



A History of Indigenous Peoples at Saratoga

Karim M. Tiro



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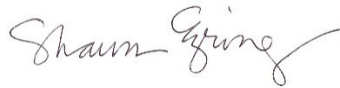
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Results of this Study have been
accepted by Interior Region 1 of the
National Park Service.

By



Superintendent
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A HISTORY OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AT SARATOGA

Special Ethnographic Report
Saratoga National Historical Park

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Cover: An Indian Chief Known by the name of Colonel [Louis], ca. 1785-1786 by John Trumbull.
Courtesy Yale University Art Gallery.

Executive Summary

Saratoga National Historical Park sits below the confluence of the Hudson River and Fish Creek. Long before the Battles of Saratoga, the place was well-known to Indigenous peoples of the region as a productive fishery on a key transportation corridor. The area also abounded in game that was attracted by the mineral-rich waters that came to the surface nearby. While at the time of European contact it was the homeland of the Algonquian-speaking Mohican people, Iroquoian-speaking Mohawks lived not far to the west. There is little evidence that their cultural differences made for chronic conflict between them, but the Mohicans were no longer at Saratoga after a war between the two peoples in the 1620s. Saratoga became a Mohawk fishing station. The Mohicans went east, but eventually returned to settle with other Algonquians just across the Hudson from Saratoga at Schaghticoke.

In the decade following the Mohawk-Mohican War, both the Mohawks and Mohicans suffered dramatic population losses as a result of smallpox. They also became enmeshed in trade relations with the Dutch, English, and French that involved several unprecedented aspects, most notably a seemingly infinite demand on the part of the Europeans for furs, as well as the introduction of weapons of never-before-seen lethality. Demographic, cultural, political, and economic factors combined with imperial competition to initiate violent conflict that sometimes enveloped Saratoga.

In 1683, the Mohawks deeded both sides of the Hudson at Saratoga to a group of politically well-connected men from Albany, including Pieter Schuyler. They likely did not do so to abandon the place, but instead to support the establishment of a religious mission. French Jesuits had created a Catholic settlement on the St. Lawrence near Montreal that was attracting many Haudenosaunee—so many, in fact, that the Mohawks were significantly weakened in their core settlement area along the Mohawk River. The English relied on the Mohawks as a shield against the French, so they regarded this as their problem as well. Although the plan for the mission fizzled, trade activity along that stretch of river intensified until King William's War erupted in 1689.

War and peace alternated along the upper Hudson for much of the next century. Poised between two rival European empires, Native peoples in the Saratoga region usually fell within an English orbit. When warfare intensified, so did diplomacy. In 1710, Pieter Schuyler took three Mohawks and a Mohican to London to meet the queen, where the “Four Indian Kings” caused a sensation. When peace prevailed, Natives, principally Mohawks from Kahnawake, carried furs, more plentiful in the French colony, to Albany. They exchanged these for trade goods, especially textiles, from England; English goods were manufactured to higher standards and were less costly. This trade was technically illegal in New France (and occasionally in New York), but the Natives exercised their customary right, reaffirmed in the 1713 Treaty of Utrecht, to

travel and trade without hindrance. Natives from the St. Lawrence valley became especially prominent around Saratoga.

However, peace also deprived Indigenous peoples the leverage to keep settlers off their lands. On the east side of the river, the Mohicans found themselves displaced once again. They headed for the Housatonic, where the Stockbridge mission took root in the 1730s. Meanwhile, the Schuyler family brought laborers, both free and enslaved, to Saratoga to cut down trees, plant crops, raise livestock, catch fish, and operate mills. No doubt piqued by the new English fort and trading post at Oswego as well, the Kahnawakes finally passed judgment on the Schuylers' Saratoga enterprise by destroying it in November of 1745. Their raid also netted a five-year-old captive, who became known as Atiatoharongwen, or Louis Cook. The son of an Abenaki mother and an African father, he grew up to become a Kahnawake chief. He espoused the Patriot cause from the very outset of the Revolutionary War. He lobbied other Natives on the Patriots' behalf and fought in many battles. Washington referred to Cook as a friend. Besides Philip Schuyler, he was Saratoga's most important Patriot.

Indigenous peoples played an important role in the Battles of Saratoga. Burgoyne's Indigenous allies, who hailed from the nearby St. Lawrence as well as the distant Mississippi, swept the upper Hudson before him. It was only with their assistance that he was able to progress as far as Stillwater. However, events near Bennington and Fort Edward caused them to become disenchanted with his leadership, and many went home. Their departure not only hampered his progress towards Albany, but permitted the entry on the Patriots' side of Oneidas and Mohicans. Led by Atiatoharongwen, they contributed to British misery in the aftermath of the Battle of Freeman's Farm.

Of course, Burgoyne's surrender, as pivotal as it was, did not end the war in the upper Hudson region. Indigenous warriors, fighting on both sides, remained active around Saratoga. When the threat of hostilities made it too risky for the Oneidas to remain in their home village near Oneida Lake, they initially fled to Schenectady. However, in the face of abuse from their supposed allies, they had to leave there as well. Seeking a refuge from their refuge, they came to the Saratoga area.

The end of the American Revolution initiated a tremendous increase in non-Indigenous settlement activity, but Indigenous peoples continued to return to the region. From Onondaga in the west to Odanak in the east, they came in force to sell baskets and other crafts to tourists at Saratoga Springs. They remained a conspicuous presence into the 20th century. For Indigenous peoples, Saratoga remained a place to gather and prosper, as it had been at the outset.

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List of Abbreviations

<i>AA</i>	<i>American Archives</i>
<i>AAlb</i>	<i>Annals of Albany</i>
AIHA	Albany Institute of History and Art, Albany, NY
ANOM	Archives nationales d'outre-mer, Aix-en-Provence, France
DCF	Daniel Claus Family Fonds, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, Ont.
<i>DHNY</i>	<i>Documentary History of the State of New-York</i>
<i>ERCCA</i>	<i>Early Records of the City and County of Albany</i>
HP	Frederick Haldimand Papers, Library and Archives Canada
<i>IAP</i>	<i>Indian Affairs Papers</i>
<i>JP</i>	<i>Papers of Sir William Johnson</i>
<i>JR</i>	<i>Jesuit Relations</i>
<i>LIR</i>	<i>Livingston Indian Records</i>
MACIA	Minutes of the Albany Commissioners of Indian Affairs, Library and Archives Canada
LAC	Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, Ont.
<i>NNN</i>	<i>Narratives of New Netherland</i>
<i>NYCD</i>	<i>Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York</i>
NYHS	New-York Historical Society, New York, NY
NYPL	New York Public Library, New York, NY
NYSAA	New York State Archaeological Association
PCC	Papers of the Continental Congress, National Archives, Washington, DC
<i>PGW</i>	<i>Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series</i>
<i>PPGC</i>	<i>Public Papers of George Clinton</i>
PSP	Philip Schuyler Papers, New York Public Library

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Any errors or shortcomings are mine alone.

Introduction

Nearly two hundred fifty years have passed since the American Revolution, but the conflict still reverberates among the Indigenous peoples of northeastern North America, often in specific ways. Karen Lewis, a member of the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinté, today points to the revolutionary struggle as “the one thing the [Haudenosaunee] Confederacy couldn’t come to an agreement on.” This social and political rupture was exacerbated by the fact the war forced Mohawks from their ancestral homes in the Mohawk Valley to new ones on the northern shore of Lake Ontario and the Niagara Peninsula. Lewis observed that “The Senecas still live on their lands; we do not.” Of the Haudenosaunee peoples, the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinté were the most directly affected by the Battles of Saratoga. Previously resident in the Mohawk River village of Tiononderoge, many fled to the British Army on the upper Hudson in the face of Patriot and Oneida harassment after the Battle of Oriskany in August 1777. Burgoyne’s defeat at Saratoga sent them to Lachine, where some of their fellows were already in exile. Tiononderoge war chief John Deserontyon returned to the upper Hudson in the years that followed, and played a leading role in the successful 1780 raid on Ballston. On the war’s later years and its outcome, the memory passed down at Tyendinaga is quite clear. Lewis put it succinctly: “We never lost a battle. Our allies gave up.”¹

At Tyendinaga and other Indigenous communities, special emphasis is placed on the term “ally”: the relationship between them and Great Britain (or the United States) was one of equals, not subordination. Today, a “Loyalist Parkway” runs near the Tyendinaga reserve, a reflection of the large number of Loyalists who settled there around them after the Revolutionary War. If the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinté were “loyalists,” their fealty was to their ancestral territories, not distant Britain. Indeed, Native communities on both sides of the US-Canadian border share a common pride that the war ultimately led to the creation of a democratic republic that resembled the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, which was itself a reflection of broader Indigenous values including reciprocity, equality, and deliberation.

By supporting the Patriots, the Mohicans and Oneidas contributed most directly to this milestone of world history. Both peoples supplied warriors who were active in the Battles of Saratoga. Like the Mohawks, their activity was rooted in the desire for secure possession of their homelands. As one Mohican explained it in 2019, they “saw

¹ Interview, Tyendinaga Mohawk Reserve, July 24, 2019.

the Revolution undoubtedly as an opportunity. If they sided with the American rebels, the new nation might respect and honor their attempts to reclaim lost lands.” Despite the Patriot victory, that didn’t happen. Ingratitude toward the Oneidas was even more flagrant, as the State of New York stripped them of the great majority of their lands in the decade following the war. Most Mohicans and Oneidas were pushed to Wisconsin in the 1820s and 30s, where they continue to live today. Even if their Revolutionary War sacrifices were, and continue to be, largely overlooked by the dominant society, the Mohicans and Oneidas continue to highlight them at war memorials and powwow gatherings.



Fig. 1. Tent display, Mohican Veterans Pow Wow, August 2019. Photo by the author.

This sustains not just a memory of past action, but a culture of military participation—a warrior identity—that has been cultivated into the present and is reflected in significantly higher-than-average rates of enlistment in the US Armed Forces.

As we shall see, it is the Mohican connection to Saratoga that runs deepest, for reasons that have nothing to do with war. The Mohicans’ name identifies them as the people of the ‘waters that are never still’—the Hudson River. Saratoga was north of their core settlement area, near where it merged with a hunting and gathering territory shared with other peoples. As the archaeological record suggests, Saratoga was nevertheless much used. As a Mohican woman describing her people’s relationship to ancestral territory in 2019 put it, “it still lives within us.”²

² Interview, Bowler, Wis., Aug. 9, 2019.

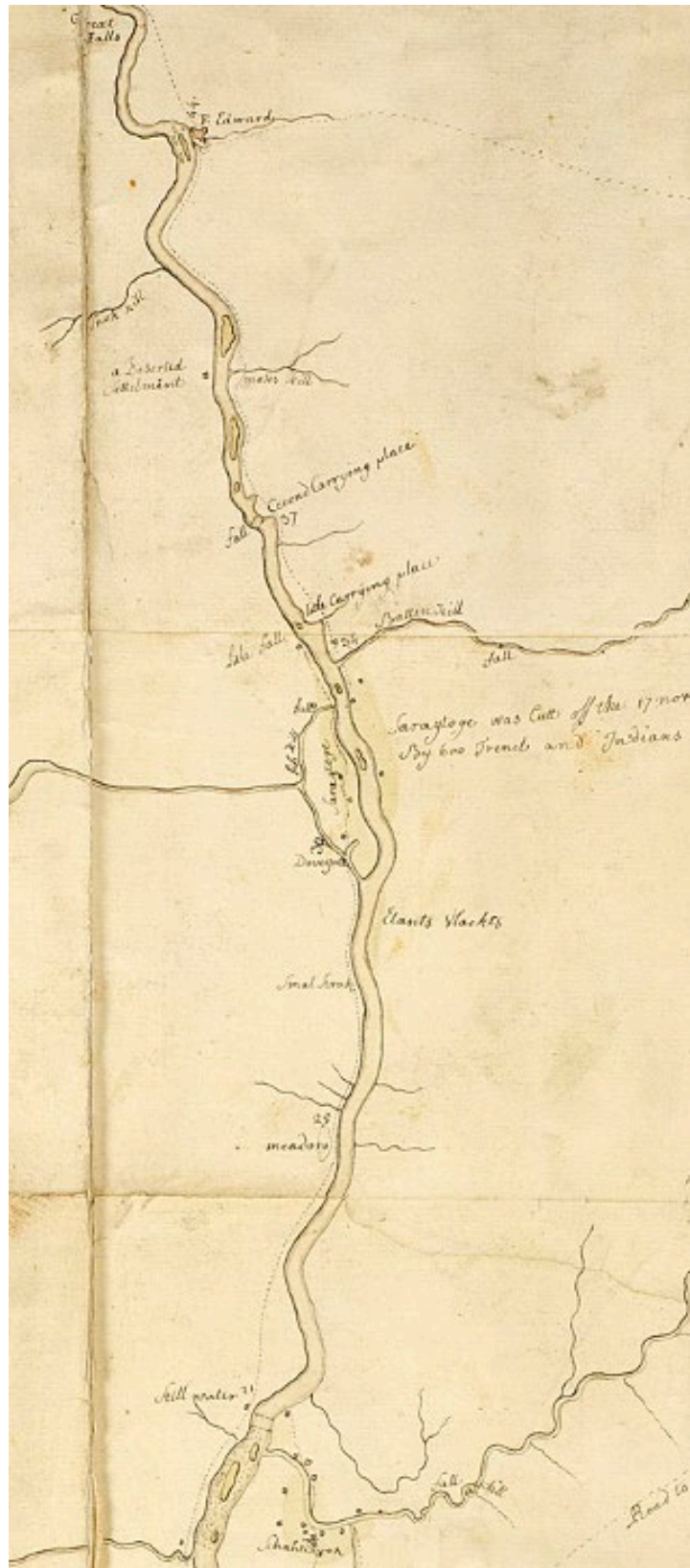


Fig. 2. Map of forts and settlements on the Mohawk, Hudson, and Hoosick Rivers, ca. 1755 (detail)
 Courtesy of the New-York Historical Society

This study surveys Indigenous peoples' historic activity at Saratoga National Historical Park and its vicinity. It illuminates the relationship between the Saratoga NHP site and a number of contemporary Indigenous peoples, including the Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohican Indians of Wisconsin, Mohawk communities in Ontario, Quebec, and New York, and Oneida communities in New York, Wisconsin, and Ontario. While I place the park property in sharpest focus, the vicinity of the park is understood here to include roughly the Hudson-Wood Creek portage (Fort Edward) at the northeast, the head of Kayaderosseras Creek in the Kayaderosseras Range at the northwest, Ballston Lake at the southwest, and Hoosic Falls to the southeast. Where the narrative discusses events farther afield—say, in Albany, Kahnawake, Quebec City, Odanak, Oswego, Michilimackinac, Philadelphia, the Bronx, Boston, or London—it does so strictly to explain the actions of Indigenous people in the park and its vicinity.

The report engages and develops several of the established interpretive themes of Saratoga National Historical Park.³ Saratoga's position along north-south and east-west travel routes, coupled with its abundance of fish, ensured it would be a place of activity and exchange, a fact that appears in the archaeological record. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it served as a way station for Indigenous women and men carrying furs to Schenectady and Albany and textiles to Kahnawake and Montreal. This trade drew the Schuyler family to Saratoga, where they cultivated connections to both Indigenous people and the French. The land the Schuylers obtained there became the basis of the land, lumber, and transportation interests they would go on to develop in the eighteenth century, and which provided a foundation for their political power. (They did not neglect the fish, either.) Indigenous people, displaced from Saratoga, resumed commercial activity at the nearby springs at the beginning of the nineteenth century, where they sold goods and performances to the tourists who flocked there.

Of course, some of the same geographical factors that made Saratoga important in commerce operated to make it important in war. By 1777, Indigenous warriors from as far away as the Mississippi were familiar with the area. This study places Indigenous participation on both sides of the Battles of Saratoga within the context of the longer history of Indigenous fighting over, and in, the upper Hudson region. This requires a consideration of previous conflicts as well as the distinct motivations that underlay Indigenous fighting. Indigenous peoples waged war for different reasons than Europeans, with the result that they cultivated different combat skills. John Burgoyne was not the first European commander who dreamt of using Indigenous warriors' skills to his own ends, and not the first to find that it was more complicated than he imagined.

³ Saratoga National Historical Park Foundation Document, [3]. The Interpretive Themes are: Corridor of Commerce; The Battles of Saratoga; Global Conflict and Influence; and History and Memory—Creating a Shared American Identity.

This study also sheds light on the second most important figure of Revolutionary Saratoga after General Philip Schuyler: Atiatoharongwen (Louis Cook).

