 13 July-26 December 1761, p. 247-56 (September 18, 1761); William Bull to Jeffery Amherst, September 24, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/35, fol. 206.
willingly assimilated into Cherokee society. The British offered to return Cherokee prisoners with no strings attached. This was long overdue, and it would regain some popularity for Attakullakulla among his people. A half dozen or more of the forty or fifty taken during the war had died of starvation, disease, and mistreatment. The Council journals from the previous winter revealed that British soldiers raped Cherokee women detainees with impunity. Attakullakulla and his delegation, with copies of the terms in hand, ventured to Charles Town to spoke from a ceremonial peace pipe that Cherokees had given to Governor Glen a decade earlier. Then they went home, promising to return to Charles Town to confirm the treaty after holding a national referendum at Chota.\(^{24}\)

Given Attakullakulla’s limited influence among his people, the promise would be difficult to keep. Indeed, he may never have intended to do so.

Despite an escort of provincial officers, frontiersmen “insulted & threatnd” Attakullakulla “oftner than once” on the road back to Fort Prince George. It was a sign of things to come. These settlers, still stinging from the 1760 Cherokee offensive, had little respect even for pacific and moderate Cherokees. Grant too thumbed his nose at the de facto puppet emperor. The Carpenter, he wrote, referring to the Cherokee’s moniker, “would have agreed” to virtually anything. John Stuart – the Indian’s friend and confidante – admitted that Attakullakulla fancied himself a hero. Stuart believed that Attakullakulla secretly aimed “to become the leading Man” of the Cherokees. The Indian carried strings of wampum from just five villages. In July, a trader with reliable

\(^{24}\) William Bull to the Board of Trade, September 23, 1761, \textit{BPRO-SC}, 29:183-85; SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 6, p. 63, 67 (January 8, 20, 1761). On Stephens, see Henry Laurens to James Grant, October 1, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frame 00310). John Bench was an ancestor of Major League Baseball Hall of Famer, catcher Johnny Bench. On sexual abuse in jail, see SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 6, p. 67 (January 20).
information reported rumors of a Cherokee-led plot to assassinate the headman, though he did not elaborate on who the conspirators were.\(^\text{25}\)

Attakullakulla and the Cherokees reached Fort Prince George on October 12. Two days later, “without Arms or an Escort,” Grant and several officers visited the remnants of the Lower Towns. Some of the displaced Lower townsmen had returned. They were “much pleased” to put the chaos behind and proceed with rebuilding. They treated the British visitors cordially, and Grant was convinced of their “Sincerity.” But the proposed treaty jeopardized their hunting grounds, and therefore placed the long-term survival of the Lower Towns in doubt.\(^\text{26}\)

An additional two hundred Cherokees camped near the fort, ready to resettle the Lower Towns in the spring. Tiftoe and the Wolf of Keowee danced all night on October 31 to celebrate. They were eager to “make Stores, & to Plant, as soon as we can.” This was home, and they would not have it any other way: “I have been Lost over the Hills: I am come down to hunt on my own Land,” Tiftoe announced. He and the Keowees had endured much. Many were starving. But as a sign of good faith, they stored their possessions and their corn at Fort Prince George. Tiftoe sent a pipe for McIntosh, Grant, and Bull to smoke. Eager to resume a semblance of “ordinary” life, he requested a trader

\(^{25}\) Stuart wrote: “he entertains the most Sanguine hopes of regaining his wonted influence and weight with His countrymen.” John Stuart to James Grant, September 26, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frame 00306); SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 5, p. 160 (Shem Town, Ashley River, September 15, 1761), 160; Grant and some officers toured Cullasatchee (Sugar Town), Toxaway, Qualatchee, Estatoe, and Columna. French, “Journal,” 292-93 (October 14). On the assassination rumors, see William Bull to James Grant, July 17, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frame 00206).

\(^{26}\) Attakullakulla left the Congarees on October 2. He left Keowee on October 15 to inform others that he negotiated a peace. He promised to return to Ninety Six by November 9 to discuss the deerskin trade. Henry Laurens to James Grant, October 1, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frame 00139); James Grant to Jeffery Amherst, November 5, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 111r.
for his people. He also made a symbolic statement. Concerned about the preliminary
treaty and hopeful of ensuring future prospects, he sent a bag of soil to Lieutenant
Governor Bull “to put him in mind” of the 1755 meeting at Saluda. There, the headman
said, all agreed “we was to hunt this Side Long Canes to Tugala [Toogaloo].” The Long
Canes settlers had violated that accord. As a consequence, Tiftoe called for the
government to limit white settlers to Turkey Creek and the head of the Broad. He
advocated a vast hunting preserve east of that to be shared by natives and colonists alike.
His plan fell on deaf ears. Its reception did not bode well for the Lower Towns.²⁷

When Grant learned that the Gadsden-Middleton coterie in the Commons House
had set the Cherokee-Carolina boundary at Twenty-Six-Mile Creek, he was incensed.
Grant blamed Bull for allowing the Assembly to call the shots despite the Crown’s best
interests. Bull had earlier agreed to strike the stipulation. But now he had reneged. The
alteration had the potential to derail the peace. Grant fretted that “The Intended
Encroachment…upon the Indian Country, must inevitably produce another War in a few
Months.” The inhabitants “cannot Subsist” upon smaller hunting grounds, he said. And
if Virginia tried to impose her own limits on Cherokee territory, Grant noted, Cherokees
would starve.²⁸ Laurens, smeared by the radicals in the Commons House, confessed that

²⁷ James Grant to Jeffery Amherst, November 5, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 111r; Lachlan
McIntosh to William Bull, [November 1], 1761, A Talk from Tiftoe, & the Wolf to Cap.’ Mackintosh,
November 1, 1761, McIntosh to Bull, November 6, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frames
00343-44, 00345-46).

²⁸ James Grant to William Bull, September 28, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 29 (DLAR reel 28, frames 00026-
28); James Grant to Jeffery Amherst, October 6, 1761, November 5, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol.
108r.
the actions of the Gadsden-Middleton faction filled him with “grief & shame.” Grant scoffed at the notion of allowing an elected assembly to manipulate a treaty.29

For some reason, Bull had shown the assembly several letters from Grant. In the correspondence, Grant mentioned the possibility of invading the Valley and concluding the peace in a Cherokee village. In the end, the scheme was neither necessary nor prudent. But now, because Grant did not follow through, his critics saw him as weak.


29 Henry Laurens to James Grant, October 14, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frames 00330-31); James Grant to William Bull, November 4, 1761, *Ibid.*, Box 29 (DLAR reel 28, frames 00036-39).
The assemblymen, Grant charged – treating them all as one block – had unjustifiably thrown “Reflections and Aspersions” on his conduct. They had disparaged the British army. Grant belittled the provincials and accused the provincial legislators of failing to sufficiently fund and equip a viable army of their own. But as a public relations ploy, the charge backfired, tipping popular support in favor of colonial rights.30

Grant complained to Amherst that Bull’s behavior was “so irregular and so unprecedented, that I cannot put up with it.” Bull defended his actions and retreated to his country estate. “He knows well how to play with both hands,” Stuart wrote, accusing the lieutenant governor of “Dissengenuity & Rotten heartedness.” But this is exactly what made Bull so successful. He was a masterful politician, able to balance the interests of both colony and metropole.31 The dispute nevertheless forced the lieutenant governor and the Council to again alter the treaty terms without the assembly’s knowledge. The struggle between royal and provincial prerogative was fully in play.32

On November 14, Attakullakulla arrived at Fort Prince George with a few pro-British Cherokee leaders after a month in the villages. Lower Cherokees continued to return to the Lower Towns. And Toxaways and Qualatchees planned to return there too. With enlistments expiring, Lieutenant Colonel Laurens disbanded the desertion-plagued

30 James Grant to Jeffery Amherst, June 2, 5, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 81v; James Grant to William Bull, September 28, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 29 (DLAR reel 28, frames 00026-28); William Bull to James Grant, [October 1761?], ibid., Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frames 00327-29).
31 James Grant to Jeffery Amherst, October 6, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 108r. Stuart pressed Grant to recommend him to replace Edmond Atkin (d. October 8, 1761), as superintendent of Indian affairs for the southern district. John Stuart to James Grant, October 17, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frames 00333-34); SCG, October 10-17, 1761, p. 3.
32 In November, the council obliged the “sick,” disorganized, and forgetful governor’s oversight and struck the land boundary article from the treaty. SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 5, p. 176-77 (November 13, 1761); William Bull to James Grant, November 13, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frames 00351-52).
South Carolina provincials. Seven white prisoners were redeemed. Without government sanction, traders from Augusta, Georgia, once again commenced business with Seroweh. Life was returning to normal, it seemed, and the Cherokees had no resources with which to fight.33

If a national referendum took place, no record of it has been found. Cherokee confidence in the proposed peace was not high. The Indians, Grant noted, “in speaking of Charles-town…have for many Years been accustomed to call it the Town of Lyes.” Cherokee women, fearful for their husbands’ safety, believed that Grant had built a jail at Ninety Six to confine the diplomats and “drive” them “like a parcel of Sheep” to Charles Town. Attakullakulla claimed that he had the consent of the “Nation.” But he could not gather a large group of pro-British headmen. He blamed this on the hunting season. If Attakullakulla’s assertions are true, hunting superseded arranging formal peace terms. If his claims are false, many Cherokees failed to understand the Anglo-European obsession with formal “terms.” Or perhaps they lacked enthusiasm for the articles and did not accede to the authority the chief claimed.34

33 James Grant to William Bull, November 19, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 29 (DLAR reel 28, frames 00044-45). On October 6 the Rangers contracted to four companies. SCG, October 10-17, 1761, p. 3. On discharging the Provincials, see James Grant to Lieutenant Henry Laurens, to William Bull, October 29, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 29 (DLAR reel 28, frames 00034-35), Henry Laurens to James Grant, November 10, 1761, to Captain John Grinnan, November 15, 1761, to James Grant, November 15, 1761, Ibid., Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frames 00350, 00357-58, 00359-60); SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 5: July 1, 1760-Dec. 17, 1761, p. 175 (November 13, 1761). On December 3, the officers of the disbanded men reached Charles Town. SCG, November 28-December 5, 1761, p. 3.