Atiatoharongwen enters the documentary record as a five-year-old boy captured in the 1745 French raid on Saratoga, where he had probably been born. He was prized by his initial French captor because he was Black, and could therefore be sold. However, after his Abenaki mother intervened, he was ultimately raised among the Mohawks at Kahnawake. Atiatoharongwen became an ardent supporter of the Patriots during the Revolution. His courage, geographical knowledge, and fluency in French, English, Abenaki, Mohawk, and Oneida, made him indispensable. In recognition of his contributions, the United States rewarded him with an officer's commission—making him one of only two African-American commissioned officers in the Continental Army. Atiatoharongwen lived the rest of his life among Mohawks at Akwesasne and the Oneidas. He died fighting for the United States in the War of 1812.

* * *

Work on this report began in earnest in the summer of 2019 with meetings with members of Indigenous communities with strong historical connections to Saratoga. These were, in order of consultation, the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinté, the Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohican Indians, and the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin. As the report will demonstrate, although these Indigenous communities were among those with the most substantive historical ties to Saratoga, particularly during the Revolutionary Era, they were not the only ones. I then surveyed the published record of secondary and primary sources, and supplemented these with archival research at the repositories listed in the Appendix. I benefitted from communications with many others, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, as the research and writing unfolded.

The Hudson River north of Albany (referred to herein as 'the upper Hudson') has received surprisingly little attention from scholars. The earliest identifiable inhabitants of the area, the Mohicans, were Algonquian speakers, but students of Algonquian cultures have concentrated their attention on New England or Canada. They have done so because that is where the great majority of Algonquian speakers of the Northeast lived, and continue to live, and where the archival collections pertaining to them have the greatest depth. Those interested in the Mohawks who succeeded the Mohicans at Saratoga focus their attention on that people's core area of year-round habitation, which lay in the Mohawk Valley. Historians of colonial settlement treat Albany as the northern terminus of the story and rarely venture further north. Upon the creation of the United States, they make an abrupt left turn to follow the post-Revolutionary spread of settlement up the Mohawk River and along the Erie Canal. As a

result, what studies exist of the upper Hudson have been driven by relatively narrow interests in local history or specific military events.⁴

In identifying the various peoples active in the Saratoga area, I have had to balance the imperatives of clarity, simplicity, and precision. This has required compromising on all counts. Quite naturally, the ethnic and social composition of communities have changed over time while the names by which they have been known changed for different (often quite arbitrary) reasons. Since this is a study of Indigenous peoples' activities at Saratoga, rather than of the histories of those groups per se, I identify actors in the configurations in which they were active at Saratoga. Of course, this means relying upon the imprecise observations of Europeans. For example, the people Hudson encountered near Albany and their descendants were named 'Mahikander' or 'Mahican' in early written records. Anglophone writers shifted the spelling to 'Mohican' in the eighteenth century. I have used this more modern spelling except where it appears in quotations. In the late seventeenth century, Mohicans who remained in the upper Hudson valley formed the core of a new community on the eastern side of the river called Schaghticoke. There, they were joined by Abenakis and mid-Connecticut River Algonquians. (This community should not be confused with the Algonquian community by the same name in Connecticut.⁵) The Schaghticoques sometimes acted in conjunction with Munsee speakers from lower parts of the Hudson River, and were collectively described as 'River Indians.' In the eighteenth century, most of the Schaghticoques amalgamated with Munsee-speaking Wappingers and other New England Algonquian peoples at the Stockbridge mission in Massachusetts. The members of that community were referred to as 'Stockbridges' and 'Mohicans.'⁶

I use the endonym 'Haudenosaunee' ('people of the extended house') in lieu of 'Iroquois' to refer to the confederation of Five (after 1722 Six) Nations. This confederation is also sometimes referenced here as the (capital-L) 'League.' Mohawks

⁴ This is not to impugn their value. See, for example, Theodore Corbett's *A Clash of Cultures on the Warpath of Nations: The Colonial Wars in the Hudson-Champlain Valley* (Fleischmanns, NY: Purple Mountain Press, 2002) and *No Turning Point: The Saratoga Campaign in Perspective* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014).

⁵ The confusion arises from the fact that 'Schaghticoke' denotes a confluence of waterways, a common feature. Marge Bruchac, "Schaghticoke and Points North: Wōbanaki Resistance and Persistence," Historic Deerfield Museum, 2004, at note 5. Accessed Oct. 13, 2022. http://1704.deerfield.history.museum/popups/background.do?shortName=ExpWob_persistence; William A. Starna and Corinna Dally-Starna, *Gideon's People: Being a Chronicle of an American Indian Community in Colonial Connecticut and the Moravian Missionaries Who Served There* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 1:667n2.

⁶ Patrick Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), xiv-xv; Starna, *From Homeland to New Land: A History of the Mahican Indians, 1600-1830* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013), xiv-xv; Alan Taylor, "Captain Hendrick Aupaumut: The Dilemmas of an Intercultural Broker" *Ethnohistory* 43 (1996): 432. The change in letter did not actually reflect a change in sound, with the 'o' being short, as in 'Monday' or the Anglo-Canadian pronunciation of 'Montreal'.

residing in the Mohawk Valley were original, full members of this confederation, but those who relocated to the St. Lawrence kept a more ambiguous political connection. Where this distinction is relevant, I employ 'League' and 'Laurentian.' By the time of the Revolution, Laurentian communities of Mohawks, Abenakis, Nipissings, and Hurons (Wendats) created their own confederation, known as the Seven Nations.

Of course, the complexities of naming are not limited to Indigenous peoples. Just as the vagaries of colonialism led to Mohicans combining with other Algonquians, so too did it result in Dutch people combining with English. The English conquest of New Netherland in 1664 meant that the people of Beverwyck became the people of Albany overnight, even if cultural change took generations. In the American Revolution, although most of the people on both sides considered themselves both patriotic and loyal, I use the labels 'Patriot' and 'Loyalist' as they came to use it themselves to refer to supporters and opponents of independence. I also use "Americans" to refer to those who supported independence from Britain, although this obscures the fact that many people on the other side were also American-born (to say nothing of the continent's Indigenous inhabitants).

Places also present problems of naming. Here, too, I have favored continuity, simplicity and some anachronism. The Hudson River is 'the Hudson River,' even though the Mohicans did not call it that, the Dutch called it the 'North River,' and Philip Schuyler referred to it as 'Hudson's River.' (With flagrant inconsistency, of course, I refer to Albany before the 1664 conquest as 'Fort Orange.') 'Saratoga' itself presents obvious and interesting problems. The Mohawk version was recorded as Ochseratonque, Saraghtogo, Saraghtoge, and Saraghtoga, among other variants.⁷ One nineteenth-century Euro-American writer, citing an Akwesasne Mohawk source, wrote that the word meant "the side-hills."⁸ Another, citing an unidentified Mohawk at second hand, said it "meant "swift water" to distinguish that point in the river from the still water that there begins and extends down to the present village of "Stillwater."⁹ These translations are irreconcilable, but both point to the fact that Saratoga referred to the outlet of Fish Creek on the Hudson, in present-day Schuylerville. This is further corroborated by Mohawk identification of the place named Saratoga as "under the lake"—doubtless a reference to Fish Creek's rapid drop from Saratoga Lake to the Hudson—in both the seventeenth and twenty-first centuries. Saratoga Lake and

⁷ William Beauchamp, *Aboriginal Place Names of New York* (Albany: New York State Education Department, 1907), 196-97.

⁸ Horatio Gates Spafford, *A Gazetteer of the State of New-York* (Albany, NY: Packard and Van Benthuyssen, 1824): 466. Franklin B. Hough added Sa-ra-ta-ke "'a place where the track of the heel may be seen," in allusion to a locality said to be in the neighborhood, where depressions like footsteps may be seen on the rock." *A History of St. Lawrence and Franklin Counties* (Albany, NY: Little and Company, 1853), 180.

⁹ William Leete Stone, *Reminiscences of Saratoga and Ballston*, (New York: Virtue & Yorston, 1875), 5-6.

Saratoga Springs thus got their names by their connection to this place along the Hudson. It was a notable and important place long before 1777.

SECTION ONE: SARATOGA IN THE INDIGENOUS NORTHEAST

Part One: First Inhabitants

Lifeways of the Archaic: Fishers, Hunters, Gatherers

Mohicans called the area around the confluence of Fish Creek and the Hudson River Amissohaendiek—which translates roughly as ‘the place where the small fish are caught.’¹ As in much of New England, fish were fantastically abundant. Before the creation of the Troy dam, Erie Canal, Champlain Canal and Sacandaga Lake, the river was wilder and more productive, as fast-moving water had higher oxygen levels. As one observer noted, Stillwater was “soe named for that the water passeth soe slowly, as not to be discerned, yet at a little distance both above and below is disturbed and rageth as in a great sea, occationed by great rocks and great falls therein.”² Before the clearing of trees for land-extensive agriculture, spawning habitat on the tributaries of the Hudson was shaded by forest and less polluted by soil. It was there that anadromous shad, herring, sturgeon, and alewife were born and swam out to the sea, where they grew. In their bodies, these fish stored the energy acquired in the ocean and transported it back upriver when they returned to spawn. Especially during the migration seasons, humans gathered at shallows, rapids, and falls on Fish Creek, the Hudson, and the Hoosic, to reap the fishes’ hard-won energy dividend. The numbers of fish were staggering during the spawning season, which came in the spring, although stragglers continued to arrive even months later. Also present were catadromous (sea-born but river-dwelling) eels and lampreys, and non-migratory fish, including suckers, sunfishes, bullheads, and catfish. Fishing appears to have been carried on at Saratoga as long as four thousand years ago.³

Since the fish population fluctuated with the seasons, sustenance was not to be found in a single location year-round. But the vegetal landscape supported populations of white-tailed deer, bear, squirrel, passenger pigeon, turtle, and woodchuck. Points and

¹ The name is the same as a Penobscot (Eastern Abenaki) site at Farmington Falls, Maine. There, the referent fish were smelt. At Saratoga, they were probably herring, possibly alewives. Ives Goddard, personal communication, March 17, 2022. Conor Quinn contributed to this identification. Jesuit Father Isaac Jogues, visiting “Ossaragué” on June 1, 1646, reported that it was a “spot...very remarkable as abounding in a small fish, the size of the herring.” *JR* 29:49.

² *NYCD* 4:194.

³ Susan Bender and Hetty Jo Brumbach “Woodland Period Settlement and Subsistence Change in the Upper Hudson River Valley” in *Northeast Subsistence-Settlement Change: A.D. 700–1300* ed. John P. Hart and Christina B. Rieth, New York State Museum Bulletin 496 (2002): 231; Robert Funk and Philip Lord, “Two Stratified Alluvial Sites in the Upper Hudson Valley” *Pennsylvania Archaeologist* 42 (1972): 27–61.

tools recovered at sites to the north and west in Gansevoort on Snook Kill and to the south and east on the Hoosic River, as well as on the shore of Saratoga Lake, testify to occupancy at Schuylerville ca. 1900-1500BC. Chert projectile points and tools from the period, as well as a lithic workshop, dating back 6000 years have also been found on the grounds of Saratoga National Historical Park at both the Victory Woods and General Philip Schuyler House sites.⁴ The remains of white-tailed deer at archaeological sites on the upper Hudson are extensive. As was the case throughout the region, deer were available year-round, supported by hickory, walnut, and chestnut trees. Hunters developed improved technology, ultimately replacing spears and atlatls by 100BC with bows and arrows that became smaller and sharper over time.⁵ These were also used to hunt migratory birds, such as geese, ducks, and heron. The passenger pigeons that visited seasonally were so prolific that they could not only be easily shot from the sky, but grabbed in their nests. Turkeys and pheasant were usually about as well, and amphibians were not overlooked, either.

In order to promote the growth of populations of deer, fowl, and other game in their vicinity, the people set fires on an annual basis, usually in the fall.⁶ In the 1650s, Adriaen van der Donck, a Dutch official, remarked upon it. He said it was “a spectacular sight when one sails on the rivers at night while the forest is ablaze on both banks” and explained its purpose:

For one, it facilitates hunting, because the dry weeds and fallen leaves not only hinder the hunter’s progress, but the crackling invariably betrays him and the game spot him first. Second, it serves to thin out the forest as the fire smothers and kills much new undergrowth. Third, it clears the forest of old deadwood consisting of branches and fallen trees; and fourth, it increases the game and assists the hunter since it restricts the animals’ movements and also enables them to be tracked in the burned areas.⁷

⁴ William A. Ritchie, *Archaeology of New York State* (Garden City, NY: Natural History Press, 1969), 134-37; James P. Walsh, “Arrowhead Casino: A Middle to Late Archaic Site at Saratoga Lake, N.Y.” *BNYSAA* 71 (1977): 36; Bender and Brumbach “Woodland Period,” 231; David A. Starbuck, ed., Saratoga National Historical Park Archeology Progress Report-1987, 19-27, 44. Report on file at Museum Services Center, Marine Barracks, Charlestown Navy Yard, Boston; Hartgen Archaeological Associates, *Inventory King William’s and King George’s Wars Battlefields* Historical Documentation Report (2015): 7.

⁵ William A. Haviland and Marjory W. Power, *The Original Vermonters: Native Inhabitants, Past and Present* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1994), 86.

⁶ Gordon M. Day, “The Indian as an Ecological Factor in the Northeastern Forest,” *Ecology* 34 (1953): 334-39.

⁷ Adriaen van der Donck, *A Description of New Netherland* ed. Charles Gehring and Starna (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), 21-22.

Forest burning also created an “edge effect,” producing the small bushes and browse that attracted game, including fowl. The practice was sufficiently widespread that over time it altered the composition of the forest itself, favoring fire-resistant species and, to a lesser extent, oaks, chestnuts, and pin cherries.⁸

These trees yielded edible fruits or nuts for people as well as animals, and berry-bearing bushes and heaths were favored, too. In all likelihood, these comestibles were collected by women and children, who had likewise familiarized themselves with edible native chenopods and amaranths and other local vegetal resources for food, fiber, and medicine. Natives’ identification of useful plants led to efforts to protect them, which in turn became cultivation. For archaeologists, the increasing emphasis on plants marked a shift to a new period known to archaeologists as the ‘Woodland.’ They have identified a long-term trend among upper Hudson inhabitants toward settlement on lands with greater horticultural potential, irrespective of their proximity to fish.⁹ The Goldkrest site south of Albany, on the grounds of the Papscaanee Island Nature Preserve, also yielded evidence of gathered nuts and “bramble berries, elderberries, and grapes as well as grains and grasses such as goosefoot, millet, buckwheat/sedge, and *Scirpus* sp. (smartweed/knotweed or bulrush).” Buttercups, used for medicinal purposes, and maize were also present.¹⁰

Evidence of maize in the environs of Saratoga has, however, been scant.¹¹ It is possible that what corn remnants have been found at Saratoga reflect a corn-for-fish trade or that Saratoga’s inhabitants cultivated maize elsewhere. Although the cultivation of maize and beans underwrote the expansion of communities in the region from the 1300s onwards, the local abundance of fish at Saratoga, as in some parts of New England and the Pacific coast, may have made settlement desirable despite the relative unsuitability of the soil for maize and the brevity of the growing season. Given the

⁸ Van der Donck, *Description*, 66; Shirley W. Dunn, *The Mohican World 1680-1750* (Fleischmanns, NY: Purple Mountain Press, 2000), 14-15, 20; William Cronon, *Changes in the Land* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1983), 51; S.W. Bromley, “An Indian Relict Area” *Scientific Monthly* 60 (1945): 153.

⁹ Bender and Edward V. Curtin, A Prehistoric Context for the Upper Hudson Valley. Report prepared for the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation, August 1990, 27-30, 91.

¹⁰ Tonya B. Largy, Lucianne Lavin, Marina E. Mozzi, and Kathleen Furgerson, “Corncobs and Buttercups: Plant Remains from the Goldkrest Site” in John P. Hart, ed., *Current Northeast Paleoethnobotany* New York State Museum Bulletin 494 (1999), 69-80; James W. Bradley, *Before Albany: An Archaeology of Native-Dutch Relations in the Capital Region, 1600-1664*, New York State Museum Bulletin 509 (2006), 11. The Papscaanee Island Nature Preserve was returned to the Stockbridge-Munsee Community in 2021.

¹¹ Bender and Brumbach, “Woodland Period Settlement and Subsistence Change in the Upper Hudson River Valley” in *Northeast Subsistence-Settlement Change: A.D. 700-1300* ed. Hart and Christina B. Rieth, New York State Museum Bulletin 496 (2002), 230, 235; Brumbach, “Algonquian and Iroquoian Ceramics in the Upper Hudson River Drainage,” *Northeast Anthropology* 49 (1995): 64.

limited rewards they could expect from cultivating maize, the locals may simply have not deemed tending the crop and keeping pests away to be the best use of their time.¹²

Algonquians and Iroquoians

Both the Mohicans and Mohawks have oral traditions that relate their arrival at the Hudson after long treks from lands of origin somewhere to the west.¹³ Mohican principal chief John W. Quinney recalled in 1854 that, as part of a migration with other Algonquians, the Mohicans

came from the North-West: crossed over the salt-waters, and after long and weary pilgrimages (planting many colonies upon their track), took possession, and built their fires on the Atlantic coast, extending from the Delaware on the south, to the Penobscot in the north.¹⁴

In a history published in 1804, Mohican leader Hendrick Aupaumut observed that “the etymology of the word Muhheakunnuk...is great waters or sea, which are constantly in motion, either flowing or ebbing.” When his ancestors “came to Hudson’s river; then they said one to another, this is like Muhheakunnuk our nativity. And when they found grain was very plenty in that country, the agreed to kindle fire there and hang a kettle....”¹⁵ The archaeological record presently sheds limited light on migration to the upper Hudson. Settlement patterns and artifact assemblages lack patterns that allow us to draw distinctions about the identity of their creators at this distance. Anthropologists

¹² Bender and Curtin, *Prehistoric Context*, 24, 91; Marshall Joseph Becker, “The Lenape and Other ‘Delawarean’ Peoples at the Time of European Contact: Population Estimates Derived from Archaeological and Historical Sources” *BNYSAA* 105 (1993): 22.

¹³ The earliest archaeological evidence suggests humans arrived shortly after the disappearance of Lake Albany some 13,000 years ago, attracted by megafauna like mammoths, ground sloths, and mastodons. Evidence of their presence around Saratoga comes in the form of artifacts like projectile points left behind on high ground between the Hudson River and Saratoga Lake, as well as a point and scraper along Flax Mill, near the Batten Kill. These “Paleo-Indian” hunters, as archaeologists call them, may have availed themselves of the nearby sources of flint for their tools. The early Paleo-Indian hunting bands probably numbered only in the hundreds for all of what is now New York. Mary Ann Levine, “New Evidence for Early Postglacial Occupations in the Upper Hudson Valley” *BNYSAA* 98 (1989): 5-12; Robert E. Funk and James Walsh “Evidence of Late Paleo-Indian Occupation at Saratoga Lake, New York” *BNYSAA* 96 (1988): 1-4; Roger L. Ashton, “Evidence of Paleo-Indian and Early Archaic Occupation in Washington County, New York” *BNYSAA* 107 (1994): 20-23. Nearby flint sources included Redstone Mountain north of Battenville (Ashton, “Evidence,” 21) and Flatly Brook, John D. Holland and Roger L. Ashton, “The Flatly Brook Quarry: A Source of Normanskill Chert Located in Washington County, New York” *BNYSAA* 115 (1999): 13-16; see also Charles F. Wray, “Varieties and Sources of Flint Found in New York State” *Pennsylvania Archaeologist* 18 (1946): 25-45.

¹⁴ John W. Quinney, “Celebration of the Fourth of July, 1854, at Reidsville, New York,” *Wisconsin Historical Collections* 4 (1859): 316.

¹⁵ [Hendrick Aupaumut], “Extracts from an Indian History,” *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society* ser. 1, 9 (1804): 100.

William Starna and Robert Funk have pointed out that “material culture does not have to reflect linguistic or ethnic identity”—and in New York, it doesn’t.¹⁶ But if the advent and identities of Woodland Period migrants is not readily detected in the archaeological record, the distribution of languages across the Northeast hints at the sequence of their arrival. Speakers of Algonquian languages are present throughout the region, and thus were likely there first. Since linguistic divergence is generally a slow but constant process, we can infer from the great differences among the Algonquian languages in the Northeast that they must have been present for many centuries. According to a reasonable, albeit speculative, estimate, Algonquian speakers arrived by AD500, probably from the far western Great Lakes, where a proto-Algonquian population resided c. 1200BC. They displaced or incorporated a population of Algonquian speakers that preceded them on the Hudson.¹⁷

Iroquoian-language speakers form a kind of linguistic peninsula in the Northeast whose eastern salient ended just west of Saratoga. The advent of Iroquoian peoples in New York likely came after AD900. The radical differences between the Iroquoian and Algonquian languages indicates that their bifurcation dates back as much as four or five millennia. Speculation regarding the Iroquoians’ place of origin prior to their migration to New York has ranged from Appalachia (either in central Pennsylvania or further south, nearer their Cherokee kin), the Ohio Valley, or somewhere even farther west.¹⁸ The emergence of Iroquoian-speaking communities in the Northeast did not produce an archaeologically observable shift in material culture, subsistence practices, or settlement patterns. This homogeneity has fed much debate about the extent to which the Iroquoian presence in the Northeast came about through migration or the adoption of new cultural patterns by peoples already present.

Since Saratoga sat on the Algonquian side of the linguistic frontier with Iroquoian peoples at the time of European contact—but then came to be on the other side—its history directs our attention not just to how Algonquian and Iroquoian societies developed, but also to how they interacted. Despite the linguistic differences, this interaction seems to have been substantial. Ceramics recovered in the Saratoga area bore a greater resemblance to those of adjacent Algonquian speakers to the east until around AD1300. At that point, they took on the characteristics of their Iroquoian neighbors to the west. Archaeologist Hetty Jo Brumbach dubbed this convergence the

¹⁶ Starna and Funk, “The Place of the In Situ Hypothesis in Iroquoian Archaeology” *Northeast Anthropology* 47 (1994): 48, 52.

¹⁷ Curtin, “The Ancient Mohicans in Time, Space, and Prehistory” in *Mohican Seminar 1* ed. Shirley W. Dunn, ed., New York State Museum Bulletin 501 (2004): 6, 10, 12.

¹⁸ Jennifer Birch, “Current Research on the Historic Development of Northern Iroquoian Societies” *Journal of Archaeological Research* 23 (2015): 272; Dean R. Snow, “Evolution of the Mohawk Iroquois” in *Societies in Eclipse: Archaeology of the Eastern Woodlands, A.D. 1400-1700* ed. David S. Brose, C. Wesley Cowan, and Robert C. Mainfort (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press), 20.

“Saratoga Complex” and posited that it did not reflect population displacement but instead the adoption of a new style.¹⁹ Analysis of the mineral composition of the ceramics and manufacturing techniques reveals differences with Mohawk Valley pottery and similarities with Algonquians of the Hudson and Housatonic Valleys, further suggesting that stylistic change was not evidence of Iroquoians moving in.²⁰ Pointing out that most potmakers were women, archaeologist James Bradley suggests increased intermarriage as a possible explanation.²¹ Since Algonquian settlements continued to be small and did not show any trend toward consolidation, fortification, or movement toward defensible locations at this time, it seems likely that the peoples were largely at peace. Interaction across the linguistic divide is also evident in shared oral narrative. Anthropologist Anthony Wonderley has observed that the Iroquoian explanations for the Pleiades as seven dancers raised into the heavens, and of the Big Dipper as three hunters pursuing four bears (one of whose blood turns the autumn leaves red), was shared by the Mohicans. Both peoples also had common lore about ferocious hairless, or “naked,” bears—the last one of which was said to have been killed at Hoosick.²²

All told, we can surmise that the ancestors of the Mohawks and Mohicans before European contact were, in relation to each other, much like they were afterwards: ethnically and linguistically distinct but mostly peaceful neighbors.²³ Their proximity would have necessitated negotiations about boundaries, but also shared resource use and rights of way. Intermarriage promoted bilingualism and intercultural understanding. The offspring of such unions would have been particularly well-positioned to manage cooperation and trade and defuse conflict. Of course, as one might expect, hostilities could—and did—erupt, sometimes in spectacular fashion. These were usually followed by reconciliation, at least after a time. Facile assumptions of inveterate hatreds based on linguistic difference should be regarded with skepticism. Indeed, given the Haudenosaunee’s history of attacking culturally similar peoples for

¹⁹ Brumbach, “Algonquian and Iroquoian Ceramics in the Upper Hudson River Drainage” *Northeast Anthropology* 49 (1995) 57-63; Brumbach, ““Iroquoian” Ceramics in “Algonkian” Territory” *Man in the Northeast* 10 (1975): 17-28.

²⁰ John P. Pretola, “An Optical Mineralogy Approach to Northeastern Ceramic Diversity” in Jordan Kerber, ed., *A Lasting Impression: Coastal, Lithic, and Ceramic Research in New England Archaeology* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2002), 180, 194-98, 200-4; Lucianne Lavin, “Those Puzzling Late Woodland Collared Pottery Styles: An Hypothesis” in same, 155-57, 174.

²¹ Bradley, *Before Albany*, 19.

²² Anthony Wonderley, *At the Font of the Marvelous: Exploring Oral Narrative and Mythic Imagery of the Iroquois and their Neighbors* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2009), 4, 8-9, 112; John Heckewelder, *History, Manners, and Customs of the Indians* (Philadelphia: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1881), 255n.2; Jeremiah Curtin and J.N.B. Hewitt, *Seneca Fiction, Legends, and Myths*, Part 1, Thirty-Second Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1918), 98, 259, 342-43.

²³ Bradley, *Before Albany*, 17-19.

assimilative purposes, the Algonquians' difference might even have had a protective effect. Their geographical position on a linguistic frontier encouraged both Mohawks and Mohicans to hone their diplomatic skills. The Mohawks, as the 'keepers of the Eastern door' to the Longhouse, were given formal responsibility for managing Haudenosaunee relations with peoples on that side. This gave them an additional measure of influence. Perhaps to offset the Iroquoian bloc to their west, the Mohicans maintained strong relationships with other Algonquian peoples to the south, such as the Delawares, and the west, particularly the Shawnees. After the arrival of Europeans, the Mohicans leveraged these relationships to present themselves to the newcomers as intermediaries with their Algonquian allies in the interior.

Warfare

Native societies had evolved in a context where populations were small and land and resources were abundant. Indigenous nations sometimes came into conflict over territorial boundaries but rarely fought each other to gain exclusive control over large swaths of territory.²⁴ More often, they fought to avenge a perceived wrong by a member of another community (even if that perceived wrong was sometimes quite remote in time) or to subdue a community they considered to constitute a threat. War was an opportunity for young men to demonstrate prowess and gain prestige. Warriors enhanced their prestige further by bringing back what they could from the enemy that might promote the strength of their own community. This meant taking ceremonial items, weapons, clothing or other goods. Sometimes women from the community that launched the raid would help haul the winnings home. Captives and scalps (and occasionally other body parts) were also sought. Scalps were receptacles of the former owner's spiritual power—power that could enhance health, harvests, fertility, and general well-being. Small-scale societies reckoned opportunity cost carefully. The best kind of traditional foe was one that was geographically remote, thereby reducing the intensity of conflict while making it sustainable.²⁵

²⁴ In the eighteenth century, as Indigenous peoples throughout the Northeast were coming under severe pressure from Euro-American settlement, Mohawk leader Joseph Brant articulated a metaphor for the peaceful sharing of territory: the 'dish with one spoon' (or beaver tail). The land (the dish) contained all that was needed for everyone's survival, but peaceful coexistence required respect for the land itself and reciprocity and toleration of others. Acknowledging that the latter was sometimes difficult, knives were explicitly excluded from the bowl. Lisa Brooks, *The Common Pot: The Recovery of Native Space in the Northeast* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 1-6; Victor P. Lytwyn has posited earlier manifestations of this metaphor in "A Dish With One Spoon: The Shared Hunting Grounds Agreement in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Valley Region *Papers of the Twenty-Eighth Algonquian Conference* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba, 1997), 210-27; Susan M. Hill, *The Clay We Are Made Of: Haudenosaunee Land Tenure on the Grand River* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2017), 42-43.

²⁵ This composite sketch of Indigenous warfare derives primarily from Daniel K. Richter, "War and Culture: The Iroquois Experience" *William and Mary Quarterly* 40 (1983): 528-59; José António Brandão, *Your Fyre Shall Burn No More: Iroquois Policy toward New France and Its Native Allies to 1701*

Thus, for Indigenous communities, a successful military campaign was one that would increase their wealth, and even their numbers. A paradoxical assumption of the war complex of the Eastern Woodlands—and its principal distinction from that of Europeans—was that life was valuable. The sometimes-spectacular brutality of Indigenous warfare masked its limited lethality. The fact that small-scale societies could not afford to lose large numbers of their warriors meant that they privileged tactics like ambush and more limited goals like winning supplies and prisoners. Part of what would make Indigenous warriors so desirable to Europeans as auxiliaries to their armies was their ability to calculate and minimize risk across the entire range of military activities. British officer Thomas Anburey, who served under Burgoyne, acknowledged this when he wrote that when it came to detecting the location, numbers, and tracks of their enemies at a distance, Native warriors were “possessed of a sagacity” that was “astonishing.” He also observed that “An Indian’s idea of war consists in never fighting in an open field but upon some very extraordinary occasion, for they consider this method as unworthy an able warrior, and as an affair in which fortune governs, more than prudence or courage.”²⁶ (Native warriors had discontinued open-field encounters once they had adopted lethal European firearms.) European warfare, by contrast, was less individualistic and presumed deep reservoirs of manpower. To Natives, Europeans’ close-order lines looked like organized mass suicide. European assumptions about the expendability of humans were evinced not just by the high death tolls, but by the poor wages paid to soldiers, even mercenaries.

(Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000); D. Peter MacLeod, *The Canadian Iroquois in the Seven Years’ War* (Toronto: Dundurn, 1996), Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1680-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Armstrong Starkey, *European and Native American Warfare* (London: Routledge, 2002).

²⁶ Thomas Anburey, *With Burgoyne from Quebec: An Account of the Life at Quebec and of the Famous Battle at Saratoga* ed. Sydney Jackman (Toronto: Macmillan Canada, 1963), 127-28.

Part Two: The Contact Period

Paths and Peoples

In the era immediately preceding European contact, Saratoga was still Amissohaendiek and frequented by Mohicans. A riverine people, the Mohicans were present on both sides of the Hudson, Hoosic, and Batten Kill. They were also on both sides of the Mohawk River from its confluence with the Hudson some ways towards the Schoharie Creek. They numbered roughly 6000, but the bulk of the population resided south of Albany. The presence of north-south and east-west paths and waterways across the Saratoga area meant that peoples of other nations passed through with some regularity for all imaginable purposes. Trails along the Kayaderosseras and Hudson connected Saratoga to hunting (and fishing) grounds the Mohicans shared with the Mohawks and Abenakis. The Mohicans hunted freely as far north as Lake Champlain but their domain on the banks of the Hudson may not have extended far inland, with Bear Swamp near present-day Saratoga Springs probably open to communal use. The Abenaki name for the latter, Nebizonbik, or 'place of water medicine' indicates that people's use of it.¹

Hudson River crossings were relatively easy at Stillwater and Saratoga. The Batten Kill provided a channel between Saratoga and peoples like the Sokokis of Vermont; the Hoosic offered the same between Mohicans along the upper Hudson and Housatonic. Culturally and linguistically, the Sokokis were at a farther remove from the Mohicans than the Munsee-speaking Esopus and Wappingers, but relations remained generally friendly. Cohoes Falls on the Mohawk River forced some travelers toward Saratoga. To reach the Mohawk River above the falls from the eastward, there was a Fish Creek-Kayaderosseras Creek-Mourning Kill-Ballston Lake-Aalplaats Creek water route with an accompanying footpath; other footpaths connected Lake George and the Mohawk River.²

Distant Glimpses

Initial awareness of Europeans did not burst suddenly upon the Indigenous population of the upper Hudson. Rather, it emerged in stages, beginning with reports

¹ Frederick Matthew Wiseman, *The Voice of the Dawn: An Autohistory of the Abenaki Nation* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2001), 197; Starna, *Homeland*, 102-3.