34 Lachlan McIntosh to James Grant, November 16, 1761, A Talk from the Little Carpenter to Mr. Mackintosh, [November 15, 1761], A Talk From the Little Carpenter to be Sent to the Gov. & Col. Grant, November 16, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 33 (DLAR reel 32, frames 00361, 00355-56, 00363; James Grant to Jeffery Amherst, November 19, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 116. Grant and the officers built “Huts” at Ninety Six for themselves. None of the prominent Valley Towns headmen listed as British allies came to the conferences.
Attakullakulla cobbled together several half-Cherokee diplomats and Connecorte’s adopted son, an African American named Cappy. The men journeyed to Fort Prince George. On the way, several Cherokees in Attakullakulla’s delegation fled back home rather than continue to Charles Town. By some accounts they left in a huff after they “quarreled” with Attakullakulla. Still, Attakullakulla and his retinue continued to Charles Town to finalize the peace.35

News of the South Carolina negotiations surprised Virginian observers. “We catch the reports of Peace with gaping Mouths,” planter George Washington wrote.36 But how would the Cherokees position themselves with Virginia? By early September, Colonel Adam Stephen had moved his army of Virginia Provincials closer to Chota. The men built a large fort on the Great Island of the Holston River, just 130 miles from the Cherokee beloved town. This no doubt put pressure on Overhills leaders, who were already disenchanted with Attakullakulla’s proceedings. These men included Standing Turkey, Ostenaco, and Oconostota. And they had Fort Loudoun adoptee Corporal John Bench to assist them as secretary and translator. The “opposite faction,” as Stephen described the men, wanted to establish an economic partnership with Virginia, without

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35James Grant to William Bull, November 19, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 29 (DLAR reel 28, frames 00044-45); SCG, November 28-December 5, 1761, p. 3. Attakullakulla clashed with Captain McIntosh, “calling all the World Lyars particularly the Province of Carolina.” JCA, 26 March 1761-9 July 1761; 13 July-26 December 1761, p. 263 (December 4). Grant broke up the camp on October 16 and marched to Ninety Six, arriving on October 26. On October 29, two hundred enlisted Provincials were paid and discharged. In the next days, the 17th, 22nd, half of the 95th Regiment, and the remaining Provincials, marched southeast. The redcoats sailed for the Caribbean. A few companies of the 95th, and the 1st (Royal Scots) remained with Grant at Ninety Six until November 19. SCG, October 24-31, 1761, p. 2, October 31-November 7, 1761, p. 2, November 7-14, p. 2, November 14-21, p. 2; French, “Journal,” 293 (October 16, 26, 30), 299; James Grant to Jeffery Amherst, November 5, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fols. 111r-v.

assigning guilt or dwelling upon past “mischief done on Both sides.” Virginia could protect the Cherokees from their Shawnee enemies as well. The men defended Cherokee sovereignty, vowing to enforce law and order without white interference by constructing a jail at Chota. In a symbolic gesture showing that the young men wanted peace, Standing Turkey’s young son delivered a pipe and a message to Colonel Stephen, announcing that “the chain [of friendship] is bright, which has been so long black.”37

Mid-November, as Attakullakulla went to South Carolina to confirm an unpopular peace. Grant’s inner circle of soldiers, both provincial and redcoat, who accompanied the Indian to Charles Town, snubbed Governor Bull during their welcome ceremony. At the same time, large numbers of Cherokees went to Virginia to attempt a separate, less humiliating peace. Overhill leaders like Standing Turkey and Oconostota were too proud and too fearful for their safety to concede defeat to South Carolina. So they went to Virginia. Along the way they met North Carolina provincials and several dozen Tuscaroras under Lieutenant Colonel Hugh Waddell. The Virginians were widening a road leading from the Great Island to Chota. Virginia, with North Carolina’s meager aid, was positioning itself for postwar prosperity and dominance.38

37 Adam Stephen to Jeffery Amherst, October 5, 24, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fols. 277-78, 284-85. See documents in Amherst Papers, WO 34/37, fols. 279-281; “A Talk from the great Warrior and all the other head Men of the whole Nation to Colonel Grant,” “Colonel Grant’s Talk to Oconostota & all the other Headmen & Warriors of the Cherokee Nation,” September 21, 1761, Grant Papers, Box 29 (DLAR reel 28, frames 00031-32, 00025). The fort at the Great Island was “a large Redoubt of hewed Logs on a piece of very strong ground on the Banks of the River, with four Bastions, the Exterior 120 feet.” It commanded a river system flowing to the Mississippi, and “not only awes the Cherokees but several other numerous tribes of Indians.” Adam Stephen to Jeffery Amherst, October 24, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 284r.

38 A[l]exander M[onypenny] to James Grant, November 14 [1761], Grant Papers, Box 34 (DLAR reel 33, frames 00111-15); SCG, November 21-28, 1761, p. 2; Adam Stephen to Jeffery Amherst, November 24, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/40, fol. 99; Adam Stephen to Francis Fauquier, [October 8, 1761], The
Waddell took the three or four hundred Overhill Cherokee headmen and warriors back to the Great Island to meet with Lieutenant Colonel Stephen. One hundred Cherokees already camped nearby under Virginia protection. The visitors had very different goals than the sycophantic Attakullakulla. They wished to keep the terms as simple as possible. The treaty signed on November 20 on the Great Island of the Holston included just two articles. First, the Cherokee warriors present agreed “to bury the Hatchet, and make a Firm Peace” with Virginia, North Carolina, and the Tuscaroras. Second, Cherokees would deliver the persons, or the scalps, of their people who had murdered British subjects to the Virginia Post at the Great Island. Though Stephen promised that Virginia soldiers would seize and “punish” the murderers whom the Cherokees didn’t kill or deliver, the treaty gave the Cherokees leeway. They needed only to deliver a scalp, so they could circumvent the stipulation if necessary. And the terms set no time limits or conditions. Byrd and Stephen had always been reasonable. Virginia wanted the Cherokee trade. Stephen gave no indication that Virginia would garrison the post during peacetime. Ostenaco spoke optimistically: “now our Chain will Certainly be bright.”

39 Ostenaco disavowed offensive war against Virginia. He added that “now our Chain will Certainly be bright when our King is Come on purpose to brighten it.” “Oconostota or the Great Warrior’s Answer,” October 17, 1761, “A Copy of Jud Friend’s Letter,” October 17, 1761, fol. 288; Treaty with the Cherokees, [November 20, 1761], Fauquier Papers, 2:593; “Colo. Stephen’s Speech to the King & Governor, Warriors and other Head men of the Cherokee Nation,” November 20, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/40, fol. 100.
A group of Overhills leaders led by Connecorte’s hand-picked successor, Standing Turkey, signed the treaty. Standing Turkey presented a vision of hope and confidence for fellow Cherokees. Under his leadership, the Cherokees were neither defeated nor demoralized: “My People will hunt & Plant their fields at Pleasure, and the Young People will grow up, flourish, and Replenish their Towns, and we shall be as numerous & Powerfull as formerly.” In order to do so, they needed “suitable goods to traffick for their skins.” They wished to reopen the deerskin trade, but on better terms.
with Virginia than with South Carolina. Willenawa of Toqua, one of the leaders of the Fort Loudoun siege, agreed. Stephen had his doubts. He signed his name and then expressed his concerns to the Indians present: “as You are a People without law, without order, or subordination; and as your rash young men can do whatever they Please…how can you be answerable for their Performing the Conditions upon which the Peace is granted to them?” No response was recorded.  

The process of finalizing the South Carolina treaty began in the Council Chamber on December 14. Cherokees brought their own interpreters. Lieutenant Governor Bull was ill. As Christopher Gadsden later scoffed, “of the Cherokees” present, no more than one or two “might have some influence, in his or their own particular town, but not one of any general weight in their settlements, much less throughout the nation, not even [Attakullakulla].”

The final treaty resembled the preliminary articles. The Cherokees must deliver four men to be put to death. “Blood revenge” became a capital felony, punishable under British law by execution. The British claimed the right to build and garrison forts among the Cherokees and to farm adjacent fields. The trade would reopen, but only after the Cherokees returned English prisoners (now adoptees), horses and cattle. But the final

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40 A Speech of the Governor of the Cherokees [Standing Turkey], November 21, 1761, The Speech of Willinawa, November 21, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/40, fols. 101, 102; Treaty with the Cherokees, [November 20, 1761], Fauquier Papers, 2:593. When the Cherokees confirmed the peace, Stephen sent Waddell back to North Carolina and dismissed the Tuscaroras. Adam Stephen to Jeffery Amherst, November 24, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/40, fol. 99.

41 For a list of signers, see SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 5, p. 186-87 (December 16, 1761); James Grant to Jeffery Amherst, December 24, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 119v.

42 Philopatrios [Christopher Gadsden], Some Observations on the Two Campaigns against the Cherokee Indians, in 1760 and 1761 in a Second Letter from Philopatrios (Charles Town: Peter Timothy, 1762), 58.
treaty differed in a few ways from the preliminaries. First, at the assembly’s urging, it also required Cherokees to hand over all white men who assisted them during the war. The assembly feared that the Appalachian region might become a safe haven for slave runaways or that Cherokees and slaves would unite in a race war. It required the Indians to surrender all African Americans among them. Third, the treaty set a boundary of forty miles southeast of Keowee, rather than twenty-six. Attakullakulla was to go home and explain the articles to Cherokee villagers. The treaty addressed few of the underlying problems that had caused the war before.43

To confirm the peace, Cherokees and councilmen smoked an Indian pipe. The Cherokee deputies asserted that the peace “would last while the Sun shined.” Attakullakulla swept the ground with eagle feathers and then spoke: “Before I came down here last, a great deal of Blood was spilt in the Path, but it is now wiped away.” He left the feathers behind “as a sure Token that no more shall be spilt by us, and I hope all will be light and clear again.” He produced a string of wampum and an eagle tail. He also delivered several strings of beads from Cherokee villages and headmen. Other Cherokees presented gifts. But Colonel Othniel Beale, speaking for the ill and absent lieutenant governor, gave the Cherokees only a stern reminder that “the English had a right to their prisoners.” And they would withhold the trade until then. Though Attakullakulla brought nine British captives, the South Carolinians released just two

43 SCCJ, 1757-62, 1757-1762, Unit 5, p. 187-89 (December 16, 1761), 190-91 (December 17, 1761), 191-97 (December 18, 1761).
Cherokees. As formalities concluded in the Council Chamber, it became clear that the relationship clearly would not be reciprocal.44

Cherokee defense and diplomacy had sown the seeds of the dispute between provincial and crown authority. Grant returned to Charles Town on December 19. Middleton was waiting for him. And so were angry partisans. Jeering mobs heckled the Lieutenant Colonel, the epitome of British arrogance, “every Time” he “appeared in the Streets.” Indeed, “the Spirit of Prejudice & Party has run higher than it ever did in any part of the World,” Grant wrote. Then, Middleton reportedly accosted Grant on Vendue Range Street, striking him with a cane. This was a formal challenge to duel.45

Wednesday morning, December 23, at an unknown location, tensions came to a head. Events culminated “to the honour of both parties, and the satisfaction of all the friends of each,” the Gazette reported. Folks were still buzzing about it six weeks later. Whether the challenger Middleton ever fired a shot remains unknown. According to Laurens, Middleton’s friends were “alleging” that “a G…was at 12 ¼ Yards distance when he fired over an M’s Calabash.” These enthusiasts supposed that the redcoat missed deliberately. Middleton’s supporters implied that Grant accepted blame. The Grant-Laurens faction thought that Grant “played the Old Soldier & seduced the Latter notwithstanding his full presence of mind.” Grant’s calm and deliberate misfire, they claimed, satisfied the challenger Middleton and spared his life. Grant “claimed as much: 

44 SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 5, p. 190 (December 17, 1761), 191-97 (December 18, 1761).
45 James Grant to Jeffery Amherst, December 24, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 119v; William Gilmore Simms, The History of South Carolina: From Its First European Discovery to Its Erection into a Republic (Charleston: S. Babcock, 1840), 133-35.
“I gave him his life, when it was absolutely in my power” to take it, he informed Amherst. With all parties in the duel sworn to secrecy, public speculation only fueled further discord among the merchant-planter aristocracy.46

Whatever the truth was, the duel stood in for a widening rift between white colonists and crown authority. It also raised contention between different groups of colonists as they sorted out their allegiances, their interests, their friends, and their prospects for the future.

Grant sailed out of Charles Town the day after the duel. Sympathetic to the Cherokees’ plight, he thought that the peace would “be a lasting one, If the People of this Province do not, by bad Treatment, force those poor Savages to break out again.” But “bad Treatment” was not the only variable. The Cherokees were starving, Grant observed, and could only “Subsist ‘till March or April” – well short of the corn harvest.47

46 James Grant to Jeffery Amherst, December 24, 1761, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 119r.
47 SCG, December 19-26, 1761, p. 1.
Chapter 12: “A Firm and Lasting Friendship…and…a Perfect Tranquility”: The Path to Revolution

With copies of the finalized treaty in hand, Attakullakulla and his warriors returned through the bitter cold to their villages. The supplies South Carolina gave them “did not fully answer their hopes” or expectations. “After repeated applications,” the governor provided “A small quantity of powder and ball” for them to hunt along the journey. The Indians “were most vilainously handled upon their return,” Henry Laurens reported. They were “way laid & rob’d at different places within fourscore Miles of Town of more than 20 Horses by a gang” of lawless frontiersmen. Laurens found the perpetrators “rather viler than any Cherokees.” These events jeopardized the “good Accounts” and “good effects” of the peace. Cherokees, white ruling elites, and British authorities all faced a growing threat: “Those Mountaineers,” Laurens predicted, “may be again troublesome to us.” The settlers, often squatters, defied British authority and encroached on Cherokee hunting grounds. They resisted legal restraints.1

Yet colonial elites needed the frontiersmen. The war had shown how useful frontiersmen could be. In 1760 alone, Cherokees had killed nearly two hundred Carolinians and had kidnapped at least as many. The number of runaway slaves increased each year from 1759 to 1761. And the enslaved population expanded rapidly each year, especially in neighboring Georgia. The assertive settlers thus protected coastal

1 SCG, January 2-9, 1762, p. 2, January 23-30, 1762, p. 3, January 30-February 6, 1762, p. 1; Henry Laurens to James Grant, February 11, 1762, Grant Papers, Box 34 (DLAR reel 33, frames 00008-9); Thomas Boone to Jeffery Amherst, January 12 and 18, 1762, Amherst Papers, WO 34/35, fol. 210r; SCCJ, 1757-1762, Unit 6, p. 449, 450-51, 462 (January 11, 12, February 24, 1762).
elites from the Indians and helped apprehend runaway slaves. Elites and frontiersmen needed each other. So long as the frontier expanded and farming thrived there, both remained happy. This clashed with the interests of Cherokees and slaves. And it clashed with the interests of the British Crown, responsible for raising the manpower and the funds to address the fallout of unbridled expansion: Indian war.

As Attakullakulla returned to the Overhills in January 1762, he saw frontier families building homes and preparing to plant. Entering the Cherokee villages, he saw the effects of war, disease and starvation. In this weakened state, Cherokees looked to the British Crown and its Indian agents for protection against both frontiersmen and elites.²

Indeed, by early 1762 some members of South Carolina’s ruling class had galvanized against the divergent aims of Crown policy. But unity was elusive. A Presbyterian pastor and former resident of Charles Town, Alexander Hewatt, observed in 1779 that after the Grant-Middleton dispute, “a party-spirit appeared in Carolina.” He added: “malicious aspersions and inflammatory accusations” were “greedily swallowed…and industriously propagated. Prejudices were contracted, cherished, and unhappily gained ground.” And invective “poured indiscriminately” on both sides, he said, “with the most pernicious consequence.”³

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² SCG, January 2-9, 1762, p. 2, January 23-30, 1762, p. 3, January 30-February 6, 1762, p. 1; Henry Laurens to James Grant, February 11, 1762, Grant Papers, Box 34 (DLAR reel 33, frames 00008-9).
³ Alexander Hewatt, An Historical Account (London: A. Donaldson, 1779), 2:255. “Prejudice, & resentment, have operated pretty extremely after your departure from thence last summer.” Unknown to James Grant, January 13, 1762, Grant Papers, Box 34 (DLAR reel 33, frames 00003-5, quote on 00003).
The new governor, Thomas Boone, had arrived just days after the signing of the treaty. He faced a disgruntled assembly. Representatives were inflamed by Grant’s handling of the campaign and emboldened by Gadsden’s vociferous dissent. Though the legislators greeted Boone cordially, they disapproved “of the methods taken to make it appear that the Indians sued for Peace.” They criticized “the manner & Terms different from those recommended by this House.” And they were enraged that the previous summer, the council interfered with provincial sovereignty by thwarting a bill to limit slave importation. The defeated proposal would have driven prices up and lined the
pockets of slave traders and planters with surplus slaves to sell. It also would have eased elite fears of revolt. But Boone’s instructions called on him to assert royal prerogative, and he did not hesitate to do so.\(^4\) Moderates in the Commons House predicted a clash of wills and feared the disruption of public business in the province. Alexander Garden and Henry Laurens, for example, hoped that the “surly, ill-tuned minds” in the Gadsden faction would “not attempt to revive a joke” that they had already “carried too far.”\(^5\) The “joke” they referred to was the Grant-Middleton controversy.

General Amherst believed that the peace of Charles Town would establish “a firm and Lasting friendship with those lately misguided Indians, and thereby Secure to the Inhabitants of the Province a perfect tranquility.” He was sorely mistaken.\(^6\) Instead, Cherokees and Cherokee affairs set the stage for Revolution.

Virginians and the Overhill Cherokees had negotiated peace terms in November 1761. From January to March 1762, the Overhills hosted Virginia provincial Lieutenant Henry Timberlake, Sergeant Thomas Sumter, their interpreter, and an African slave on a goodwill tour to confirm the accord. Timberlake’s journal, later published, offers a remarkable glimpse of eighteenth-century Cherokee life. It also reveals the division,


\(^5\) Henry Laurens to James Grant, March 2, 1762, Grant Papers, Box 34 (DLAR reel 33, frame 00111); Alexander Garden to John Ellis?, Feb. 26, 1762, in James Edward Smith, ed., A Selection of the Correspondence of Linnaeus, and Other Naturalists, from the Original Manuscripts, 2 vols. (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1821), 1:514.

\(^6\) Jeffery Amherst to Thomas Boone, February 4, 1762, Amherst Papers, WO 34/36, fol. 85.
disillusionment, and doubt that swept through the Overhills after the war. Cherokees pursued a full range of options to ensure their immediate and long-term survival.7

Figure 34: Timberlake’s Map of the Cherokee Country, 1762. From Lieutenant Henry Timberlake’s Memoirs, 1756-1765, ed. Samuel Cole Williams (Johnson City, TN: Watauga Press, 1927).

Some observers estimated that “upon account of the War Sickness and famine,”
the Cherokee population had been cut by a third from 1758 to 1761. Stores of weapons
and ammunition ran low. British settlers and enemy Indians swarmed over Cherokee
hunting grounds. Hopeful of reviving the French and angered at the stinginess and
unresponsiveness of British Indian policy, Indians in the Ohio Valley, Illinois Country,
and Great Lakes region took to the warpath. Most were Cherokee enemies: Ottawas,
Miamis, Delawares, and Shawnees, among others. Now they hoped to persuade the
Cherokees to channel their anger against the British into a broad-based native alliance.
As long as they refused, they risked attacks from the north. But these attacks might
happen anyway because their weakened state made them vulnerable. On the other hand,
if they joined the others against the British, they could not rebuild their villages. Their
population would decline further through war, disease, and hardship. And war drew off
warriors and hunters from the villages. They also risked attacks from the Creeks to the
South or the Chickasaws to the west if they sent their men off to war. Settlers continued
to encroach from the east, including Virginia. Cherokee villages, many of them in ruins,
were vulnerable on all sides.

For the Cherokees, recent events took precedence. War with the British – in this
case Virginia or South Carolina – was no longer an option. Most Cherokees gradually
adopted a defensive posture. The first event to prompt this policy was a shock wave of
Shawnee raids against the Overhills early in 1762. Willenawa led forty Cherokees to the

8 “The Colony, Its Climate, Soil, Population, Government, Resources, &c.”: An Answer to the several
Queries sent by the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, CRNC, 6:617.
Virginia frontier to strike back against the attackers. Though his men took four scalps, they lost a key warrior, the Raven of Toqua. Soon thereafter, “for want of arrows,” the Shawnees routed another revenge-seeking party of Cherokees. Eight of the thirty Cherokees in the battle died. The Cherokees soon recognized that in their weakened state, offensive war was not viable. Moreover, they needed peace with the British to defend themselves against their Indian enemies and to rebuild their villages and recoup their population losses.