² Laura Snell, "Indian Trails" *Saratoga County Communities: An Historic Perspective* ed. Jan Johnstone (n.p., Saratoga County Board of Supervisors, 1980), 6-8; Guy Omeron Coolidge, *The French Occupation of the Champlain Valley From 1609 to 1759* (Harrison, NY: Harbor Hill Books, 1979 [1938]), 173.

and objects coming from the north and the south via people of different ethnicities. Verrazzano had encountered the Munsees in New York Harbor in 1524. The visit was friendly enough, if brief, but it was sufficiently strange that the news probably made its way upriver to the Mohicans, with whom the Munsees enjoyed generally good relations. Jacques Cartier's visits to Iroquoian settlements at Stadacona (Quebec City) and Hochelaga (Montreal) in 1534 and 1535-6 constituted a more substantive introduction. Cartier traded metalware for provisions and furs and collected geographical information. Disquietingly, he raised a large cross on the river—which he explained as merely a marker to facilitate his return—and (much more disquietingly) kidnapped some Natives to take back to France. The St. Lawrence River Iroquoians had settlements in northwestern Vermont and friendly relations with the Abenakis, so news of the developments along the river doubtless spread southward quickly.³

Cartier returned in 1541, and fishermen and whalers from France, many of Basque origin, became an increasingly regular presence on the shores and islands of the St. Lawrence River, where they landed to dry or boil their catch. By the 1580s, regular, seasonal trading took place around Tadoussac. The Europeans exchanged metalware, especially copper kettles and iron axes, knives, and swords, with Natives in exchange for beaver pelts and other animal skins. Glass beads and textiles were also exchanged.⁴ Although Natives of the Mohawk and Hudson valleys were not present at these encounters, some of those beads and bits of metalware made their way to their villages, and information doubtless accompanied them along the circuits those objects had traveled. Nearest to Saratoga, ten late 16th or early 17th century beads have been found on Mechanicville Road in Waterford.⁵

The Iroquoian populations Cartier encountered disappeared in the 16th century. The reasons for this probably lie in conflicts that predated European contact, but disease and competition over access to European trade appear to have accelerated it. These peoples were likely absorbed by the Mohawks and other Iroquoian nations of New York, the Wendat (Huron) north of Lake Ontario, and neighboring Algonquians (including the Abenaki). Traces of this dispersal appear in the form of St. Lawrence Iroquois-style pottery design elements found in the subsequent material assemblages of

³ James B. Petersen, "St. Lawrence Iroquoians in Northern New England: Intruders in the "Dawnland"?" in *From the Arctic to Avalon: Papers in Honour of Jim Tuck* ed. Lisa Rankin and Peter Ramsden, International Series 1507 (Oxford, Eng.: British Archaeological Reports, 2006): 120-22.

⁴ Laurier Turgeon, "French Fishers, Fur Traders, and Amerindians during the Sixteenth Century: History and Archaeology" *William & Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser. 55 (1998): 600-3.

⁵ The absence of other European trade goods suggests these beads were not acquired through direct trade with Europeans. Donald A. Rumrill, "The Mohawk Glass Trade Bead Chronology: Ca. 1560-1785" *Beads* 3 (1991): 5-45; Bradley, *Before Albany*, 14, 23, 26; Charles Fisher and Karen Hartgen, "Glass Trade Beads from Waterford, NY" *Pennsylvania Archaeologist* 53 (1983): 47-52.

those peoples.⁶ Force was probably involved in at least some of these removals. The arrival of some Iroquoians from the St. Lawrence among the Mohawks bolstered the Mohawks' knowledge of, and orientation toward, the St. Lawrence Valley, a vista that encompassed the Adirondacks and upper Hudson-Champlain corridor, and which would influence their future actions in those regions.⁷ A modern-day Mohawk version of their migration narrative suggests that the St. Lawrence Iroquoians had been companions of the Mohawks on their long trek from the west. While some Iroquoians stopped above Cohoes Falls, others turned left and continued onward to settle the St. Lawrence.⁸ This account of the Iroquoians of the Mohawk and St. Lawrence valleys as ever one people may reflect the whitewashing of a violent assimilation, the amnesia of a peaceful one, or it may have been thus. Whatever the case, by the early 17th century the Mohawks felt invested in the St. Lawrence, and Saratoga lay astride one of the important routes there from their villages.

In the Flesh

Europeans suddenly came much closer to Saratoga from both the north and the south in the summer of 1609. Samuel de Champlain, who had arrived at Quebec City the previous year, decided to ingratiate himself with the local Wendat, Algonquin, and Montagnais by accepting their enemies as his enemies. The following summer, Champlain and two French soldiers joined sixty warriors of this coalition on an expedition against Iroquoian enemies. Geography would suggest these were Mohawks but the evidence is lacking. Champlain only identified them as 'Iroquois' and Mohawk tradition is silent on the matter.⁹ In any case, as the contending sides massed for battle near Ticonderoga on July 30, Champlain moved to the fore of his allies. When several Haudenosaunee bowmen stepped forward to launch their arrows, Champlain burst forth brandishing his arquebus. As he recalled, they "caught sight of me, halted and gazed at me, and I at them." Then he fired. Three died, at least one of whom was a chief. In total, about fifty of the Haudenosaunee party were killed and a dozen taken captive,

⁶ Daniel K. Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 53; Jon W. Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1534-1701* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2010), 13-18; Anthony Wonderley and Martha L. Sempowski, *Origins of the Iroquois League: Narratives, Symbols, and Archaeology* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2019), 151-73. James B. Petersen, John G. Crock, Ellen R. Cowie, Richard A. Boisvert, Joshua R. Toney and Geoffrey Mandel, "St. Lawrence Iroquoians in Northern New England: Pendergast was "Right" and More" in *A Passion for the Past: Papers in Honour of James F. Pendergast* ed. James V. Wright and Jean-Luc Pilon (Ottawa, Ont.: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 2004), 116.

⁷ William Engelbrecht, "Northern New York Revisited," in *Passion for the Past*, 132-34.

⁹ Darren Bonaparte, *A Lily Among Thorns: The Mohawk Repatriation of Káteri Tekahkwí:tha* (Ahkwesáhsne Mohawk Territory: The Wampum Chronicles, 2009), 36-44.

despite their more than two-to-one advantage. They fled, returning west with shocking tales about the deadly event that had transpired. Even if they had not been present, the Mohawks would have soon heard the reports.¹⁰

It is not known when the Mohicans heard about the Frenchman's deadly exploit, but they were probably not taken unawares by the appearance of a Dutch ship on the river a few weeks later, in the middle of September. The explorer's encounter with their Munsee brethren downriver had been marred by a violent exchange, so runners were likely sent north. However, even if forewarned, the Mohicans' first encounter with Europeans still held the power to surprise—and impress—those who saw the *Half Moon* itself. The Mohicans were struck by the newcomers' peculiar skin color. They interpreted it as illness. "Our visitors were white, and must be sick," Quinney recalled. Another man was described as "red." Travelers on seventeenth-century ships were hardly hardy specimens after weeks of constant motion, confinement, and bad food. Quinney recounted, "They asked for rest and kindness, and we gave them both." If the physical appearance of Europeans gave the Mohicans pause, their technology made a more favorable impression. The 85-foot *Half Moon* was "a big canoe," a floating house, the likes of which they had never seen before. Although these individual Mohicans had probably already encountered some samples of European metalware, glass, and textiles, the assemblage they saw now was doubtless far more fascinating and obviously useful. According to Quinney, "A passion for information and improvement possessed the Indian – a residence was freely offered – territory given – and covenants of friendship exchanged."¹¹

The *Half Moon*'s crew of sixteen were greeted in a friendly manner by the locals. According to one of Hudson's officers, Robert Juet, the Mohicans "came flocking aboard, and brought us Grapes and Pompions [pumpkins], which wee bought for trifles. And many brought us Bevers skinnies, and Otters skinnies, which wee bought for Beades, Knives, and Hatchets." The Europeans were also given "stropes of Beades: some had sixe, seven, eight, nine, ten." Although Juet interpreted this as an economic exchange ("wee bought"), the objects offered by the Mohicans—furs, food, and beads—were ones that befitted a diplomatic encounter communicating good will and reciprocity. "The trifles" the Mohicans received were, objectively speaking, anything but. In America,

¹⁰ Trigger, *The Children of Aataentsic: A History of the Huron People to 1660* (Montreal, Qc. and Kingston, Ont.: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987 [1976]), 247-55.

¹¹ Three Indigenous sources describe reactions on the middle and/or upper Hudson, but they are from a later date: In 1754, a spokesman for the River Indians referred to the meeting during a council with British officials. A few years later, Rev. John Heckewelder conversed with Delawares, Munsees and Mohicans about their first encounters with Europeans at Manhattan, which Heckewelder committed to writing decades later. NYCD 6:881; [John Heckewelder], "Indian Tradition of the First Arrival of the Dutch" *Collections of the New-York Historical Society*, 2nd ser. (1841): 72-73; Quinney, "Celebration," 317; Starna, *Homeland*, 18-32.

these were items that were made of scarce and exotic materials, and were useful in a variety of tasks from the mundane to the spiritual. The production of glass and metal goods was labor intensive and technologically complex, a fact that Europeans tended to forget. Hudson and his first mate also introduced some Mohican chiefs to alcohol to see “whether they had any treacherie in them. So they tooke them down into the Cabbin, and gave them so much Wine and *Aqua vitae*, that they were all merrie...” Drunkenness “was strange to them, for they could not tell how to take it.” In any case, the Native recollection was that “Our forefathers...immediately joined hands with the people in the vessel and became friends.”¹²

On the 22nd of September five of Hudson’s men took a smaller boat and ascended the river. They reported to Hudson that the river was not navigable.¹³ Although Hudson was disappointed that the passage he sought through the continent was not at hand, he spoke of the land, fish, and people he encountered in the Hudson valley in the most favorable terms. He promised the Mohicans that the Dutch would return. Hudson made happier memories at meeting Mohicans than he did the following year in the frigid northern bay that would also bear his name.

Dealing With the Dutch

In order to move beyond the seasonal shipboard trading that took place regularly in Champlain’s wake, a Dutch party overwintered at the mouth of Normans Kill in 1613-1614. That spring, the Dutch constructed a fortified trading house, called Fort Nassau, on Castle Island.¹⁴ That Mohicans from the Saratoga area participated in trade is evinced by Dutch artifacts from this period recovered at the Mechanicville Road site in Waterford.¹⁵ In addition to pelts, they and Mohawks supplied Dutch traders with fish, meat, and vegetables.

The Dutch numbered roughly a dozen (and included one Jan Rodrigues, a mulatto who would likely have been the first person of African descent whom the Mohawks and Mohicans would have encountered). Jacques Eelckens was their commander.¹⁶ Eelckens claimed to have spent considerable time living among the Natives and possibly learned their language. He made enough of an impression on the Mohawks that, in formal settings, they subsequently addressed Dutch and English officials as ‘Jacques.’ This custom gave the relationship an embodied, personal

¹² NNN, 22-23; Quinney, “Celebration,” 317.

¹³ NNN, 23.

¹⁴ NNN, 47.

¹⁵ Bradley, *Before Albany*, 197n14.

¹⁶ NYCD 1:79; Bradley, *Before Albany*, 35.

dimension and, as such, called for continuity and consistency.¹⁷ This required more than a small measure of idealization because the Dutch were not easy guests. They had a propensity for ethnocentrism and even brutality. Eelckens himself was later implicated in the violent extortion of wampum from Natives along the Connecticut.¹⁸ Compared to other Europeans, Dutch attitudes toward Indigenous people generally tended to the negative end of the spectrum. The fact that New Netherland was one of the less lucrative corners of the Dutch Empire only magnified these unfortunate traits there. In the lower Hudson valley—as in the Caribbean, Brazil, and Southeast Asia—Dutch colonizers showed little inhibition to using violence to achieve their ends, which were strictly commercial. (This was underscored by the fact that not one, but two, of the ships entering New York Harbor in 1614 was christened ‘Fortuyn,’ a name that also captured the gambling element of their enterprise.¹⁹) In 1622, Eelckens’ successor, Hans Jorisz Hontom, took a Mohawk sachem hostage. Although the Mohawks met his ransom demands, Hontom proceeded to kill the sachem by amputating his genitals.²⁰

The Mohawk-Mohican War

Between roughly 1624 and 1628, the Mohicans and Mohawks fought a war against each other, with the result that control over the confluence of the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers changed hands. The documentary record offers only the briefest glimpses of the conflict. Its timing and location have led historians to speculate that it was related to trade at Fort Orange. However, access to the Dutch may have been only a secondary issue, or not an issue at all. The arrival of the Dutch did not suddenly reorder Indigenous life, and more routine causes may have been at play; in 1624 the Mohawks

¹⁷ Richter, “Rediscovered Links in the Covenant Chain: Previously Unpublished Transcripts of New York Indian Treaty Minutes, 1677-1691” *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 92 (1982): 48-51; Starna, “Retrospecting the Origins of the League of the Iroquois” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 152 (2008): 302-5. Today, some date the first articulation in Haudenosaunee-European relations of the *kaswentha* principle (mutual respect and cooperation but also non-interference in relations between peoples) to these negotiations with Eelckens. This is a matter of some contention. “Oren Lyons” in Harvey Arden and Steve Wall, *Wisdomkeepers: Meetings with Native American Spiritual Elders* (New York: Atria Books, 1990), 69; Parmenter, “The Meaning of Kaswentha and the Two Row Wampum Belt in Haudenosaunee History: Can Indigenous Oral Tradition be Reconciled with the Documentary Record?” *Journal of Early American History* 3: 81-109; Gehring and Starna, “Revisiting the Fake Tawagonshi Treaty of 1613” *New York History* 93 (2012) 95-101; Starna, “A Fake Treaty, the Two Row Wampum, Oral Traditions, and Shared Histories in New Netherland and Colonial New York: The View from 1614” *De Halve Maen* 88 (Fall 2015): 47-50.

¹⁸ Gehring, “The Dutch Among the People of the Long River,” *Annals of New Netherland*, [2001], 10, accessed Nov. 14, 2022. <https://www.newnetherlandinstitute.org/files/8015/3816/0796/2001.pdf>.

¹⁹ Hart, *Prehistory of the New Netherland Company*, 30-31.

²⁰ Gehring and Starna, “Dutch and Indians in the Hudson Valley: the Early Period” in Thomas R. Wormuth, *America’s First River: The History and Culture of the Hudson River Valley* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009), 23.

were reportedly angered when the Mohicans refused them permission to cross their lands to attack the Sokoki Abenakis.²¹

Whatever prior provocation may have been offered them, the Mohicans in 1626 repaid it in full by burning down the Mohawks' easternmost village. Some months later, the Mohicans moved to strike the Mohawks again. The leaders of a Mohican war party went so far as to request assistance from Daniel van Crieckenbeeck, the commander at Fort Orange (which had replaced Fort Nassau in 1626). Ignoring company policy barring him from participating in a Native dispute, Van Crieckenbeeck and six others (at least one of whom was Portuguese) joined the Mohicans. Unfortunately for them, a Mohawk war party had set an ambush about three miles from the fort. The would-be raiders were "peppered...so bravely with a discharge of arrows, that they were obliged to fly." The commander and two of his men were killed and burned. One was eaten. Some of the two dozen Mohican and three Dutch casualties were dismembered and their limbs taken by the victors as trophies. Van Crieckenbeeck's participation had surprised the Mohawks. Discussing the episode with a Dutchman shortly afterward, a Mohawk expressed some regret, "and asked the reason why the [Dutch] had meddled with them; otherwise they would not have acted as they had."²²

The conflict apparently abated in 1628, at which time a Dutch pastor noted that "the Mahican have fled and their lands are unoccupied." Some moved south to other Mohican communities in the Catskills, while others went east to, or at least towards, the Housatonic and Connecticut Rivers.²³ The Mohawks' triumph allowed them to dominate the Mohawk River all the way to its confluence with the Hudson. However, they did not interfere with a Mohican return within a few years to the eastern side of the Hudson opposite Fort Orange or north towards the Hoosic River.²⁴ The resurgent fur trade at Fort Orange following the war was likely supplied by Mohawks and Mohicans hunting and trapping in the upper Hudson valley on the western and eastern sides respectively.²⁵ Although peace was conducive to commerce, trade with the Dutch did not always proceed smoothly. Hans Jorisz Hontom reappeared at Fort Orange in 1633.

²¹ Starna and Brandão, "From the Mohawk-Mahican War to the Beaver Wars: Questioning the Pattern," *Ethnohistory* 51 (2004): 734n34; Bruce G. Trigger, "The Mohawk-Mahican War (1624-1628): The Establishment of a Pattern" *Canadian Historical Review* 52 (1971): 276; Parmenter, *Edge of the Woods*, 31-33. Parmenter has argued the name "Mohawk-Mahican War" is "parochial" because it reflected "wider Iroquois objectives."