Second, citing high costs and the conclusion of a Cherokee-Virginia peace, Governor Fauquier withdrew the provincial garrison from the fort on the Great Island and disbanded it. Without Virginia troops to deter them, northern Indians attacked the Cherokees with greater frequency. Cherokees believed the troops had served another purpose too: they had deterred Virginia settlers from attacking their villages. Thus villagers now faced a dual threat: Indian attacks from the north and settler violence from the northeast. To make matters worse, the safety of the Lower Towns on the Carolina frontier remained unclear. So insecure were the Cherokees that Seroweh vowed “not to go to war himself unless the white people should begin first.” As “the leading man of the Lower Towns,” he resisted overtures from disaffected Creeks. And he blasted Kinneteta of Great Tellico for having killed two Carolina prisoners. If Carolina launched a punitive invasion, the reeling Lower Towns would be the first to feel its effects.10

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The recent disruption of village life was a third reason offensive war was unappealing. Most Cherokee men were out hunting so they could get skins to trade for weapons, blankets, and household items. Displaced villagers had to rebuild or find new homes. Of the roughly forty Cherokee towns in existence in the mid-1750s, only twenty remained. Some villagers had reoccupied the Lower Towns by early 1762. But the Lower Towns and the Out Towns, hampered by military vulnerability and shrunken hunting grounds, never recovered. Keowee never rebuilt. Only two Out Towns persisted, and they merged politically with the Middle Towns. In the Middle Towns, Tassee and Nequassee lay empty. Displaced Cherokees thought not of war but of relocation and recovery. They built new villages in defensible locations, including Seneca (today Clemson) in the Lower Towns and Mialoquo in the Overhills. The occupants of these refugee villages fumed bitterly about their situation. They were angry with the British frontiersmen who had started the Cherokee War, and they were also angry with their elders for mishandling it. Dragging Canoe, Attakullakulla’s son, was the head of Mialoquo. The young chieftain would one day challenge the elders’ accommodationist policies.11

On April 2, 1762, thirty white and black prisoners – “all that were willing to quit
the Indian Country – remained in Cherokee hands. It took three months to collect them. The struggle to do so revealed important realities. First, Cherokees had little incentive to free their prisoners. Because unlicensed Virginia and Georgia traders still circulated the Cherokee villages, South Carolina’s embargo had no effect. Second, many of the so-called captives did not want to leave. They had developed close relationships and family ties with the Overhill Cherokees at Fort Loudoun. South Carolina officials feared the implications. They remembered Christian Gottlieb Priber and the interracial community he advocated all too well. Third, not all village clusters agreed on the importance of returning their prisoners. In this sense, Cherokees proved that a sense of “nationhood” was weak. Lower townspeople had fewer resources to feed themselves and their prisoners. They feared Carolina military action. They surrendered their captives quickly. The Overhills did not face the same pressures. Each settlement cluster and each village, had to look out for its own interests.13

The attacks by Shawnees and other northern enemies continued through the spring of 1762, further reducing Cherokee resources. As late as May, northern Indians killed five Cherokees in the Middle Town of Watauga. They also surprised an encampment of warriors, killing fourteen. They freed the lone survivor “to tell the

12 SCG, March 27-April 3, 1762, p. 1; JCA, 6 February 1762-13 September 1762, p. 70 (April 2); SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 6, p. 484-85 (April 21, 1762).

13 On white pessimism, see SCG, April 24-May 1, 1762, p. 1. On Virginia and Georgia traders and Lower Towns views, see SCCJ, 1757-1762, Unit 6, p. 468 (March 11, 1762); SCG, June 12-19, 1762, p. 2. As one redeemed captive put it, “some of the prisoners both old and young had no inclination to leave the nation & chose to remain there.” SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 6, p. 505 (May 25, 1762).
warriors what had been done.” In fact, Atakullakulla told the commander of Fort Prince
George, Lachlan McIntosh, that the enemy threat kept Cherokees from hunting and
rebuilding, hampering their ability to provide food and shelter to their prisoners.14

Cherokee villagers, much like South Carolina elites, were divided. The Overhills
split “into two factions, between whom there is often great animosity,” Timberlake
recalled. The leaders of those factions, Attakullakulla and Ostenaco respectively, were
“sure to oppose one another in every measure taken,” Timberlake wrote. While
Attakullakulla had made his peace with South Carolina, Ostenaco had sided with
Virginia, seeing that colony as the best bet for a more equitable future. Both men
expected too much.15

Some Cherokees remained “much attached to the French,” Timberlake said. The
“Great Warrior,” Oconostota, was one of them. In 1760 he orchestrated the killing of the
accused rapist and tyrant Lieutenant Coytmore at Fort Prince George. He directed the
Fort Loudoun siege and its aftermath. These actions had enhanced his reputation among
the Cherokees. On the other hand, spurred by the French, Oconostota had started an
unpopular war with the Upper (Western) Chickasaws later that year. He was not a gifted
speaker. He journeyed often to Fort Toulouse, Mobile, and New Orleans, though he
extracted only empty promises from French military and political brass. Whatever his

14 SCG, April 24-May 1, 1762, p. 1, June 12-19, 1762, p. 2, May 22-29, 1762, p. 3.
flaws, Frenchmen and Cherokees alike still respected him. “In all his expeditions,” Timberlake marveled, Oconostota never lost a man in battle.  

Figure 35: Governor Louis Billouart, Chevalier de Kerlérec. After an eighteenth-century painting. Courtesy of the Collections of the Louisiana State Library.

The French could live peacefully among the natives. They repaired Indian weapons, offered fair prices, and at times respected and appreciated native cultures. Louisiana Governor Louis Billouart, Chevalier de Kerlérec, said all the right things. But for the last five years, he had been cut off from regular supplies and reinforcements. He had little but promises to offer the Indians of the southeast. On April 28, 1762, he wrote to Paris that he had sent couriers – one of them a Creek headman – to the Choctaws and

Cherokees. Kerlérec aimed “to revive their patience, quiet their murmurings, and slow
down their prospect of resorting to the English.” He recruited a dozen prominent
Cherokees from the Overhills – some of them from Chota – to plan “operations” against
the British. The motivations of the delegation are unclear. Presumably they favored a
French alliance over a Virginia one. Oconostota was one of that dozen. He journeyed to
New Orleans but returned empty handed and “naked.” Kerlérec also dispatched
Lantagnac, the French agent and former Chota resident, to the Overhills “to redouble
their hostility and courage against the English.” Finally, the Louisiana governor ordered
the soldiers at Fort Toulouse to cultivate a Creek-Cherokee alliance. Because the French
had no supplies to offer, these efforts did not bear fruit. Oconostota’s hopes waned.

For South Carolinians, years of war put crown and province at odds. Raising
provincial regiments and rangers, funding Lyttelton’s campaign, provisioning the frontier
forts, and subsidizing the Grant Campaign had proven costly. White elites resented the
“load of Taxes” which they “must Struggle with for years to come,” House Speaker
Benjamin Smith observed. “We never was so taxed in our lives,” planter Eliza Lucas
Pinckney wrote. And “our Seas does not throw up sands of gold, as surely the British
does,” she wrote to a friend in England.

17 Minister to Kerérec, January 25, 1762, Orders of the King and Dispatches Concerning the Colonies:
1762, AC B/114, fol. 171 (CDFA, reel 105); Louis Billouart de Kerlérec to Etienne Francois, duc de
Choiseul, April 28, 1762, AC, C13A, Vol. 43, fols. 30-31, Dunbar Rowland, A.G. Sanders, and Patricia
Kay Galloway, eds., Mississippi Provincial Archives, Vol. 5: French Dominion, 1749-1763 (Baton Rouge:
Louisiana State University Press, 1984), 276-77; SCG, July 24-31, 1762, p. 2.
18 Louis Billouart de Kerlérec to M. Accaron, June 24, 1762, AC, C13A, Vol. 43, fols. 79-80, Mississippi
Provincial Archives, 5:279-80.
19 Eliza Lucas Pinckney [To Mrs. King], February 27, 1762, in Eliza Lucas Pinckney, Letter Book of Eliza
Radicals prevailed at the polls, defeating moderate candidates in the January 1762 Commons House elections. Henry Laurens was one of the losers. Yet in the new session of the assembly in March, Governor Boone demanded that the assembly reinterpret, or rewrite, the Election Act of 1721 in a way that would reduce the power of the Commons House. It was clear that he would push his instructions to the limit, though radicals predominated in the Commons House.20

Gadsden, sensing a threat to colonial rights, resumed his assault on British authority. He had not run in January 1762. But he did not bow out of the public arena. Putting pen to paper, he again targeted his scapegoat James Grant. Captain John Dunnet, an Independent Company officer, wrote Grant from Fort Augusta. He reported that “the turbulent Spirit of Gadsden pursued You still farther” in March, and “usher’d itself forth” in a second pamphlet criticizing Grant’s decisions in 1760 and 1761. The assemblymen were so swayed that they declared publicly on May 28 that the war had provided no “Real advantages” to the Province. But they met with resistance. Governor Boone blocked Peter Timothy from printing articles in his South Carolina Gazette that criticized the crown. Wells’ Weekly Gazette, a staunch supporter of the Crown, gloated that Grant had been promoted to Colonel “for Services done in America.” Partisanship was


20 JCA, 6 February 1762-13 September 1762, p. 45 (March 19).
inflamed. Incidentally, General Amherst sent Grant back to Charles Town in May in an ultimately unsuccessful attempt to recruit more men for British campaigns in the Caribbean. Grant kept a low profile. But his mere presence – and fears that he might draw away the white men that kept slaves in check – drew the ire of Lowcountry elites.

In September 1762, voters in St. Paul’s Parish elected Gadsden in a special election to fill a vacant seat in the Commons House. Boone targeted his enemy and tried to undercut his election. Gadsden was not only a firebrand. He considered himself an outsider, an urban merchant, with a following among the white masses. For a political leader who prided himself on his business acumen, not his landed estates, to have an influence over landless men, and to be shaped by them, was anathema to British conservatives at home and abroad. And it flew in the face of British tradition. Boone refused to administer the state oaths and swear in Gadsden. Citing technicalities in election procedure, the governor pointed out that the church wardens of St. Paul’s Parish had not taken oaths before a magistrate before conducting the election in which Gadsden had triumphed. The governor claimed to be merely complying with his royal instructions. The assembly argued that Gadsden had won by a wide margin. Church wardens did not need to be sworn in before elections; their oaths were implied. Neither Boone nor the assembly would give an inch. Boone dismissed the assembly and called

21 Some Observations on the Two Campaigns against the Cherokee Indians, in 1760 and 1761 in a Second Letter from Philopatrios (Charles Town: Peter Timothy, 1762). Gadsden was “a dirty subject, unworthy of your notice,” wrote the commander of Fort Augusta. John Dunnet to James Grant, December 4, 1762, Grant Papers, Box 34 (DLAR reel 33, frames 00097-98); JCA, 6 February 1762-13 September 1762, p. 138 (May 28).

22 James Grant to Jeffery Amherst, June 28, 1762, William Ramsay to Jeffery Amherst, August 10 and 13, 1762, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fols. 122-23, 129r.
for new elections. The move backfired. Gadsden won the election. And so did many of the fiery merchant’s friends.  

A well-known struggle, detailed by several historians, followed. The origins of this conflict, and the seeds of revolutionary fervor, date to the tensions unleashed by the Cherokee war’s end. In December 1762, a committee of future Patriots excoriated the Governor. Not only had Boone denied the Assembly the authority to judge and certify the validity of their own elections, but he had gone a step further in declaring that colonial assemblies existed not as a right of the colonists, but at the pleasure of the Crown. A majority of representatives in the Commons House refused to do business. Their action – or more precisely their inaction – shut down South Carolina’s government for eighteen months.  

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23 See #12: “You shall take care that the Members of the Assembly be elected by the Freeholders as being more agreeable to the Custom of this Kingdom…” Instructions from the King to Governor Boone, November 11, 1761, CO 5/404, fol. 79; JCA, 6 February 1762-13 September 1762, p. 41 (March 19); Thomas Boone to the Board of Trade, September 14, 1762, BPRO-SC, 29:238-41.

While the assembly dispute unfolded, Ostenaco, Cunne Shote, and Woyi were in England. In April 1762, seventy Cherokees journeyed with Timberlake and Sumter to Williamsburg. Hoping to unseat Attakullakulla, Ostenaco begged Fauquier and the Council to go to England “to see the great King his Father, and judge whether the little Carpenter [Attakullakulla] had not told them Lies.” Was cooperation with the whites the only option? Could Ostenaco supplant Attakullakulla’s influence among both the British
and the Cherokees? Ostenaco persisted in his machinations despite the “Inconveniences and Dangers he would be exposed to.”

Figure 37: Anikituhwa Cherokee Dancers in Eighteenth-Century Dress. Courtesy of the Museum of the Cherokee Indian.

The Cherokees appeared in public on numerous occasions. They fascinated Britons, who gathered in enormous crowds wherever they went. The trio of chiefs toured the Woolwich Dockyards, the Tower of London, Parliament, Westminster Abbey, and Vauxhall Gardens. They attended plays and musical performances. Ostenaco and Cunne

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Shote sat for portraits with Sir Joshua Reynolds and Francis Parsons, respectively. And the Cherokees met the King at St. James Place. Because their interpreter had died on the passage, the Cherokees could not communicate. This must have been a bitter disappointment. The Indian visitors dined with Colonel Montgomery’s cousin, with Lord Egremont – now the Secretary of State – and with Henry Ellis. Alexander Cuming, the Scottish adventurer who had escorted a different Cherokee delegation to England in 1730, was released briefly from Fleet Street debtor’s prison to interpret. The Cherokees were a public curiosity and an instant sensation.26

The last prisoners – fewer than a dozen on each side – returned home in the spring and summer of 1762. Governor Boone then reopened the Cherokee trade on new terms.27 Passed by the assembly on May 19, the Act to Regulate the Trade with the Cherokee Indians (Indian Trade Act) established a public monopoly of the Cherokee trade under five directors. The quintet fixed prices and coordinated shipments. The Act prohibited private trade from South Carolina. And it established a factory at Fort Prince George, where a commissary oversaw the exchange of Cherokee deerskins, hides, and other items for British manufactures.28

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27 SCG, July 3-10, 1762, p. 3. JCA, 6 February 1762-13 September 1762, p. 146 (June 29); SCG, June 26-July 3, 1762, p. 1, July 31-August 7, 1762, p. 2. White prisoners reunited with family at Ninety Six and the Congarees. SCG, June 26-July 3, 1762, p. 1; SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 6, p. 505 (May 25, 1762), 522-23 (June 1, 1762); SCG, June 5-12, 1762, p. 2, June 12-19, 1762, p. 2.

28 SCG, July 31-August 7, 1762, p. 2; Thomas Boone to Francis Fauquier, [June 15, 1762], Fauquier Papers, 2:758; Thomas Cooper and David J. McCord, eds., Statutes at Large of South Carolina (Columbia, 364
But the trade remained far from fair. Because the law could not “Operate beyond the Limits of the Province,” unscrupulous traders from Virginia, Georgia, and North Carolina competed with each other by spreading unfounded rumors. Some of the traders charged exorbitant prices, extended credit too freely, or cheated the Indians – as they had done before the war. Colonial officials had no way to hold the illicit traders accountable, especially those from other colonies. To paint Virginia traders as untrustworthy, Carolina’s traders threatened that Virginia troops would attack the Cherokees.29

For the Cherokees, the biggest problem was an ongoing shortage of goods regardless of the official reopening of South Carolina trade. This hampered Cherokee recovery efforts and imperiled Cherokee lives as winter approached. In November, Kettagusta of Chota complained to Governor Boone, but to no effect. As the Cherokees saw it, South Carolina had broken its promises yet again. It was 180 miles from the Overhill towns to the factory at Fort Prince George. It was 90 miles from the Valley, 45 from the Middle Towns, and 60 from the Out Towns.

For women, the Indian Trade Act was devastating. The new trade stipulations eliminated the informal exchanges that had given women economic and political independence. Cherokee women found themselves cut out of the trade, save for scraping


29 SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 6, p. 468 (March 11, 1762); SCG, February 27-March 6, 1762, p. 2, May 29-June 5, 1762, p. 3; Jeffery Amherst to Thomas Boone, February 4, 1762, Amherst Papers, WO 34/36, fol. 85; Jeffery Amherst to John Stuart, April 16, 1763, Amherst Papers, WO 34/48, fol. 103. The South Carolina Gazette also spread rumors that the Cherokees would not keep the peace. SCG, May 15-22, 1762, p. 2, May 22-29, 1762, p. 3.
and preparing the skins. The Cherokees saw the Indian Trade Act as a failure. But the Council resolved to take no action. The Trade Act kept prices fair for the Cherokees. But it decreased the profits of South Carolina merchants. Over the next several years, these men abandoned the Indian trade and turned instead to the cultivation and exportation of Lowcountry indigo and backcountry wheat and cattle. South Carolina’s Cherokee deerskin trade waned in importance as British West Florida and Georgia siphoned it off. Cherokee concerns dropped lower on the list of provincial priorities. For both elites and frontiersmen, the Cherokees became an obstacle to progress and independence.30

Because Lieutenant Timberlake had fallen into debt during the junket to England, the Cherokees sailed back to Charles Town with Sumter, arriving there in early November. The tour shored up British support for the Cherokees. It gave Ostenaco the political clout that he sought. And it further convinced him to maintain peace with the British. When he landed and met with Governor Boone, he promised “no more bad Talks” among the Cherokees, “no more disturbances,” and “no more war.” He vowed to bring to justice any Cherokee who killed an Englishman. His people would “immediately put to death” the guilty, including Kinneteta of Tellico, accused of murdering, rather than liberating, two prisoners. The population, grandeur, and military capabilities of Britain had awed Ostenaco. When Boone pressed the Indian to recall exactly what convinced him to maintain peaceful intentions, Ostenaco was “astonishingly reserved and silent.”

30 SCCJ, 1757-62, Unit 6, p. 566 (November 19, 1762); John Stuart to Jeffery Amherst, March 15, 1763, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fols. 233r-v, 234r; Robert L. Meriwether, The Expansion of South Carolina, 1729-1765 (Kingsport, TN: Southern Publishers, 1940), 247.
Boone wrote to Lord Egremont, British Secretary of State, that the headman “apparently aims at influence with his nation, this seems his chief, and almost only concern.” Boone missed the mark. The fact is that Ostenaco now believed, much as Attakullakulla had all along, that Cherokee survival depended upon peaceful coexistence. If only more of the headman’s white contemporaries felt the same way. Instead, Hatley argues, some South Carolinians were offended by the fanfare surrounding the Cherokee visit to England. Were Indians more important to the Crown than colonists, they wondered?31

Sumter escorted the trans-Atlantic travelers back to the Overhills. He lived in these villages from November 1762 to March 1763. “The majority” of Cherokees listened alertly and “seemed much delighted with” the accounts Ostenaco and his companions provided. But some Cherokees remained dissatisfied. They refused to wait for South Carolina to address their concerns about the trade. Around January 1, 1763, Oconostota led fifty followers and six Frenchmen to Fort Toulouse. He met with French soldiers, Choctaws, Creeks, and others. The Upper Creeks and the Fort Toulouse commandant spewed anti-British invective. Oconostota and the Cherokees then ventured to Mobile and New Orleans. No French accounts of the early 1763 conferences have been found. Reliable sources claimed that the French hoped to build forts at Toqua in the

Overhills, and at Hiwassee in the Valley. While Oconostota visited the French, disaffected Creeks combed the Valley for recruits.32

Figure 38: Reconstruction of Fort Toulouse, 2010.

When Ostenaco’s party returned to the Overhills, they brought a guest: Baron des Jonnes, a French lieutenant who had fought against against Braddock (1755) and Forbes (1758). If des Jonnes and the French-leaning Cherokees had any designs against the British, they were soon foiled. Sumter secured the consent of other Cherokee leaders and apprehended the Frenchman in a legendary wrestling match in Toqua. He led the prisoner to Fort Prince George and later to Charles Town for interrogation. White observers said des Jonnes sought to stir up anti-British Cherokees on behalf of the

32 SCG, March 19-26, 1763, p. 2, April 16-23, 1763, p. 4, April 30-May 7, 1763, p. 4; John Stuart to Jeffery Amherst, March 15, 1763, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fols. 232r-233r.
commander of Fort L’Assomption. Others claimed he was just an aspiring French hero. Still others thought he was just passing through the Overhills “to return to Canada.” Des Jonnes aimed to “seduce those savages and detach them from the Brittish Interest,” Stuart wrote. Regardless, French and Pro-French Cherokee hopes of an alliance died with the capture of des Jonnes.33

In February 1763 the British and French governments signed preliminary peace terms. The French government and military promised to withdraw from Louisiana permanently by November. Governor Kerlérec reported that the Indians told him “they are not yet all dead; that the French have no right to give them away,” and “they know what they have to do when the time comes.”34 The impending French departure dealt a crushing blow to the leverage the southeastern tribes had against the English. Most Cherokees sensed the end of the French Empire in North America.