²² NNN 84-85; *DHNY* 3:43-46 (quote 44).

²³ NNN 89, 131; Day, *In Search Of New England's Native Past* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998), 33.

²⁴ *IMC*, 32; Colin G. Calloway, *The Western Abenakis of Vermont, 1600-1800: War, Migration, and the Survival of an Indian People* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994), 62-63.

²⁵ Ted J. Brasser, *Riding the Frontier's Crest: Mahican Indian Culture and Culture Change* (Ottawa, Ont.: National Museum of Man, 1974), 16-17.

Positively identified by the Mohawk Saggodryochta, the Mohawks threatened his life, killed cattle around the fort, burned a Company boat, and refused to trade.²⁶

The Smallpox Epidemic of 1634

The Mohawks' population had been growing toward as many as 8000, so the ample hunting and fishing at Saratoga and elsewhere was more valuable to them than ever. Native use of natural resources could be quite intensive. As Van der Donck observed, "so many deer and suchlike are killed that a person who did not know the country's nature and extent would judge on the face of it that, within a year, all would be destroyed."²⁷ Van der Donck attributed the fact that all was *not* destroyed, at least not right away, to two factors. The first was that "the country is so extensive." Second was that the Natives' "numbers had dwindled owing to smallpox and other causes to the extent that there is now barely one for every ten."²⁸ His numbers were only a modest exaggeration. As a result of a smallpox epidemic that swept the Northeast beginning in 1633, and returned in 1640, the Mohawk population slid to fewer than 2000 by 1646.²⁹ The Mohicans fared even more poorly. Their numbers collapsed to as few as 500 by midcentury.³⁰ Traveling through Mohawk country in December 1634, a Dutchman named Harmen Mynderts van den Bogaert noted a chief living in isolation from his village "because many Indians here in the castle had died of smallpox." Upon arriving at another settlement, he wrote "I could see nothing else but graves."³¹

The devastation wrought by disease was so great because it was the first time Natives of the area had encountered smallpox. The virus was endemic in Europe, so widespread exposure by the end of childhood, during which time it was less deadly, conferred immunity upon the great majority of the population. Children themselves were likely transatlantic vectors, and it was probably not coincidental that an epidemic followed the onset of the English Puritans' family-based Great Migration, although the local source may have been Dutch. Lacking prior exposure, the Natives of New England and the Hudson Valley were universally susceptible. Adults' bodies produced the most robust immunological responses, which only resulted in their suffering especially acutely and dying at higher rates. Since no one had prior exposure, affliction was widespread, and the universality of illness compromised the community's ability to

²⁶ A.J.F. van Laer, ed., *Van Rensselaer Bowier Manuscripts* (Albany: University of the State of New York, 1908), 303-04.

²⁷ Van der Donck, *Description*, 68; Brandão, *Your Fyre*, 83.

²⁸ Van der Donck, *Description*, 68-69.

²⁹ Snow, "Mohawk Demography and the Effects of Exogenous Epidemics on American Indian Peoples" *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 15 (1997): 160-82; Richter, *Ordeal*, 59.

³⁰ Snow and Kim M. Lanphear, "European Contact and Indian Depopulation in the Northeast: The Timing of the First Epidemics" *Ethnohistory* 35 (1988): 15-33.

³¹ Starna and Gehring, eds., *A Journey into Mohawk and Oneida Country, 1634-1635: The Journal of Harmen Meynderts Van Den Bogaert* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2013), 6.

carry out nursing and subsistence functions on which survival of the afflicted depended. Neither Indigenous peoples nor Europeans had effective therapies for smallpox or most of the other diseases that afflicted them. All these issues converged to drive mortality to devastating levels.³² For the several decades that followed, Saratoga was probably less frequented by people than it had been for a very long time.

Mourning War

Recovery demanded action, which was defined by culture. Indigenous peoples saw live individual human beings as repositories of spiritual power, so disease-decimated communities perceived a deficit that left them exposed to every misfortune imaginable. They also saw the malediction of an enemy as the most likely explanation for this strange terror. One way to replenish the spiritual power of the community was to appropriate the power of enemy others by taking them captive. Captives were essentially enslaved until traded away, killed, or adopted. If adopted, the captive might be given the name and position of someone who had been lost. If the adoptee learned to satisfactorily occupy the role of the deceased, the grief of the captor family might be assuaged. However, if the captive was not deemed a promising candidate for adoption, some of his power could still be transferred to the community via ritual torture. (I use the masculine pronoun because torture was usually reserved for men.) Of course, if a war party judged that its captives were too numerous or unwieldy to return safely to their village, they could bring back some of their power by harvesting their scalps.³³ The Haudenosaunee leveraged the benefits of their political confederation and ability to produce agricultural surpluses to raise the practice of captive-taking to a new level in what historians have dubbed the mourning-war complex. It would dominate the years that followed.

Sent forth by their clan matrons and backed by the power of the Haudenosaunee League, the Mohawks attacked St. Lawrence Valley Algonquians. Saratoga lay upon the trail Mohawk war parties used to reach them. These parties became smaller in size but operated more frequently and year-round, rather than just in the summer.³⁴ A 1642 raid on a Wendat party on the St. Lawrence River netted the Jesuit priest Isaac Jogues. The French prisoner arrived at Saratoga in May, where he found 400 Mohawks living in “cabins” while they harvested the migrating fish. The “cabins” were not the longhouses

³² Snow and Lanphear, Richter, *Ordeal*, 59; Elizabeth Fenn, *Pox Americana: The Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1775-82* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2002), 20-29.

³³ Brandão, *Your Fyre*, 73, points out that “the Iroquois captured two, probably three times as many people as they killed.” Starna and Ralph Watkins, “Northern Iroquoian Slavery” *Ethnohistory* 38 (1991): 34-55.

³⁴ Parmenter, *Edge of the Woods*, 56-57; IMC, 15.

generally associated with the Haudenosaunee. They were shorter structures that generally housed nuclear families.³⁵

The Mohawks also joined Haudenosaunee campaigns to the west that devastated the Wendats and put Natives to flight as far west as the Illinois country in the 1640s and 1650s. Interestingly, Mohicans lent warriors to some of these raids, suggesting that relations had been mended—or at least that Mohicans probably knew that the alternative to assisting the Haudenosaunee was to become their targets.³⁶ Wendats were valued as captives because their cultural and linguistic proximity to the Haudenosaunee made them more assimilable adoptees.³⁷

Historians for a long time assumed the Haudenosaunee onslaught was economic in its motivation and denominated these conflicts the “Beaver Wars.” While that was a misnomer, war has always been a costly proposition, and the Mohawk could not afford to ignore economic considerations. In the course of their extensive raiding to collect other nations’ people, they did not neglect to collect their pelts. The spoils of war were always welcome. This helped subsidize their campaigns and kept them well-armed. While prisoners’ final destinations were the Mohawk villages, their furs went to Fort Orange and the trading village that sprang up around it, Beverwyck. The war parties also hunted around Saratoga and north to Lake Champlain and the St. Lawrence Valley, which they continued to regard as their ancestral territory even if other nations hunted—and lived—there.³⁸

Guns were among the most sought-after commodities at Fort Orange. The Mohawk-Mohican War of the 1620s had been a bow-and-arrow affair, and when Van den Bogaert had traveled through Mohawk and Oneida settlements in 1634-35, he was constantly asked by his curious hosts to discharge his firearm. By 1643, however, the situation had changed dramatically. Firearms were no longer a novelty; they were a necessity. Father Jogues reported at the Mohawk village of Ossernenon that “There are here nearly three hundred arquebuses, and seven hundred Iroquois; they are skilled in handling them.” Nearly every Mohawk warrior was carrying, and archaeological evidence showed that they had a clear preference for efficient and versatile flintlock muskets.³⁹ There is no reason to believe the Mohicans were far behind. Although the precarity of the small Dutch upriver outpost engendered a certain ambivalence among

³⁵ Parmenter, *Edge of the Woods*, 58-59; JR 39:59-61; George Hamell, “From Longhouse to Log House: At Home Among the Senecas” Paper presented at Native Americans in the Early Republic Symposium, US Capitol Historical Society, 1992.

³⁶ Tom Arne Midtrød, *The Memory of All Ancient Customs: Native American Diplomacy in the Colonial Hudson Valley* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012), 105.

³⁷ Brandão, *Your Fyre*, 72-91.

³⁸ Brandão, *Your Fyre*, 81-83.

³⁹ Bradley, *Before Albany*, 125, 138; Thomas E. Burke, *Mohawk Frontier: The Dutch Community of Schenectady, New York, 1661-1710* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 17; NYCD 13:35-36; JR 45:203-5; IMC, 21.

colonial officials toward the gun trade, they generally tolerated it lest Indigenous warriors seek out an alternate supply among the English. Nor was it lost on them that traders were able to secure large quantities of furs in exchange. Trade at Fort Orange grew until its apex in 1657, when receipt of 41,000 pelts at the post was recorded.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Burke, *Mohawk Frontier*, 7-8, 28; Brandão, *Your Fyre*, 88; NYCD 13:27n; NNN 2:310n.

Part Three:

Schenectady, Kahnawake, Schaghticoke, Saratoga

Schenectady

Trade declined sharply in 1658, when France committed itself to challenging the Haudenosaunee more forcefully over their raiding in what the French called the *pays d'en haut* (or “Upper Country”), referring to roughly the Great Lakes Basin.¹ In 1660, the upper Hudson became even more treacherous for Mohawks, when they and some Haudenosaunee allies went to war with eastern Abenaki peoples as well.² Using the Mohawks’ urgent need to acquire guns and ammunition at a secure location as leverage, trader Arent van Curler shrewdly proposed they cede to him an alluvial flat along the Mohawk. He had been eyeing this parcel ever since the 1640s, when he had represented his great-uncle the patroon in the first official negotiations with the Mohawks. The Mohawks were not anxious to increase their proximity to the Dutch, but the path that led from the disembarkation point along Mohawk River above Cohoes Falls to Fort Orange was already frequented by traders (including one Philip Pieter Schuyler). Some of these traders lay in wait to intercept Natives with alcohol, the law notwithstanding.³

The Schenectady deed was signed on July 27, 1661. In exchange “for a certain number of cargoes,” the Mohawks ceded “Schonowe” to Van Curler. The Mohawk signatories, Cantuquo, Sonareetse, and Aiadne, represented the three clans of that nation, Bear, Wolf, and Turtle, respectively. Sodarchdrasse also participated. This was the first cession by the Mohawks of lands taken in the Mohawk-Mohican War. As such, it was an important precedent for the Saratoga cession. Explaining to Governor Stuyvesant the Mohawk willingness “to abandon the land for a moderate price,” Van Curler cited the fact that “trade is so slack and meagre.” Although the settlement was technically supposed to be for the purposes of agriculture only—and the Mohawks would complain of the settlement’s expansion beyond the flat—the majority of the first purchasers were Dutchmen connected to the fur trade.⁴

A series of military reversals saw the Mohawks’ security situation deteriorate further. In 1664, after the eastern Abenakis secured the Pocumtucks of the Connecticut

¹ Brandao, *Your Fyre*, 110.

² Midtrød, *Memory*, 113-18; Calloway, *Western Abenakis*, 70-73.

³ Dutch treatment of Native traders at the trading village at the fort (named Beverwyck) was not any better. At a meeting with Albany magistrates in 1659, the Mohawk speaker stated that “the Dutch must cease their viciousness and not beat them as they have done in the past.” *Fort Orange Court Minutes, 1652-1660*, ed. Gehring (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1990), 454.

⁴ NYCD 14:773; Jonathan Pearson, *History of the Schenectady Patent* (Albany, NY: Joel Munsell’s Sons, 1883), 9-15; Burke, *Mohawk Frontier*, 17-21.

Valley and Sokokis of Vermont as allies, and amidst a smallpox epidemic that had affected the entire region, the Mohawks asked the Mohicans to mediate. However, not only did the peacemaking fail, the Mohicans joined their fellow Algonquians, raising the danger on the Hudson even higher.⁵ The Mohawks had every incentive to promptly declare their peaceful disposition toward the English after the latter ousted the Dutch in September 1664. The English had every reason to reciprocate, and they did. A treaty was promptly held in which Haudenosaunee delegates and English officials agreed to continued trade and cooperation. (The English in the years that followed would leave the management of the province's relations with the Indigenous peoples above the mid-Hudson to the Dutchmen who ran the garrison town that was now called Albany.) In 1666, Mohawks visiting Albany asked to stay inside the town "for we do not want to be killed by Mahicanders."⁶ They also had the French to fear. Louis XIV committed to put an end to Mohawk depredations along the St. Lawrence. In 1665, he dispatched the 1300-man Carignan-Salières regiment to Canada. However, the regiment's previous stint fighting in Spain was dubious preparation for a wintertime campaign in Mohawk country. Descending via the Kayaderosseras or Sacandaga trails, they got lost and failed to reach the Mohawk villages. Instead, they found themselves outside Schenectady, where they murdered a few Mohawk women and children living on the edge of the settlement. This episode increased Mohawk anger toward the French, but also alienated them from Van Curler, who had quartered some of the sick French soldiers in the town and sold them supplies for their return trip.⁷

The French demonstrated their ability to strike the Mohawks at home the next fall, destroying all four of the nation's villages. In Quebec City, Ursuline nun Marie de l'Incarnation heard the Mohawk town described by returning soldiers as "well built and magnificently ornamented; no-one would ever have believed it." She added that "There were several captives from the Iroquois nations here," of whom the governor Marquis Prouville de Tracy had one hanged. According to Marie, this "greatly startled the barbarians, who trembled like children."⁸ The reaction reflected a deep-seated abhorrence of hanging. Natives regarded a blow to the head as the proper mode of summary execution. To inhibit future Mohawk movement into the St. Lawrence Valley, the French also built forts in the Richelieu valley. The Mohawks successfully avoided

⁵ NYCD 13:308-10, 372, 378-82; See Midtrød, *Memory*, 113n-118n.

⁶ Quoted in Midtrød, *Memory*, 115.

⁷ NYCD 10: 118-19. New York Governor Nicolls opined that "soe bold and hardy an attempt (circumstances considered) hath not happened in any age." Jack Verney, *The Good Regiment: The Carignan-Salières Regiment in Canada* (Montreal, Qc., and Kingston, Ont.: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991), 42-53.

⁸ Verney, *Good Regiment*, 71-84; Marie de l'Incarnation to Claude Martin, Nov. 12, 1666, in *Word From New France: The Selected Letters of Marie de l'Incarnation* ed. and trans. Joyce Marshall (Toronto, Ont.: Oxford University Press, 1967), 326-27; Cadwallader Colden, *The History of the Five Indian Nations* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2017) 19.

casualties in the second invasion but they understood that maintaining control of their domain required a new strategy. Joining the other Haudenosaunee, they promptly sued for peace with the French. Van Curler, who accompanied a Mohawk diplomatic delegation traveling to Canada to affirm the peace, drowned en route.⁹ His Native companions disclaimed any responsibility, explaining that he had displayed his rear end to a rock inhabited by a spirit in Lake Champlain. This act precipitated a squall that upset his canoe. But as with 'Jacques' Eelckens, the Mohawks overlooked his sins in this life and gave him another one. Even though colonial governors would now be English, the Haudenosaunee would address them as 'Corlaer.'

Kahnawake

Per the 1667 peace deal with the French, the Haudenosaunee allowed Jesuit missionaries to reside in their villages. The communities the Jesuits entered were struggling with the effects of alcohol and epidemic disease, as well as the challenge of assimilating a very large number of captives from other nations. In some of these villages, adopted captives by then represented the majority of the population. The strong presence the Jesuits had established in the Wendat homeland from the 1630s onwards meant that the priests appeared to some adoptees of that nation as a thread of continuity with their past. The adoptees were disproportionately represented among converts.¹⁰

For their part, the Jesuit priests imagined what they might achieve with these proselytes in an environment over which they had more control. They imagined a settlement where Indigenous Catholic converts could be isolated from the influence of their impious or more traditional fellows, and where they could live under the watchful eye of the French. To that end, the French established a "reduction" (or what Puritans called a "praying town") on the south shore of the St. Lawrence River opposite Montreal at a location known to the Haudenosaunee as Kentaké and to the French as La Prairie. The first residents, who arrived in 1667, were primarily Oneidas. To be sure, piety and temperance were the order of the day in the early years of the Laurentian mission. However, the appeal of moving to the outskirts of Montreal was not simply to pray. It also allowed the Haudenosaunee to reestablish a durable presence in the St. Lawrence Valley for economic and military purposes.¹¹ While the surveillance by

⁹ Burke, *Mohawk Frontier*, 85n36; Richter, *Ordeal*, 104.

¹⁰ Richter, *Ordeal*, 124-25.

¹¹ Gretchen Lynn Green, "A New People in an Age of War: The Kahnawake Iroquois, 1667-1760" (Ph.D. diss., College of William & Mary, 1991) 36; Jean-François Lozier, *Flesh Reborn: The St. Lawrence Valley Mission Settlements through the Seventeenth Century* (Montreal, Qc. and Kingston, Ont.: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2018), 179; Allan Greer, *Mohawk Saint: Catherine Tekakwitha and the Jesuits* (New York: Oxford, 2006), 89-108.

French priests stinted their freedom, this was more than compensated for by the ready access to the region they now enjoyed.

Father Bruyas, writing from the village of Tionnontoguen on the Mohawk River in June of 1673, reported that prices of “stuffs” in the Anglo-Dutch settlements were “so dear that our Iroquois are resolved to provide themselves with these at Montreal.”¹² In that year, a wave of emigrants moved from Caughnawaga in the Mohawk Valley to the Jesuit mission near Montreal. These included the prominent leader Kryn (aka Togouiroui), who came with forty others, primarily of the Turtle clan. The clan basis of this Mohawk movement suggests that women consented to the move—if they hadn’t led it.¹³ Mohawks began to eclipse in numbers the predominantly Oneida founders.¹⁴ A Kahnawake man in 1766 explained “the establishment of...the French Mohawks” as follows:

our forefathers going to hunt chiefly in this neighborhood was one of the principal reasons for our settling upon the River St. Lawrence near Montreal, as whenever they killed any game nearest that market, they carried it there and being well received and flatter’d by the French and on the contrary slighted and neglected by the Dutch.¹⁵

In 1676, agricultural considerations led to the settlement shifting to a location slightly farther west. It was called Kahnawake (‘At the foot of the rapids’), as it sat astride the roiling waters on the St. Lawrence opposite Lachine.

For members of societies like the Haudenosaunee, where a high value was placed on consensus, separation might appear a better option than chronic conflict. The process of community fission was analogous in many ways to that by which consensus-based Puritan communities in New England splintered and spread across the region, spawning new colonies. Loosening the political ties between separated communities relieved tension, while shared cultural traits and economic interests promoted continued cooperation. A smallpox epidemic that spread from Kahnawake to the Mohawk Valley in 1678 served as tragic evidence of ongoing interaction between Mohawks at both places.¹⁶ Thanks primarily to Mohawk immigration, the Kahnawake population reached approximately 600—rivaling the population of the city of Montreal itself. Demographically, they had effectively brought the upper Hudson and Lake

¹² JR 57:23-25.

¹³ Lozier, *Flesh Reborn*, 179. See also Richter, *Ordeal*, 125n42.

¹⁴ Green, “New People,” 42, 50n55.

¹⁵ Jean-Pierre Sawaya, *Alliance et dépendance: Comment la couronne britannique a obtenu la collaboration des Indiens de la vallée du Saint-Laurent entre 1760 et 1774* (Montreal, Qc.: Septentrion, 2002), 197.

¹⁶ Richter, *Ordeal*, 145n24.

Champlain regions back within their compass. Haudenosaunee, and especially Mohawk, activity also reinforced claims to the St. Lawrence Valley.¹⁷

Schaghticoke

From the Mohawks' perspective, Saratoga was once again a way station between villages in Mohawk country.¹⁸ However, despite their recent peace with France, the Hudson remained dangerous for the Mohawks. France's erstwhile Indigenous allies were in no hurry to reach terms. In 1667, the Mohicans sold lands at Halfmoon to Philip Pieter Schuyler and Goosen Gerritse van Schaik. Their doing so may have been an act of defiance toward the Mohawks. A multinational Algonquian expedition to the Mohawk Valley in 1669 was defeated by Mohawks, but a formal peace between the Haudenosaunee and the Mohicans and Munsees did not follow until 1671.¹⁹

It was ultimately only the shock and upheaval of King Philip's War that brought a durable peace to the region. The Hoosic River was the traditional channel connecting the Mohicans on the upper Hudson to their Housatonic River counterparts, and in the winter of 1675-76 it brought King Philip's War from New England to New York. Wampanoag chief Metacom (King Philip) and his forces took refuge near Schaghticoke after the devastating attacks on New England settlements. A large council took place on the Hoosic that drew Wampanoags, Narragansetts, and other southern New England nations with Pocumtucks, Norwottocks of the Connecticut Valley, and 'North Indians' (Sokokis and other western Abenakis) on the Hoosic.²⁰ The Mohawks promptly attacked the Algonquians gathered on the river, dispersing them. Rather than defend their fellow Algonquians, the Mohicans and Munsees, per the terms of their peace with the Haudenosaunee, "sat still."²¹ Historian Francis Jennings argued that the Mohawks' action on the Hoosic was pivotal to the outcome of King Philip's War, but remains in the shadows only because it took place outside New England.²²

Although the results of King Philip's War were disastrous for the Algonquian peoples of southern New England, Schaghticoke became a stable home for many,

¹⁷ Brandão, *Your Fyre*, 82; Lozier, *Flesh Reborn*, 165, 193-94.

¹⁸ Green, "New People," 33-35.

¹⁹ NYCD 13:387; Starna, *Homeland*, 146-47; Ted J. Brasser, *Riding on the Frontier's Crest: Mahican Indian Culture and Culture Change* (Ottawa, Ont.: National Museums of Canada, 1974), 22; Evan Haefeli, "Becoming a Nation of Statesmen: The Mohicans' Incorporation into the Iroquois League, 1671-1675" *New England Quarterly* 93 (2020): 434-50; Midtrød, *Memory*, 114-18.

²⁰ Charles Lincoln, *Narratives of the Indian Wars, 1675-1699* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913), 87-88; *The Andros Papers: Files of the Provincial Secretary of New York During the Administration of Governor Sir Edmund Andros, 1674-1680*, ed. Peter R. Christoph and Florence A. Christoph (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1989-1991), 1:330-1; Calloway, *Western Abenakis*, 77; Day, *Search for New England's Native Past*, 141-7.

²¹ *LIR*, 37-9; Haefeli, "Becoming a Nation," 452; Bruchac, "Schaghticoke" at footnote 18.

²² NYCD 13: 528; Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010 [1976]), 314-16.

particularly the central Connecticut Valley nations like the Agawams, Pocumtucks, and Norwottocks. In late May 1676, Albany officials noted with concern that “the ffrench do receive Northern Indians under their protection, and its said, that five hundred of them are already there.” Schaghticoke was the English counteroffer, and they wished it be made known “that all Indyans, who will come in & submit, shall be received to live under the protection of the Government.” Andros met with the Mohawks and Mohicans in Albany to broker an entente and Andros went to Schaghticoke in May 1676 to encourage the Mohicans and the Connecticut River communities to remain.²³ Schaghticoke became a haven for Algonquians ousted from New England, as well as “North Indians,” including Pennacooks. Thenceforward, although many continued to hunt in their old watersheds, whites lumped them all together under a “Mahican” or “Schaghticoke” label, and coresidence led to substantive commonality.²⁴

The Mohawks were satisfied with the arrangement since the Schaghticoques would play a subordinate role to them in an emerging political institution that integrated Indigenous nations and English colonies: the Covenant Chain. New York and the Haudenosaunee (especially the Mohawks) were considered the central links. Meetings were to take place at Albany, but the Schaghticoques and Massachusettsians were part of the forum. The Covenant Chain drew heavily upon Haudenosaunee diplomatic symbols, ceremonies, and practices. The chain was a metaphor for alliance. Accounts of Haudenosaunee diplomacy from the late 17th century invoked a rope securing the Europeans’ ships to their land or even a tree symbolizing peace as its precedent. The rope was upgraded to iron and silver. Silver underscored that the relationship was not only valuable, but also that it required upkeep. For the Haudenosaunee, silver’s attributes of reflectivity and whiteness were associated closely with well-being and spiritual power. In nature, such substances occurred only in extraordinary places and therefore carried otherworldly associations.²⁵

²³ NYCD 13:496-7, 503-4, 14:721; 3: 565; 4: 742, 902, 991.

²⁴ Some Pennacooks moved to Schaghticoke in 1676, as did many Sokokis, while their brethren moved to Trois-Rivières. Calloway, *Western Abenakis*, 79-83; Robert S. Grumet, *Historic Contact: Indian People and Colonists in Today’s Northeastern United States in the Sixteenth through Eighteenth Centuries* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995) 167; NYCD 5:722.

²⁵ George R. Hamell, “The Iroquois and the World’s Rim: Speculations on Color, Culture, and Contact,” *American Indian Quarterly* 16 (1992): 451-69, esp. 462.



Fig. 3. Philip Schuyler, Draft notes of conference with delegates from the Six Nations, ca. May 2, 1776. With its ship, chain, tree, and date, Philip Schuyler's doodle captures the essential elements of the Covenant Chain origin story. Courtesy of the New York Public Library.

The chain tethered the vessel of the newcomers to the Tree of Peace at the League's central council fire at Onondaga. Covenant Chain diplomatic encounters also adhered to an Indigenous condolence ritual framework. They began with a version of the Woods' Edge Ceremony, with the host ritually condoling the visitor for losses since their last meeting, thereby alleviating their grief and placing them in a correct frame of mind to resolve differences and establish good relations. The parties took turns delivering and responding to messages, punctuating their statements with gifts of wampum or other items of significance.²⁶

Andros saw the value of the Covenant Chain as a way to centralize relations between the English colonies and Indigenous peoples from New England to the Carolinas—and hopefully claim a preponderant influence over all of them. Within the stylized council speech of Covenant Chain diplomacy, the English and Haudenosaunee would refer to one another as “brothers,” but to the Schaghticoke as “children.”²⁷ (New York did not apply diminutive kin terms to its fellow colonies, but expected to act

²⁶ Fenton, *The Great Law and the Longhouse: A Political History of the Iroquois Confederacy* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998), 136.

²⁷ Richter, “Rediscovered,” 60-61; Richter and James H. Merrell, eds., *Beyond the Covenant Chain: The Iroquois and Their Neighbors in Indian North America, 1600-1800* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1987).

as mediator on their behalf.) The Schaghticoke had inferior status but enjoyed a modicum of security and diplomatic attention.

For the Mohawks the extra manpower that the Schaghticoke represented was especially welcome at a time of depopulation and conflict, and the next quarter century would bear this out. However, at least one faction was unhappy. In June of 1677, as many as a hundred Mohawk warriors attacked Mohicans and North Indians at the flats north of Albany recently acquired by Philip Pietersen Schuyler and at Halfmoon. They robbed the Mohicans and took some prisoners. They were reproved by the English, and promised to release the prisoners, but they had sent a clear message about who was in charge now, and on which side of the river the Algonquians should stay.²⁸ The conflict settled and the Schaghticoke community grew in the years that followed under its principal sachem, Wamsachko, who was regarded as a leader of all the River Indians north of Albany.²⁹ About 200 were at Schaghticoke in its first year. Others came in the years that followed. This was still very familiar territory to them and provided refuge from personal debts and French pressure to assist them in wars against the western Haudenosaunee.³⁰

The Mohawks were not enamored of the growing settlement at Albany, though. In July 1682, Naerenachteno, a North Indian who had removed to Schaghticoke, opened a gate at Schuyler Flatts, cursed Philip Pietersen Schuyler (in English), injured a horse with a rock, and brawled with Jan, one of Schuyler's enslaved workers. Jan was stabbed and seriously wounded in the fight. Wamsachko came to the Albany court house with a delegation to express contrition, blaming the fracas on alcohol.³¹ Only a little more than a year earlier, the court had ordered constable Robert Sanders to pay Cornelius van Dyck for stitching Wamsachko's head after Sanders had beaten him in a fight over alcohol.³²

About 150 Abenakis from Odanak arrived at Schaghticoke in 1685. In a meeting with Albany officials including Peter Schuyler at the Albany Court House in July, their leader, Sadochques, declared they were "fully Resolv'd to live and dye att Skachkook & there to be buried." At a subsequent meeting at the same place in December (with Peter Schuyler present again) the speaker Sachquahan declared that "we Should nott be north Indians any longer butt all River Indians."³³

²⁸ NYCD 13:508.

²⁹ Richter, "Rediscovered," 61; Grumet, *The Munsee Indians: A History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009), 149.

³⁰ Lozier, *Flesh Reborn*, 242-43.

³¹ MCA 3:274-77.

³² MCA 3:133-34.

³³ LIR 77-79, 95-96; Bruchac, "Schaghticoke," at notes 30-31.

Saratoga

Fr. Thierry Beschefer reported in 1683 that as many as 200 Mohawks had decamped from their Mohawk River villages for Kahnawake in the previous two years.³⁴ In October, at a meeting with Governor Thomas Dongan at Manhattan, a Mohawk sachem, Odianah, acknowledged “the Indians that are gone to Canada. . .they will endeavor to get them back again and they desire the Governor’s assistance in it that they may goe hand in hand to promote it, and they doubt not to get them back again.”³⁵ Dongan wished to maintain Mohawk numbers in the colony, just as Andros had for the Algonquians.³⁶ If the exodus of Mohawks to Kahnawake continued, it could compromise New York’s security and pretensions to sovereignty south of Lake Ontario. Many Mohawks were uneasy as well. The departure of Christianized dissidents meant that they enjoyed more domestic tranquility but, if too many left, those left behind would be weakened both diplomatically and militarily. Meanwhile, the Five Nations were fighting against the Miamis, Illinois and other Native allies of France in the west. Success in that endeavor meant the prospect of retaliation by France. Since they were dependent upon Albany for arms, it would not hurt to shore up English support. Thus, all parties’ interests would be served by the creation of an English alternative to Kahnawake, a magnet for those Mohawks looking to engage the colonizers’ religious ideology (and maybe trade with them, too). King Philip’s War and the founding of Schaghticoke had focused attention on the Hoosic-Hudson confluence, making Saratoga appear a good site for such a project. The Mohawks signed the Saratoga deed to provide their Anglo-Dutch allies with a place to create a new settlement that would reunite them with the Kahnawakes.³⁷

On July 26, 1683, four Mohawk sachems from both castles “in the presence of all the Maqua [Mohawk] sachems” put their marks to a deed at the Albany County Court House. They were the sexagenarian Rode, Saggodiochquisax, Aihagari, and Taiskanounda.³⁸ All four belonged to the Turtle clan, which suggested that that clan had special jurisdiction over the fishing place at Saratoga. The recipients of the land were Pieter Schuyler, Cornelis van Dyck, Jan Bleecker, and Johannes Wendell, all well-connected Albany traders. Pieter Schuyler, who was the brother of Halfmoon patentee Philip, would be named Albany’s first mayor in 1686. The tract they received for an unspecified sum followed the Hudson north from Tioneendehouwe (Anthony’s Kill),

³⁴ JR 62:237.

³⁵ NYCD 1:262.

³⁶ NYCD 3:394-95, 447; 13:503.

³⁷ LIR 104.

³⁸ ERCCA 2:196-97. Rode was a sachem of the Turtle clan and lived at Caughnawaga. He was in his late sixties. According to Sivertsen, his name meant ‘stupid’. Like Rode, Saggodiochquisax also belonged to the Turtle clan, but he came from Canagere. *Turtle, Wolves, and Bears: A Mohawk Family History* (Bowie, Md.: Heritage Books, 1996), 42, 21.

which was the northern boundary of the Halfmoon Patent, to Dionoendogeha (Batten Kill) and stretched on each side of the river to a distance to be indicated by the Mohawks. (The eastern and western boundaries would eventually be set about six miles from the Hudson.) As evidence of thawing relations between the Mohawks and Mohicans, several of the latter—Nisi Campe, Knaep (a sachem), and Keshuchamak—were party to the Saratoga deed because “in old times it was their land before the Maquas won it from them.” As token recompense for the quitclaim, they were given “seven pieces of duffel, also two half casks of beer and two small casks of wine.”