With Cherokee fortunes shifting, Oconostota sought a creative solution that bypassed Virginia and South Carolina, the two colonies that had caused his people so much suffering. He reached out to Georgia. Reversing his long opposition to British authority, the warrior sent white wampum to Governor James Wright and asked for trade goods. Georgia already enjoyed a profitable trade with the populous Creek people. Wright did not wish to alienate these longstanding allies. And Wright feared the costs of

33 Thomas Boone to the Earl of Egremont, April 21, 1763, BPRO-SC, 29:327-28; SCG, March 19-26, 1763, p. 2, April 16-23, 1763, p. 4, April 30-May 7, 1763, p. 4; John Stuart to Jeffery Amherst, March 15, 1763, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 233r; SSCJ, 1763-1767, Unit 1, p. 34-39 (March 21, 1763); Anne King Gregorie, Thomas Sumter (Columbia, SC: R.L. Bryan, 1931), 20-22.
hosting repeated delegations of Cherokee leaders in Savannah for years to come. He declined Oconostota’s invitation to engage. With no other viable alternative, the chief now realized that to ensure his peoples’ survival, he had to cultivate military and economic common ground with the British.\(^{35}\)

In February 1763, the closure of the assembly entered month three of eighteen.\(^{36}\)

In a lengthy open letter to his voting constituents, published in the *South Carolina Gazette*, Gadsden complained that a British subject “bid farewell to the dearest” of his liberties upon stepping foot “on American ground.” He attacked Parliamentary representation, and he argued for the powers of colonial assemblies, especially the right to oversee their elections.\(^{37}\)

The shutdown jeopardized the finances of the faction led by Henry Laurens and William Wragg, an ardent Loyalist recently elected to the assembly. Many of these men had loaned money to the provincial government to pay for the war. Now they expected repayment. That could not happen with the legislature closed for business. Laurens and Wragg were eager to restore normalcy to South Carolina politics. The two politicians believed that Gadsden was unwisely and illogically challenging the Crown. In late February 1763, Laurens launched a personal attack on Gadsden in the *Weekly Gazette*.

\(^{35}\) Oconostota, calling himself “King and Governour of the Cherokee Indians,” wrote to Wright on May 21, 1763. *CRG*, 9:78-79 (July 14, 1763).

\(^{36}\) *SCG*, December 4-11, 1762, p. 1; JCA, 25 October 1762-28 December 1762, 18-20 (November 30, 1762), p. 30 (December 4, 1762), 35-37 (December 7, 1762), 38-45 (December 9, 1762), 48 (December 16, 1762), 49 (December 24, 1762), JCA, 24 January 1763-6 October 1764, p. 8, 11 (March 28, August 18, 1763). For Boone’s view, see Thomas Boone to the Board of Trade, May 31, 1763, *BPRO-SC*, 29:332-35.

The only surviving copy appears in Laurens’ papers. Weeks later writing as “Philolethes,” a “Lover of Obscurity,” Laurens rebutted Gadsden’s 1762 *Philopatrios* pamphlet. This fanned the flames of partisanship in the Lowcountry.\(^{38}\)

Expressing great sympathy for the Cherokee Indians and unabashed praise for Colonel Grant, Laurens blasted Gadsden in private as a “poor rash headlong gentleman…a ringleader in popular quarrels.” He sided with Governor Boone on the election dispute. Publicly, Laurens called Gadsden a “Brazen Trumpeter,” who had subverted all “Order and Decency.” He went on to invoke trans-Atlantic implications. Gadsden aimed, he said, “to set the whole province in a flame of civil discord & personal hatred, as well to bring it under the censure of its Mother Country & into contempt with all impartial men abroad.”\(^{39}\)

With the cession of French lands imminent, the southeastern Indian tribes were more unsettled than ever. Indians in the Ohio Valley, Illinois Country, and Great Lakes launched attacks on white settlers and British forts in the region in 1763. British policy disenchanted them. Nativist religion took root. And they hoped to spark the French to return. The uprising became known as Pontiac’s Rebellion. The disaffected tribes also attacked their traditional enemies, the Cherokees and Catawbas. They did so to punish those southern Indians for their pacificism. And they did so opportunistically. By

\(^{38}\) Laurens Papers, 3:270-71; *A Letter Signed Philolethes*, Ibid., 273-355.

\(^{39}\) Christopher Gadsden to Peter Timothy, March 12, 1763, *Writings of Gadsden*, 50; *A Letter Signed Philolethes*, Laurens Papers, 3:305, 350.
attacking vulnerable enemies, the chances of taking scalps and thus proving one’s manhood, increased substantially.40

After attempting to drive back Virginia frontiersmen in July 1763, Shawnees raided the Cherokee villages repeatedly over a three-month period and killed fifty residents, Stuart reported. Two of Attakullakulla’s sons were reported dead. If the Shawnees expected to build a multi-tribe coalition against white settlers, the Cherokees and their neighbors were hardly swayed.41 The Cherokees determined to postpone blood revenge if attacked, and to retaliate only when success seemed likely.42

The Cherokees’ Catawba neighbors, who also declined participation in Pontiac’s Rebellion, were not spared. July brought an attack in which northern Indians kidnapped five Catawba women. In September, Shawnee warriors murdered the Catawba headman King Hagler as he returned home from the Waxhaws.43 To protest corruption in the trade, Upper Creeks murdered five British traders between May and October 1763. To pressure the Cherokees to join them in a war against the British, the Creeks killed two Cherokees. But if Cherokees joined forces with disaffected Creeks against the British, the Lower Towns would be the first to feel the effects of a punitive strike from South


41 Thomas Boone to the Earl of Egremont, June 1, 1763, BPRO-SC, 29:339; John Stuart to Jeffery Amherst, June 2, October 4, 1763, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fols. 241v, 247r; SCG, May 28-June 4, 1763, p. 2; extract of James Wright [to John Stuart], July 20, 1763, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 245.

42 Francis Fauquier to Jeffery Amherst, August 2, 1763, Amherst Papers, WO 34/37, fol. 177. Laurens attributed this to the “drubbing which they submitted to in 1761.” Henry Laurens to Willis Martin, August 29, 1763, Laurens Papers, 3:552-53, 553n.

43 John Stuart to Jeffery Amherst, July 30, 1763, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 244r. The identity of the attackers was initially disputed and blamed on the Cherokees. SCG, July 9-16, 1763, p. 4.
Carolina. Therefore, Seroweh vigorously opposed any hostile measures against the British.  

He did so though settlers were arriving “in great numbers,” and were infringing on Cherokee hunting grounds. In December 1761, the King issued a Royal Proclamation banning the purchase, settlement, or possession of Indian lands without permission or license from the Crown. Governor Boone, for some reason, did not publish it. Virginia did. But it hardly mattered. In all the southern colonies, western expansion continued at unprecedented levels, with the support of coastal elites. Settlers built private forts for their own protection, and their homes, livestock, and hunting trips inched closer to Indian villages.

Settlers showed their disgust with the Crown in the spring of 1762 by renaming Gouedy’s “Fort Ninety Six.” They now called it “Fort Middleton” in honor of the Provincial who defied Crown authority.

Lord Egremont and Henry Ellis had already planned a conference in Augusta, Georgia, with Cherokee, Catawba, Chickasaw, Choctaw and Creek leaders. It now became urgent. Indian superintendent John Stuart, who had replaced the late Edmond Atkin in 1762, reassured tribal leaders that the conference aimed to preserve “pacific and Friendly Intentions” between the British and the southeastern Indians. He sent a copy of

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44 John Stuart to Jeffery Amherst, October 4, 1763, Amherst Papers, WO 34/47, fol. 247r-v; SCG, October 15-22, 1763, p. 2; Cashin, *Henry Ellis*, 174; Georgia Council Minutes, *CRG*, 9:70-77 (July 14, 1763).


46 SCG, July 24-31, 1762, p. 2.
the King’s Proclamation of 1761 to “The Principal Warriors of the Cherokee Nation.”
Stuart stalled any alliance they might wish to make with northern Indians or against the British.47

Seven hundred Indians gathered near the rough frontier town of Augusta in October 1763. They met for a few weeks, to smooth out disputes between themselves. Unfortunately, no record of these proceedings has been found. On November 5, Stuart, with Governors Boone, Dobbs, Wright, and Fauquier, officially opened the British-Indian conference at Fort Augusta. The Lower Cherokees and Lower Creeks dominated the proceedings. Their villages lay nearer to the British, so they had the most at stake. In addition to Attakullakulla, Ostenaco and Seroweh were present and spoke for peace.48

Stuart and the governors pledged that Indian lands would “not be taken.” This policy may have pleased the Indians, but it did not please white South Carolinians. Wealthy whites benefitted from land and slave sales and by shipping the fruits of labor of backcountry farmers.49 Backcountry farmers served military and police purposes as well. They protected easterly regions from Indian attack and deterred runaway slaves. Predictably, settlers who had traveled hundreds of miles in search of land and

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48 Stuart also promised to protect and facilitate the trade through the newly acquired French forts. “MEETING OF THE GOVERNORS,” Augusta, November 5, 1763, in Journal of the Congress, 22-25.
49 Thomas Boone, Arthur Dobbs and Francis Fauquier, “Copy of the Talk inclosed to Mr Stuart for the Indians at Augusta, October 18, 1763,” in Journal of the Congress of the Four Southern Governors with the Five Nations...at Augusta, 1763 (Charles Town: Peter Timothy, 1764), 14-15.
opportunity, sometimes escaping debt or religious intolerance to do so, respected no restraints.

British authorities, including those present, feared the effects of a continental Indian War should Pontiac’s Rebellion spread south. They attempted to assuage the Indians’ fears and to address their concerns. Several days of discussions culminated in a November 10 accord called “A Treaty for the Preservation and continuance of a firm and perfect Peace and Friendship.” White and Indian signatories agreed to forgive “all past offences and injuries.”

The British dignitaries promised to respect tribal lands and to “always give due attention” to the Indians’ interests. The Crown would supply “all sorts of Goods” provided the warriors did not “molest” or disturb British traders. The Indians pledged to “do full and ample justice to the English.” They also vowed to prevent their people from stealing cattle and horses or otherwise clashing with colonial settlers.