Per English law, the deed was then converted into a patent issued by the governor. The patentees included three additional men: Dirck Wessels, David Schuyler (Pieter’s nephew), and Robert Livingston, the secretary of the Albany Commissioners for Indian Affairs.³⁹ The acquisition made good business sense for these men, even if the land would be occupied by Mohawks for the foreseeable future. Albany’s traders were enjoying some success in luring pelts away from New France, but their trade was still off its earlier peak, and they desired more. A move north could provide them a satellite trading area. (The near-contemporaneous launch of trading missions to Michilimackinac was another example of their adjusting their business model in the face of unsatisfactory results.) As early as June 1653, Dutch officials had discussed “whether it would not be of advantage and service for the Company, to establish a trading-house, 18 or 20 leagues above Fort Orange and make it the staple of this fur-trade” in order to attract furs from the north.⁴⁰

Even if their fur trade efforts failed, the purchase of territory from the Natives presented itself as a hedge since land prices were rising. As Richard van Rensselaer noted in 1684, “the land is getting to be much in demand and brings big money, owing to the increase in population and the rapid falling off of the trade, and that there is no land, no matter how far from the place, but it is being bought.”⁴¹ In that year, Maria van Rensselaer (who would marry Pieter Schuyler in 1691) and three other investors purchased from the Mohicans a strip of land two miles wide straddling the Hoosic River east of Schaghticoke to Nachawickquaak which became the Hoosick Patent.⁴² Traders made the land itself collateral for goods advanced to hunters. This was abundantly clear in a mortgage to Schaghticoke that merchant Robert Sanders made Mohicans Gekameek and Massehaes (Masseha) sign in 1686—and for which Abraham Schuyler (Pieter’s cousin) and Abraham Cuyler served as interpreters.

³⁹ *ERCCA* 2:196-97.

⁴⁰ *NYCD* 13:35.

⁴¹ *Correspondence of Maria van Rensselaer*, ed. and trans. A.J.F. van Laer (Albany: University of the State of New York, 1935), 148.

⁴² Dunn, *Mohicans and their Land 1609-1730* (Fleischmanns, NY: Purple Mountain Press, 1994), 159.

We, the undersigned...Mahikander Indians, acknowledge and declare that whereas we are indebted to Robt Sanders in a considerable sum in beavers...we bind to him all our right and title which we have at Skachkook, which shall have effect till we have paid him in full and if the city of Albany shall happen to buy said land, then Robt Sanders shall be paid the just value of the land.⁴³

That the Mohawks had ceded Saratoga for their own use was implied by comments made by the Kahnawake Onnachragewas (Jannetje) in the presence of at least three of the patentees in 1686. He reported that the “Christian Indians in Canada” were “very willing to come to live at Sarachtogue” where Dongan “wanted to give them as much land as they needed.” Onnachragewas even referred to such a move as a “return...to their country.”⁴⁴ Dongan indicated to both the King and the Mohawks that he had acquired land at Saratoga from the patentees and “promised the Indians that they shall have Priests & that I will build them a Church.”⁴⁵ Neither the Dutch nor the English clergy present at Fort Orange/Albany had shown much interest in interacting with Indigenous peoples, let alone living among them, and there were few in their home countries who were, either.⁴⁶ But Dongan was a Catholic, and he hoped to secure an English Jesuit, but he did not succeed.

In the absence of a mission, trading activities moved to the fore at Saratoga, and the cultural reticence (or arrogance) of the Dutch and the English meant that it would be primarily Frenchmen who took up residence there. René Poupard dit Lafleur, a veteran of the Carignan-Salières regiment, had previously been trading furs in the area of Lake Champlain and Albany under the auspices of his former captain, Pierre de Saurel. After the Saratoga patent was issued, Poupard settled at Stillwater on Pieter Schuyler’s property. Another Carignan-Salières soldier, Jean-Baptiste de Poitier Dubuisson was living on the other side of the Hudson on land that David Schuyler transferred to Pieter in 1686. Frenchmen Pierre de Garmeaulx dit Villeroy and François de Lafortune were also present. Their connection to the patentees remains obscure; the legal proscriptions against trading with Natives outside Albany required they exercise discretion. In late 1686, charges were even drawn up against Poupard for trading stockings and wampum for deerskins.⁴⁷

⁴³ *ERCCA* 2:358.

⁴⁴ *LIR* 104.

⁴⁵ *NYCD* 3:394; *LIR* 97-104.

⁴⁶ *NNN*, 178.

⁴⁷ Christine Valosin, ““Where LaFleur Had Lived...”: The Hidden History of a French Family in the Saratoga Patent, 1685-1708,” unpublished paper, 5-6; David L. Preston, *Colonial Saratoga: War and Peace on the Borderlands of Early America* (n.p.: US National Park Service, 2018), 32; *ERCCA* 2:344.

Saratoga never actually developed into an alternative to Kahnawake, but the mere prospect aided the English-allied Mohawks in their tug-of-war with their pro-French counterparts. When French governor Denonville pressured Laurentian Mohawks to join the fight against the western Haudenosaunee nations in 1687, a backlash ensued. While a significant number of them met French demands, still more simply ignored it, and others looked to resist it and rejoin their fellows in the Mohawk Valley. A decline in the Laurentian Mohawk population around this time may have reflected dissatisfaction on their part.⁴⁸ In April 1687, a Mohawk sachem visited Albany to “Complain of the Diligence of the French Preists [sic] in carrying their People to Canada.”⁴⁹ In August of that year, the Christian Mohawk Kakarriel (Adandidaghko) told English authorities that “as soone as Jannitie told them att Canada that a priest was come to bee att Saragtoge, eight families resolved first to goe a hunting and then returne to the Saragtoge, because they would not come with empty hands, and when they came from a hunting. . .[they] were. . .threatned [by the French] to bee imprisoned if they did not goe” and join Denonville’s expedition to burn the Seneca country.⁵⁰ It is unclear whether we can take the interaction at face value or whether it was a way to shift blame for Mohawks not showing up, or even for fighting for France. Sindacksegie cast some doubt on the Five Nations’ appetite for religious instruction. He indicated their intent to keep their distance from French priests, but noted “If any of the Five Nations are inclined for English Jesuits, they will come to acquaint your Excell^{cy} with it.”⁵¹ Trade and war, not religion, would dominate life at Saratoga in the coming years.

⁴⁸ Lozier, *Flesh Reborn*, 213-16

⁴⁹ Richter, “Rediscovered,” 78.

⁵⁰ NYCD 3:431.

⁵¹ NYCD 3:443.

Part Four:

The Glorious Revolution, King William's War and Queen Anne's War

The Mohawks in the Glorious Revolution

Talk of war dominated along the upper Hudson in 1689. Sometime in the spring, Schaghticokes used Saratoga as a place to meet with eastern Abenakis. In July, a large Haudenosaunee force “encamped 50 miles above Albany.” While there, they exchanged barbs with a party of four Kennebec (Eastern Abenaki) messengers. Interestingly, the Kennebecs were spared capture thanks to “some of the principal Warriors of the 1 & 2d [Mohawk] Castle who were their Relations being the offspring of the Onagongues” [eastern Abenakis].¹ The Haudenosaunee warriors’ attention was directed toward New France. The League had endured French attacks over the past two years as the French sought to protect Odawas and other peoples with whom the Five Nations had been fighting to the north and west. On August 6, the aforementioned Haudenosaunee army attacked Lachine, the trading village that was on Île-Jésus with Montreal. They “burned three leagues of country,” killed about two dozen, and captured about eighty more. Some warriors from Kahnawake participated in the pursuit and counterattack. At least seven died and some others were taken prisoner.² While the mission communities had not been targeted, Haudenosaunee hostility toward the French had risen to a level that those Natives who assisted France no longer enjoyed an exemption from violence.

While the Haudenosaunee were gathering to strike Lachine, colonists in Albany learned of the previous year’s coup in England that had sent Catholic King James to exile in France and installed Protestants William and Mary. Now war with France was in the offing for them as well. The town leaders—including Pieter and David Schuyler—promptly arrested LaFleur, DeGarmeaulx, and De Lafortune and brought them to the town for questioning. As they expressed it, this was not done to neutralize an authentic threat so much as “to Remoove all Suspicion which People now have” about the traders to the north.³ Anthony Lespinaud and John van Loon were also taken into custody for questioning. The depositions provided little description of their activities beyond innocuous activities like making snowshoes, procuring canoes, and baking bread. This opacity was likely a result of their connection to the Albany grandees, who did not wish

¹ Richter, “Rediscovered,” 81-82.

² Richter, *Ordeal*, 160; Lozier, *Flesh Reborn*, 218.

³ *DHNY* 2:81.

attention to be drawn to their trading activities outside approved locales. They were released on bail but not permitted to return upriver immediately.

The Schaghticokes were active as scouts for the English, and Saratoga became their base. In early August a party of 18 men was dispatched to investigate a report made by four Schaghticokes that “an army of French & indians were Seen on this Side of ye Lake.”⁴ On the first of September, Captain John Wendel and six men went to Saratoga to interrogate five warriors from Canada who had been brought there by League Mohawks after being spotted and captured on Lake Champlain. Three days later more men were dispatched with orders to build a fort “at ye house of Bartel Vroman” where several people had reportedly been killed. The convention also ordered “some Indians of Skachkook to be there with them to goe out as skouts in yt Part of ye County.” In late October they updated their instructions to deploy Claes Rust and Dirck Albert Bradt, two men with some Native language proficiency, at the post.⁵

The League Mohawks rose to address a different sort of threat to Albanians in November, where they responded to Pieter Schuyler's request to protect him against fellow colonists. Upon learning of the hostile takeover by Jacob Leisler of the provincial government seated in Manhattan, Albany town officials took action to preempt his seizing the reins there. They created a “convention” composed of the city's council, justices, and commissioned officers to administer the city until orders arrived from London. As mayor, Schuyler was its leader and commander of the fort. In November, Leisler sent his lieutenant Jacob Milborne to Albany to demand Schuyler and the convention step aside. Leisler was deeply suspicious of the traders at Saratoga, describing them as “rank french papists...settled there for some bad designe.”⁶ For their part, the Mohawks visiting Albany did not look kindly upon a development that threatened their access to needed guns and ammunition while they were actively fighting a war with France. This was no time to replace Schuyler. According to the minutes of the convention,

A Company of Maquase...Standing upon ye hill neer ye fort...Sent word by hille Pieterse...to ye fort to acquaint ye Mayr and ye oyr gentn that Since they were in a firm Covenant chain with us, and Seeing yt ye People of N: Yorke came in a hostile manner to Disturbe their Brethren in ye fort which was for our and there Defence, Desyred yt ye said hille should tell them if any of those men came without ye gates to approach ye fort they would fyre upon them and charged there gunns.

⁴ DHNY 2:81-85.

⁵ DHNY 2:87, 89, 98, 99, 105.

⁶ Quoted in Preston, *Colonial Saratoga*, 33.

Schuyler demanded Milborne withdraw, and Albany dominie Godfridius Dellius mediated between Milborne and the Mohawks until Milborne “Marched doune ye towne and Dismissed his men.”⁷ Had it not been for the Mohawks present, Schuyler and the Convention might have been deposed—and possibly Dellius from his church post as well, since Leisler hoped to impose a stricter version of Calvinism.

The key player in this episode was the interpreter, “Hille Pieterse.” Better known in the documentary record as Hilletie van Olinda, she was a Mohawk woman in her early forties. Although she grew up among the Mohawks, her father had been a Dutchman, and she displayed an affinity for Christianity. She had moved to Schenectady in the 1660s, ostensibly to avoid harassment for her beliefs. There, she encountered harassment for her Mohawk ancestry instead, but married a tailor, Daniel van Olinda.⁸ Hilletie did not appreciate the upstart Leisler, as Schenectady society was divided between early settlers, including the Van Olindas, and more recent arrivals. The latter had eagerly welcomed Leisler’s ascendancy as a way to challenge the Schenectady establishment (such as it was). If Leisler prevailed, Hilletie would likely have lost some of her work as an interpreter to her close competitor, Arnout Viele, a Leisler supporter who had served as interpreter for the Saratoga deed.⁹

Having deflected the Leislerian challenge to Schuyler, Hilletie proceeded to forge a new and mutually beneficial alliance with Dellius, whose interest in Indigenous souls had suddenly been activated by the Milborne episode. Although the dominie had been in Albany since 1683, he had not previously paid them much attention. This was par for the course with the Dutch ministry. Their sense of cultural aloofness from Native peoples was deeply ingrained, and they had no incentive to create friction with the trading community. There is no evidence that Dellius made any real effort to baptize Mohawks prior to Leisler’s Rebellion. Only after his own position was threatened and the power of the Mohawks made clear did he engage them. Hilletie was brought on the payroll as interpreter. By 1693, the minister claimed two hundred converts, although this was not reflected in his registers. He reported having worked with Hilletie to translate several texts—a common standard by which authorities back in the home country judged missionary productivity. They also translated some psalms, as music was undoubtedly one the most effective means by which Natives became engaged with Christian practice. However, as their future activities would confirm, there is reason to

⁷ DHNY 2:130-32.

⁸ Sivertsen, *Turtles*, 7; Bartlett Burleigh James and J. Franklin Jameson, eds. *Journal of Jasper Danckaerts, 1679-1680* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1913), 204.

⁹ Burke, “Leisler’s Rebellion at Schenectady, New York, 1689-1710” *New York History* 70 (1989): 405-30; Midtrød, “The Flemish Bastard and the Former Indians: Métis and Identity in Seventeenth-Century New York” *American Indian Quarterly* 34 (2010): 94.

doubt the degree to which Delliuss' and Hilletie's motivations were truly spiritual in nature.¹⁰

The Attack on Schenectady

The Glorious Revolution led to the English entrance into the Nine Years' War in Europe, which became King William's War in North America. Most of the fighting took place in New England until 80 Kahnawakes, 16 Algonquins, and about 110 Frenchmen set out from Montreal in early February 1690. They passed through Saratoga on their way to attack Albany. However, on the advice of the Natives in the party—who generally determined the target when they were so well-represented—the target was changed to the smaller, less well-protected Schenectady (which the Natives dubbed 'Corlaer'). According to the account of a French official, they entered the town at 11 o'clock at night, set it ablaze, "and all who defended the place [were] slaughtered." Despite the fact that "few houses made any resistance," the French and their Indigenous allies burned the town and killed sixty persons, spared about as many, and took twenty-seven prisoners. The French account noted that "some twenty Mohawks were...spared in order to show them that it was the English and not they against whom the grudge was entertained."¹¹

Two hours after the attack began, the French withdrew. An alarm was sent to Schaghticoke, but did not make it "by reason of ye highwater—deep snow."¹² The pursuit was led by the Mohawk Lawrence, who professed "his heart was Broke to see so much of his Brethrens blood shed." Some forty other Mohawks were mobilized and joined by Ensign Abraham Schuyler (who was Pieter's cousin), but the majority of warriors who set off after the French appear to have been Schaghticoques who had been able to cross the river at Saratoga. While English officials blamed the exceedingly bad weather for the inability to rendezvous and pursue the retreating enemy, the Mohawks may have hesitated to overtake a party that had generally spared their own people. A Native prisoner taken by the Mohawks of the Lower Castle, Tiononderoge, was "Tormented" but then "given to an Indian woman according to there custome who gave him his life."¹³

A Mohawk delegation visited Albany in late February. The Albany authorities insisted that the new Protestant monarch would spare no effort to defeat a Catholic foe, and that their letters to other colonies and England would yield a fleet "not only to

¹⁰ Sivertsen, *Turtles*, 32; Eric Hinderaker, *The Two Hendricks: Unraveling a Mohawk Mystery* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2010), 49-58.

¹¹ *DHNY* 1:299-301.

¹² *DHNY* 1:303.

¹³ *DHNY* 1:306; 2:157-58, 163; Peter Schuyler et al. to Andros, *The Andros Tracts* (Boston: Prince Society, 1874), 3:115.

hinder succor comeing from france but to take Quebeck itt Self.” Echoing the militant rhetoric, the Mohawk replied that “we doe not design to goe out wth a small troop as skouts but as soon as ye nations come together we well goe with a whole army to Ruine ye french Country.” Nevertheless, they denied the request of the Albany authorities that the Indians resident at Schaghticoke be resettled on Marte Gerritsen (later Westerlo) Island, presumably to help protect nearby Albany. They said, “Concerning ye Skachkook Indians in our opinion they lye well where they are as a good watch they are our Childeren we will take good care yt they doe there duty.”¹⁴ The Mohawk were well-served by the status quo, and did not wish to see their control over either the Schaghticoke Indians or the Hoosic-Hudson confluence diminished.