Despite earlier promises, Indian lands were taken. To make amends for the killing of white traders earlier that year, the Lower Creeks gave Georgia a tract of land between the Savannah and Ogeechee Rivers. They also agreed in principle to return runaway slaves. Attakullakulla and his Cherokees had done the same in 1761. This was a coup for the white delegates and for the expansion of Georgia. France had just agreed to

50 Stuart reassured the Indians that the King had ordered his subjects to respect Native lands. Indians would be “plentifully supplied with goods.” And he vowed “to manifest an attention to your Interests and a readiness to do you justice upon all occasions.” “At a Congress held at Augusta in the Province of Georgia on the 10th of Nov: in the year of our Lord God 1763,” in Journal of the Proceedings, 38.

evacuate their military and governmental personnel from southeast North America. Spain had ceded East Florida to the British. Runaway slaves now had nowhere to go. The Catawbas had just lost King Hagler. Their population poor, surrounded by squatters, and vulnerable to northern Indian enemies, they reluctantly accepted the bounds of their small reservation in exchange for a survey line to delineate those lands. The treaty was all they could do to thwart further encroachments by North Carolina squatters. They remained military allies of South Carolina, and they remained on the public dole. The Choctaws and Chickasaws exchanged promises of peace for promises of British traders and goods.

The treaty appeared to assure British security in the southeast. The guns of Fort Augusta roared to mark the moment, and Stuart distributed a bounty of trade goods to those present.52

King George III’s Royal Proclamation of 1763 arrived in the colonies at the end of the year. The Royal Proclamation restated the 1761 proclamation’s ban on purchasing, settling, or possessing Indian lands without royal permission or license. It delineated the Appalachian Divide as the colonial-Indian border beyond which colonists could not settle. It also opened the Indian trade “to all our Subjects whatever” who could pay a bond and secure a license. In one stroke, the proclamation rendered South Carolina’s Indian Trade Act moot. White South Carolina had taken a loss. But for the colony’s slaveholders, there was a final gesture. The proclamation authorized all public and

52 The absent Upper Creeks ratified the Treaty of Augusta on April 10, 1764 at Little Tallassee. Cashin, Governor Henry Ellis, 175-76; “Augusta 9th Novr 1763, At a Congress held at Augusta in the Province of Georgia on the 10th of Nov....,” in Journal of the Congress, 38, 39-41. Stuart and the governors wrote that “there never was a time more seasonable for the establishing the Commerce with Indians upon a general safe equitable footing and which we are afraid will never be done by respective Provinces.” James Wright, et al., to the Earl of Egremont, November 10, 1763, in Journal of the Congress, 42-43 (quote on p. 43).
military officials to apprehend accused white and black felons and to send them to their respective colonies. In effect, then, the treaty violated Indian sovereignty. It also eliminated Indian Country as an interracial safe haven for criminals and runaways of different races.⁵³

Now that the Crown had made its ruling, was it enforceable? The British had sided with Cherokee Indians. But whether or not settlers and coastal elites would respect British policy remained to be seen.

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⁵³ George Rex, [The Royal Proclamation of 1763], [October 7, 1763], SCG Extraordinary, December 31, 1763, p. 1-2; Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, 247.
Conclusion

Scholars have explored the origins of the American Revolution in the South. Some have described the war’s outbreak. But no scholars have linked the Cherokee Indians to the turmoil that followed in the era of American Independence. African American, Indian, and white actors – each with wide ranging interests and alliances – seethed in dissatisfaction and reeled from the war and its conclusion. The long term consequences were dramatic.

For some black South Carolinians, the Anglo-Cherokee War had provided opportunities, however limited. Bondsmen and bondswomen tried to turn white divisions and distractions to their advantage. Runaways proliferated from 1759-61.¹ Some, like Philip, found adventure and high wages in the British army. Others, like the freeman Thomas Jeremiah, amassed wealth during the war years. Jeremiah made his money by working as a firefighter, boatman, and harbor pilot. He shuttled soldiers around Charles Town’s waterways on his boat, and he guided British warships through the harbor. Abram was the last slave manumitted by the assembly during the colonial period. In 1762, he made an encore appearance in the Council Chamber, as an emergency interpreter during a Chickasaw conference with the Governor and council. Because no other Indian interpreters were available, Abram spoke in Cherokee to a Chickasaw diplomat who understood the language. Then, the former deerskin trader faded from the

documentary record. Joe Fleming of Berkeley County, a veteran of the 1760 campaign, saw the Commons House deny his 1761 petition for freedom. Peace thereafter shut down the opportunities for meritorious service of the kind that could lead to legally sanctioned freedom.2

Abram the messenger and Thomas Jeremiah the harbor pilot were exceptions. For most black South Carolinians, the war years brought misery. Some were forced into military camps as laborers and herdsmen. Twelve percent of Charleston’s African-American community died of smallpox, and many never received a decent burial. The Philip Johns conspiracy shows how black colonists tried to turn the chaos of the war to their own advantage. But brutal repression – an expression of white fear – was the aftermath. In a province already in upheaval and vulnerable to Indian attack, race slavery had threatened social stability, undermined military readiness, and added to white anxieties.

White Carolinians slammed the doors of opportunity on black provincials. They needed slaves to work the backcountry lands taken from the Indians. By the early 1770s, two thirds of all slave imports went to the backcountry. They composed nineteen percent of the population, a two-fold increase from pre-war numbers. With indigo cultivation expanding throughout the province, and Lowcountry rice still the dominant export, in the

years that followed the war, slavery expanded throughout the colony. The African American population of South Carolina rose from its prewar total of about sixty or seventy thousand to over 107,000 in 1775. Persistent resistance from black Carolinians only heightened white fears and brutality. As the merchant-planters struggled to regain their economic footing in the post-war recovery period, African Americans bore a disproportionate share of the burden.

In 1764, to address the inherent instability their labor system created, members of the assembly halted slave importations temporarily from 1766 to 1768. The goal was twofold. First, higher slave prices benefited the wealthiest Carolinians – those eager to sell bondsmen to backcountry settlers. Second, the importation ban curbed the risk of revolt by keeping black numbers in check. Slavers, however, anticipated the embargo. In 1765 alone, ships carried eight thousand new slaves into Charles Town, William Bull reported. Bull, serving as lieutenant governor again after the recall of Thomas Boone, reported that this was three times the typical annual average. In fact, the eight thousand, the most ever, quadrupled the annual average of 1999 per year from 1753 to 1764.

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As Henry Laurens observed, bondsmen applied whites’ rhetoric of British mistreatment and tyranny to their own situation. They became “apprehensive of an Odious Load falling upon their Shoulders.” As white Carolinians touting liberty protested the Stamp Act that same year, black Carolinians used the opportunity to challenge oppression at home. They too took to the streets shouting “Liberty! Liberty!” – albeit with different tyrants in mind.\(^6\) Hundreds of Carolina bondsmen and bondswomen fled coastal plantations to join or establish maroon communities in the post-war years. They did so in the largest numbers in half a century. Governor Bull reported in December 1765 alone, 107 freedom seekers had joined “several large parties” of maroons in coastal Colleton County. In late 1765 and early 1766, maroons launched raids on plantations along the Savannah River. Whites feared a massive insurrection and responded with a brutal show of force in early 1766.\(^7\) An uneasy quiet reigned during the early 1770s.

The Anglo-Cherokee War was more cataclysmic in the Indian high country, where it left an entire nation in disarray. Cherokees fought and bled alongside British troops in the early stages of the French and Indian war. Then overzealous frontiersmen indiscriminately killed them. The ensuing Cherokee blood revenge raids on the frontier led Governor Lyttelton to take hostages. Mutual “pressuring” violence on the frontier

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continued and escalated until the final crisis of the soldiers at Fort Prince George
murdering them. Many white South Carolinians called for extermination, and
successfully pressured the British military command to send troops on two expeditions.
After two years of war, the Indians struggled to reconstitute life as they knew it. From
1758 to 1761, at least one third of the Cherokees had died from combat and disease.
Smallpox, measles, and mumps had become ubiquitous with the movement of Indian and
white troops. The resulting dislocation was social, cultural, and physical. Cherokee
towns broke apart, recombined, and relocated. The Out Towns largely emptied.
Generational and geographical divisions widened. And longstanding patterns of
authority collapsed. Indeed, the rivalry between Oconostota and Attakullakulla
foreshadowed the internecine strife that would again divide the tribe during the
Revolutionary era.

In spite of all that had happened, the “Chain of Friendship” that once linked the
Cherokees to the British actually regenerated after 1763. The Cherokees looked to
British metropolitan authorities for help in protecting their lands from colonists. The
Crown could not afford another Indian war, so it had a vested interest in placating native
peoples. But in spite of the Proclamation of 1763 and the Treaty of Augusta, lawless
white settlers overran Cherokee hunting lands. This imperiled the sovereignty, survival,
and dignity of Indian peoples throughout the Appalachian region.

Many white interlopers, like the Long Canes settlers, were evangelical Protestants
from the northern colonies, pushed southward from Pennsylvania and Virginia by war
and population growth. These migrants had arrived in large numbers during the Anglo-
Cherokee conflict. The fighting did nothing to improve their lives. It worsened their material conditions and widened the gulf between the rich and the poor. It launched a dreadful refugee crisis. And it added to their resentment of low-country elites who never supplied sufficient military assistance.

At the war’s end, impoverished, starving whites turned into bandits, marauders, and horse thieves. Some sought their living by duping vulnerable Cherokees and carving out homesteads on Indian lands. None of the Cherokee settlement clusters was immune from these intrusions. All faced an onslaught of new encroachments by Virginians, North Carolinians, South Carolinians, and Georgians. Eager to form new partnerships and to keep slaves from fleeing westward, the South Carolina Assembly lured immigrants with free land and economic incentives in 1764 and 1765. As early as 1764, squatters took up lands within fifteen miles of the Lower Towns. South Carolina’s non-Indian backcountry population increased from seven thousand to eleven thousand within five years of the war’s close. In seven years’ time, nine thousand new settlers occupied the Carolina-Cherokee borderlands.

The frontiersmen, old and new, found safety and confidence in their growing numbers. They targeted their Indian neighbors in a trans-colonial backlash against Pontiac’s Rebellion, an uprising in which the Cherokees had played no part. In 1765, backcountry whites in Augusta County, Virginia, killed six Cherokees. Lieutenant Governor Fauquier blamed a “profligate and abandon’d mob.”

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8 *CRNC*, 7:109, 210-11, *EJC*, 6:276-77. Virginia’s “Upper Counties,” Fauquier observed, were “so inveterate to all Indians friends or foes.” Fauquier wondered “with what face can they [frontiersmen] complain of Indians, who are worse than Indians themselves.” Francis Fauquier to Andrew Lewis, May 14, 1765.
1763, Parliament, the southern governors, Superintendent John Stuart, and Indian Commissioner Alexander Cameron could not restrain the settlers’ advance, violence, and disdain for Native peoples.⁹

Not surprisingly, the South Carolina Assembly and representatives of the Crown – including Governor Bull – were at odds over these developments. The settlers buffered coastal regions from the Cherokees. Their crops, livestock, and timber propped up the fortunes of coastal merchants and planters – the very men who served in the colonial assembly. But Governor Bull and British agents such as Superintendent John Stuart and his deputy, Alexander Cameron, were obliged to support Crown policy. All of them tried to stop the tide of settlers. But none could restrain the settlers’ advance or their violence and disdain for native peoples.¹⁰ Bull expelled the frontiersmen with force in 1764. White Carolinians rich and poor argued that British policy favored Cherokees. The governor’s efforts were futile. And when Britain imposed revenue measures in the years that followed, tensions between the executive and the assembly escalated.¹¹

Despite British efforts, the deerskin trade never again rose to Cherokee expectations. Virginia traders did arrive in Cherokee villages after the war ended, but as

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⁹ Charles Montagu to the Board of Trade, January 16, 1767, to the Earl of Shelburne, March 5, April 14, 1767, Regulations for the better carrying on the Trade with the Indian Tribes in the Southern District, William Bull to the Earl of Hillsborough, October 4, 1769, November 30, 1770, BPRO-SC, 31:184, 297; 314-15, 318, 319, 32:108-9, 403.

¹⁰ South-Carolina and American General Gazette, August 30-September 6, 1769, p. 2.

¹¹ Hatley, The Dividing Paths, 168.
the land base shrank and white gunmen invaded, Cherokee men struggled to hunt and thus to hold up their end of the trade. They became debtors. And they began to starve.

The British post at Pensacola tapped the Creek deerskin trade, bypassing the Cherokee brokers who had once profited from Creek commerce. And South Carolina’s inland economy shifted to more lucrative ventures: grain, fruit, timber, hogs, and cattle. No longer valued as trading partners, the Cherokees became all the more expendable to coastal planters and hardscrabble farmers alike.¹² What remained of the deerskin trade was as corrupt as ever. Other than five “half-breeds,” Alexander Cameron could not find “one honest man” among forty-six traders in 1765.¹³

In 1768, the Crown abandoned most of its frontier outposts, including Fort Prince George, in a cost-cutting measure. Settlers, particularly from Virginia, descended like vultures onto Cherokee lands. As white encroachment and its ill effects became more apparent, elder Cherokees ceded more and more land to colonial authorities. They hoped to avert war and to pay off debts. Treaties and agreements in 1766, 1768, 1770, 1772, and 1773 diminished the Cherokee land base to an unsustainable scrap of its pre-war extent. At one conference, angry Georgia frontiersmen – so-called “crackers” – heckled Cherokee delegates, adding insult to injury.¹⁴

¹² “The Trade of the Cherokees is not very beneficial. This nation commands the attention of Government more upon political than commercial considerations.” William Bull to the Earl of Hillsborough, November 30, 1770, BPRO-SC, 32:403.


Moreover, the actions of northern Indians brought the Cherokees themselves under suspicion. While the Cherokees abstained from making war on their white and black neighbors, the northerners did not. In 1774, the Shawnee Cornstalk led an intertribal offensive along the Virginia frontier. The attacks reawakened colonial apprehensiveness about the Cherokees and other Indians alike. The Cherokee people also endured the attacks of northern tribes in the 1760s and 1770s. Attempts to negotiate proved fruitless.15

Members of the merchant-planter class emerged victorious at the end of the Anglo-Cherokee War, but this merely meant they had lost the least.

The conflict had tapped into the deepest fears of the coastal gentry. It also widened the chasm between the gentry and British authorities. The 1758 quartering controversy had planted the seeds of discontent, and these seeds germinated with Lyttelton’s 1759 missteps. The events that followed, including the Montgomery and Grant campaigns and the Gadsden election controversy, brought colonial dissatisfaction into full bloom. Afterward, South Carolinians had burdensome war debts to pay off. When the British imposed new assessments of their own, taxpayers objected, arguing that the levies were debilitating and unconstitutional. Finally, the postwar settlement brought a new, centralized Indian policy that seemed to institutionalize Britain’s disregard for her colonial subjects. Well-to-do coastal residents like Christopher Gadsden accused the

Cameron and George Price, May 8, 1766, Great Britain Indian Department Collection, Vol. 387, William B. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.

British of disrespect and abandonment. They charged that arrogant politicians and bureaucrats from the metropole were trying to burden them economically by forcing them to assume high costs that inevitably raised the provincial tax burden.

The war gave a generation of young men from all backgrounds military experience and social standing. Some of these men rose to prominence on their reputation as Indian fighters. Included among them were the revolutionaries Christopher Gadsden, William “Danger” Thomson, Owen Roberts, Benjamin Hayne, William Moultrie, Francis Marion, Thomas Sumter, and Andrew Pickens. Pickens married a Long Cane refugee, Rebecca Calhoun, and settled on lands ceded in the postwar era. For some, the passage of time transformed past realities. By 1775, when the naturalist William Bartram visited Charles Town, proud veterans led him to believe that Colonel Middleton and the provincials had “vanquished” the Indians. These men leveraged their wartime connections for postwar gain.16

In 1775, tensions came to a head. South Carolina’s former governor William Henry Lyttelton was by this time a Minister of Parliament. In a 1775 speech to the House of Commons, after news of the first bloodshed in Massachusetts reached Britain, he warned his colleagues that he saw an ominous new chain of friendship forming. The colonies were now linked together against Great Britain. But South Carolina, he

observed, was a distinctive place. The colony’s racial demography meant that its future was up for grabs. Slaves and Indians, he believed, might serve the British in putting down the colonial “insurrection” in the South.17

By the winter of 1775, the Cherokees were on tenterhooks, divided among themselves and pressured by the British, by land-hungry colonists, and by other Indian peoples. In March, with the Treaty of Sycamore Shoals, the elder statesmen Attakullakulla and Ostenaco ceded a massive swath of land in present Tennessee and Kentucky to the North Carolina speculator Richard Henderson. Soon thereafter, the northern Indians who had attacked the frontier the previous year came to Chota. The visitors vowed to smash the Cherokees if they refused to help attack the frontier interlopers. At the same time, Whigs reached out and sent arms to Cherokees in an effort to forge an alliance against the British. But Loyalists seized the weapons before they reached their destination.18

With war looming, South Carolina Whigs feared that black resentment and numerical strength would manifest itself. They sent Thomas Jeremiah to the gallows in August 1775 in an effort to keep black ambition in check. On less-than-compelling evidence, a court convicted the entrepreneurial harbor pilot of conspiring to help the British capture Charles Town by starting a slave revolt. Many African Americans took

17 William Lyttleton’s Speech, October 26, 1775, quoted in Ryan, *The World of Thomas Jeremiah*, 16.
their chances during the years of fighting that followed. They fled to British lines rather than continue to suffer on their plantations as they had in the Cherokee War.²⁰

Some Cherokees made similar calculations. Attakullakulla’s son, Dragging Canoe, had fought in the siege of Fort Loudoun. Afterward, he ascended to become the leader of the village of Mialoquo in the Overhills. Mialoquo – or “the Great Island” – was a town settled by refugees displaced by the British during the war. In 1775, when fighting erupted between Britain and her colonists, Dragging Canoe broke with his father and other elders. Angered by endless concessions and bolstered by British agents, the fiery young chief dared his people to take up the hatchet to preserve their traditions and independence. But when Dragging Canoe led disaffected Cherokees against the frontier in July 1776, the Virginians swiftly defeated them. This allowed colonial elites to resume what they had started in 1761: a campaign of genocide.²⁰

William Henry Drayton, a prominent Whig leader in South Carolina, vowed in 1776 to “never give my voice for a peace with the Cherokee Nation upon any other terms than their removal beyond the mountains.” Virginia’s Thomas Jefferson chimed in as well. He hoped “that the Cherokees will now be driven beyond the Mississippi…as the invariable consequences of their beginning a war.”²¹

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Patriots then launched four coordinated expeditions against the Cherokee towns in 1776 and 1777. Six thousand troops rampaged through Cherokee country, leaving desolation in their wake. In so doing, white elites perpetuated the very brutality they “abhorred” in the British. When Cherokee elders ceded more lands to save themselves from famine, the nation divided against itself. Dragging Canoe and four Overhill Towns seceded in 1777, determined to fight for Cherokee traditionalism. That same year they moved down the Tennessee River and set up the Chickamauga Towns. They launched raids on Americans for another fifteen years. And they ultimately saved the Cherokee people from complete extermination.\(^{22}\)

As plantations proliferated in the post-Revolutionary South Carolina backcountry, the new United States negotiated a treaty with the Cherokees at Andrew Pickens’ South Carolina estate in 1785. Pickens, the grizzled veteran of the Grant campaign and of the bitter contest for the South Carolina frontier during the Revolution, lived on Cherokee lands. By the terms of the settlement, South Carolina took over what remained of the Lower Towns. The next fifty years brought still more concessions as the United States negotiated no fewer than seventeen additional treaties involving the Cherokee people.

Then, with the Removal Act of 1830, it forcibly expelled most of them – including the
descendants of Dragging Canoe’s Chickamaugas – from their lands in the southeast.23

During the French and Indian War, the Cherokee Indians had forced elites to
confront their deepest fears and to assert their strongest desires. The Cherokees had
exposed underlying tensions between colonists and the Crown, and they had lost their
lives to enemies who soon put their new-found military experience to use in the
Continental army. Fifteen years after the Anglo-Cherokee War, when white South
Carolinians severed their ties with Britain, they also broke free of Crown restraints on
western expansion. The Cherokees impeded their economic opportunities. The Indians
also stood in the way of the postwar economic partnership between the coast and the
interior.

Finally, the Anglo-Cherokee conflict taught the planter-merchant class that a
powerful Native American military presence did more than endanger white lives on the
frontier. By drawing resources westward, it emboldened black resistance and endangered
white lives on the coast. So long as the Cherokees commanded the frontier, race slavery
was in jeopardy. For Carolina planters, the solution was independence. Independence
allowed them to clear away the Cherokees and expand their brutal and inescapable
system of African slavery. And it enabled them to create a world where they replaced
British “tyranny” and intolerance with their own.

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