Amidst concern about the prospect of further French attacks, Ensign Simon van Ness was dispatched to Saratoga for eight days to keep watch.¹⁵ Lest the French consolidate their military success at Schenectady with a diplomatic one at the League capital at Onondaga, Pieter Schuyler traveled there in May to warn the League against treating with a French emissary, the Chevalier d’Aux. The Haudenosaunee were already in an anti-French mood. Not only did they refuse to negotiate with the d’Aux, they took him prisoner and burned to death his interpreter and two French companions.¹⁶

Counteroffensive

New York appealed to other colonies for troops to march on New France via the Hudson-Champlain corridor, but Connecticut was the only other colony to gather soldiers for the expedition. The description of the area from Hartford to Albany by the commander of Connecticut forces, Fitz-John Winthrop, as “almost impassible parts of the wilderness” raises questions about his fitness for the task before him. Winthrop also complained about a lack of organization and personnel at Albany, before he arrived at “the Still Water,” where he camped on August 1, 1690. The next night he quartered at Saratoga, where the blockhouse presumably erected at Vrooman’s had become a hub of activity. At Wood Creek, Winthrop consulted with Pieter Schuyler and Mohawk sachems. Facing a lack of provisions (and, according to a Sokoki captive, the fear colonists had of traveling in elm canoes), they decided to scrap the expedition. Another significant factor—perhaps the most important one—was the spread of smallpox through the army as well as among the western Haudenosaunee, whom they had hoped would join them. The smallpox would eventually become general, infecting Mohicans as

¹⁴ DHNY 2:168-70.

¹⁵ DHNY 2:224

¹⁶ Richter, *Ordeal*, 172-3; Baron de Lahontan, *New Voyages to North-America* (Chicago, Ill.: A.C. McClurg, 1905), I:238-39.

well.¹⁷ A thrilled French governor Frontenac wrote that “the small pox or plague [was] fortunately communicated to the Iroquois and English, by the goods and clothes the latter brought them.” He noted that it “killed five or six hundred in four or five days. This broke them up, and obliged them to return to their villages where the bad air continued to destroy a number of others.”¹⁸ If Frontenac celebrated the ravages disease caused among his enemies, the Sokoki captive claimed that the English had planned to spread the disease intentionally through “cases containing. . .poisoned clothing which they were to abandon to be pillaged by the French soldiers.” Ultimately, only Pieter Schuyler’s brother Johannes (a man “of great vallew to the Indians,” in Winthop’s words) went forward. Commanding forty colonists and one hundred Mohawks, Schaghticokes, and River Indians, Johannes marched to the French village of La Prairie. They killed cattle and a dozen men and took 19 prisoners. This was, however, just a consolation mission.

In 1691, Pieter Schuyler led 130 colonists out of Albany to launch another attack on the French. Heading north past Halfmoon, he passed Schaghticokes there. They were planting rented land but complained that the women were being debauched with alcohol due to their proximity to the colonial population. Although the province encouraged them to contribute warriors for the summer’s expedition, they were still being decimated by smallpox. The Schaghticokes’ principal concern was building a fort for their own protection.¹⁹ A little further north at Stillwater, Schuyler and his men were joined by 60 River Indians and at Saratoga by 15 Mohawks under Schayavanoendere. Another Mohawk party that would rendezvous them farther north was coming from “a Lake right over Saraghtoga.”²⁰

Schuyler’s journal provides a glimpse into Indigenous use of the upper Hudson as he proceeded toward Wood Creek. The warriors broke into smaller parties, taking bear and deer as they went, with a larger group of Mohawks splitting off to do the same on the east side of the river. Schuyler and the Natives with him “felled a great many trees that could not be peel’d” to make canoes but a party of Mohawks at the end of Lake George eventually succeeded in making a large enough fleet. By the time they set out on the 19th there were 260 men in all, in two to four dozen canoes of four to twelve men.²¹ Schuyler was accompanied by 92 Mohawks (12 of whom were, to his eyes, children) and 66 River Indians. Schaghticokes were present, probably counted among these 66.

¹⁷ NYCD 4:193-6, 3:808; Brian D. Carroll, “The Effect of Military Service on Indian Communities in Southern New England, 1740-1763” *Early American Studies* 14 (2016): 513-16.

¹⁸ NYCD 9:495.

¹⁹ Entries of June 3 and 6, 1691, nos. 1555, 1569,

²⁰ NYCD 3:800.

²¹ NYCD 3:802.

Among the officers was Abraham Schuyler, who was attached to the Native warriors. They moved slowly down Lake Champlain, arriving at the mouth of the Chambly River on the 27th. Schuyler launched a direct assault on the fort at Chambly on August 1, which had between four hundred and five hundred defenders. The expedition killed an unknown number before withdrawing and then burning as much corn and hay as possible as they went. Their losses were about 20 colonists, 6 Mohicans, and 16 Mohawks. "Refreshed" by the 15 moose they killed en route home, Schuyler declared "successe and victory."²² However, the Haudenosaunee were unimpressed with English strategy and indignant at the high price of powder. At an Albany council in September, a Seneca speaker opined that "itt seems as if you are drunke in yor understandings yt you and ye Maquas should goe to fight with such small parties yt is not the way to overcome ye ennemy [.] [Y]ou break what was concluded." The Mohawks in attendance did not disagree.²³

In early December 1691, a 31-strong Mohawk-Oneida party raided a winter hunting camp of Laurentian Natives near Chambly. They killed four men and took six prisoner, as well as ten women and two white boys who had been taken at Schenectady nearly two years earlier. A large party of Frenchmen, "North Indians," and Laurentian warriors gave pursuit. The raiders were caught several days later somewhere around the middle of Lake Champlain. In the fighting that followed, only four of the Mohawk-Oneida party escaped, and the majority were killed rather than captured. Among the dead were prominent chiefs Caristasie (Garistasi, chief sachem of Tiononderoge), Cakarij Janondakke (Gaxari, brother of Jannetje), and Wannegreo. These events represented serious cracks in the solidarity of Mohawks. Until that point, the Natives fighting along the length and breadth of Mohawk country had set their sights on colonial targets and took significant pains to shield one another from the brunt of warfare. Looking southward, the French-allied Indigenous participants in the raid on Schenectady did not harm Mohawks in the village or in nearby Mohawk villages. Looking northward, by selecting Lachine and La Prairie as targets, League Mohawks kept a distance from their fellows. Historian Jon Parmenter's close analysis of violence among Iroquoians revealed that specific underlying family disputes were usually the cause, and the small scale of these campaigns are consistent with that. However, the previously respected limits on internecine killing and capture now appeared to be at an end, and the erosion of this norm compromised the League Mohawks' freedom of movement through Mohawk territory, including Saratoga. There certainly was fear. Albany authorities reported that "The Maquas are very loath to goe out upon any occasion."²⁴ In June of the following year, thirty soldiers were detached to Halfmoon

²² NYCD 3:800-5.

²³ NYCD 3:807.

²⁴ NYCD 3:815, 817, 9:534; Parmenter, *Edge of the Woods*, 223.

after a “false alarm occasioned by some skulking Indians from Canada.”²⁵ At a meeting with the Albany commissioners that same month, Rode (of Saratoga deed fame) asked pointedly “Pray Corlaer what is the matter, how comes Maryland Delaware River and New England to be disengaged from this warr...do they draw their arm out of the Covenant chaine...?”²⁶

In February 1693, 350 French and 200 Natives from all the mission villages laid waste to all three Mohawk villages, killing thirty and taking as many as 300 captives. The Mohawks were upset that the English had prioritized securing Albany and Schenectady at the expense of protecting the Mohawks. Pieter Schuyler sought to assuage their frustrations by leading a pursuit by 273 New Yorkers, met by an even larger force of “our uppermost Indians.” Lieut. John Schuyler and Captain Arent Schuyler also participated.²⁷ Bad weather allowed them to catch and engage the attackers. Schuyler reported having lost ten of his men (including four Natives), with twelve wounded. The French lost close to thirty, and about as many wounded. It was a sharp and significant engagement, and Schuyler closed his report with “The Indians after their naturall barbarity did cutt the enemies dead to pieces, roast them and eat them.” However, Schuyler had also observed that “that which did most of all discourage us is the great averseness the Indians had to fall upon the enemy because of their wives and children: whereupon we marched back.”²⁸ The Natives’ ethic of restraint towards one another was echoed in a frustrated French officer’s report that “The Indians represented that they were loaded with prisoners whom they could not in any way be persuaded to kill, though they had on setting out from Montreal, promised to do so.” Their “obstinacy...was the cause that this expedition was not accompanied by all the success that was anticipated.” At Lake George “several of our Indians left us to hunt, and as they alone were the masters of the prisoners whom they did not guard very strictly, many of these escaped.”²⁹ As high as the temperature of the conflict between Natives allied with the French and those allied with the English had risen, the bonds between them had not melted completely.

Pro-French Natives both within and outside the League doubtless asked what on Earth kept any of the Haudenosaunee peoples allied with England. Addressing Governor Fletcher in Albany, an Onondaga sachem chided England for failing to deliver a promised naval assault, which was now more crucial than ever “because a great part of our Strength is already broke.”³⁰ The French and their Native allies undertook hit-and-

²⁵ Jonathan Pearson, *A History of the Schenectady Patent in the Dutch and English Times; being contributions toward a history of the lower Mohawk Valley* (Albany, NY: Munsell, 1883), 275.

²⁶ NYCD 3:843.

²⁷ NYCD 4:16-17.

²⁸ NYCD 4:18-19.

²⁹ NYCD 9:559-60.

³⁰ NYCD 4:23.

run raids on the upper Hudson all the way to Albany, which was itself falling to ruin. The raiders moved through Mohawk country as far as Albany, largely at will until news of the end of the war arrived in late 1697.³¹ Ultimately, the Mohawk majority were too invested in the English politically and economically to give them up. Although New York's weakness was obvious, it still represented guns, powder, and the Covenant Chain. The Mohawks' Eastern-Door identity tied them to the English for better and (as was the case at the moment) for worse. To shut that door would deprive them of too much, materially and politically. They also understood that France was unable to compensate or protect them. The brutality of King Philip's War in New England and, prior to that, Kieft's War in the lower Hudson valley, demonstrated that the threat posed by Anglo-Dutch settler society was not to be dismissed; good relations had to be maintained.

England's Many Faces

For the Natives, Pieter Schuyler and his family were more than ever the face of their English alliance. Between the departure of Governor Dongan in 1688 and the arrival of Benjamin Fletcher in 1692, Corlaer's face had changed no fewer than five times. As the head of the Albany Commissioners of Indian Affairs, Pieter Schuyler was their most consistent interlocutor, which prompted them to permanently refer to the provincial point man for Native diplomacy at Albany by the title "Quider." ("Quider" was the Mohawk pronunciation of Pieter).³² After the destruction of their villages, the Mohawks built a stockaded village on the Schuyler property at the Flatts where they resided until settling two new villages on the Mohawk, Tiononderoge (the lower castle) and Canajoharie (the upper castle). As a Five Nations speaker noted in a 1698 council with yet another new governor, the Earl of Bellomont, "during the whole War, all the succor and relief that ever we had was from Coll. Peter Schuyler."³³ There is little evidence, however, that Pieter Schuyler's stalwartness derived from an emotional bond with the Natives or a sense of obligation to them. Indeed, Schuyler used his relationship with the Mohawks to finagle a deed for himself and a coterie of high-profile Albanians, including Dominie Dellius, to most of the Mohawks' territory during the war. As the Mohawks explained it, the deed had been presented to them as a means of safeguarding—not relinquishing—their lands.³⁴ Upon learning the truth, they informed Governor Bellomont of their "desire that the said Writing may be abolished and burnt, and that we who are the right owners may be masters of our own Land, especially since

³¹ NYCD 4:173-74; *Annals of Albany* ed. Joel Munsell (Albany: J. Munsell, 1852), 3:15-16.

³² Richter, *Ordeal*, 164.

³³ *Propositions made by the Five Nations of Indians...to His Excellency Richard Earl of Bellomont...in Albany, the 20th of July, anno Dom. 1698* (New York: William Bradford, 1698), 11.

³⁴ NYCD 4:345-46, 447-48; 5:11.

we are in one Covenant Chain and ought not to wrong one another.”³⁵ But even if Schuyler's schemes sometimes misfired, he continued to advance in colonial society. In 1691 he was appointed to the provincial council, and by 1693 had received a colonelcy. In 1698 he secured an important contract to supply the military. He would eventually serve two stints as the province's acting governor.

In Dellius, the Mohawks encountered someone even more grasping than Pieter Schuyler but decidedly less useful. In 1696, Dellius talked some of his converts into granting him a colossal tract. It lay on the east side of the Hudson beginning from the northern border of the Saratoga Patent at the Batten Kill and stretched twelve miles inland and nearly a hundred miles north to Rock Regeo in Burlington Bay of Lake Champlain.³⁶ The land had many tall white pines that were extremely valuable for use as ship masts, and were relatively easy to transport from the river banks he now ‘owned.’ Dellius likely laid eyes on the land for the first time when he traveled to Quebec with Pieter Schuyler as representatives of the new governor of New York to discuss the peace settlement that had been signed at Ryswick in 1697 and repatriate some French prisoners.

Unfortunately for both Schuyler and Dellius, Bellomont was aligned with the Leislerian faction, and he lobbied the Lords of Trade to have the “extravagant” grants vacated. He told them the cessions “come not much short of Yorkshire, for extent of land, and the persons that are the grantees have no merit.”³⁷ Bellomont's engineer, William Römer, had toured the upper Hudson and shared his boss' opinion regarding the Schuyler-Dellius coterie. Reporting on his inspection of the province's fortifications in the spring of 1698, Römer blamed poor frontier defenses on the profiteering of “a handful of people with diabolical profusion.” Römer found Halfmoon to be “of very little consideration” but noted “there is a place seven leagues higher up the river, called Cheragtoge, which must be an important frontier.”³⁸ Römer also put Bellomont on his guard against anyone who might tell him “that a woman may answer you as an interpreter.” He was of course referring to Hilletie. Römer warned the governor that anyone who recommended her did so “only for the purpose of deceiving you, and keeping you in ignorance of important affairs.”³⁹

When Bellomont cancelled the grants, Schuyler quietly withdrew his claim. Dellius, however, complained loudly. Among his defenses, he claimed he could not have misled the Mohawks because he did not speak their language, thereby transferring

³⁵ *Propositions*, 3-4.

³⁶ NYCD 4:391-92; 5:11. The grant itself estimated the distance from the southern to northern boundaries as seventy miles. Rudy VanVeghten, “The Dellius Patent and Rock Regio” *De Halve Maen* 59 (2018).

³⁷ NYCD 4:327.

³⁸ NYCD 4:328-30

³⁹ NYCD 4:329-30.

responsibility—although not motive—to the interpreter. The interpreter had been none other than Hilletie, and she admitted the fraud. In addition to having the grant vacated, Dellius lost his pulpit. At the eleventh hour, Hilletie orchestrated a ham-fisted attempt to have the Mohawk negotiators recant their testimony about his fraud, but this backfired. Disgraced but not ashamed, Dellius went back to Europe. Following him there were allegations by one of the French prisoners he had taken to Quebec that he had fathered her child.⁴⁰

During the war, the Mohawks had also sold Hendrick van Rensselaer a six-mile square that included Schaghticoke, whence the Natives had fled to the environs of Albany. The Albany council reacted angrily to this because this grant encompassed a 500-acre reserve the city claimed there. The council noted in 1698 that Schaghticoke was “principally for the settlement of Indians for trade” and in particular “such nations of Indians as should desert Canada or New England or other parts.”⁴¹ This description represented a commercial revision of the security rationale for the creation of the settlement. For their part, the Schaghticokes appealed to Governor Bellomont in July that they wished to return. However, they complained that

when our young Indians come from hunting, so soon as the Christians hear of it, they take their Horses and come to our Settlements, and there seize upon what we have got in our Canows, under pretence of being in their Debt, and not contented to take the Furze obtained in hunting but also our Guns, & thereby render us unable to hunt again, by which means we become extreamly poor, and so must always run in debt for new Guns and other Necessaries to go hunt again, whereas if we had the liberty to bring our things to Market, as other Indians do, we should not only be able to pay our Debts, but also have surplusage to supply ourselves with other things needful.

Bellomont encouraged them to return and to invite others; he pledged to talk to the Albany council.⁴² It seems they did return, but things did not go well and the following year some had decamped northward to Winooski, in present-day Burlington, where those of Western Abenaki origin had lived earlier. This threatened to return them to a French orbit. Schaghticokes complained that “Last yeare our corn was scarce by reason of high waters, and what was left most part thereof your people took from us, which caused our Wifes suffer for it in Winter. . . and this yeare there is but little prospect of a better crop.” They also fretted over the fact that “when they come home, your people

⁴⁰ NYCD 4:363-65, 539-41, 581-82.

⁴¹ *AAlb.* 3:34-35.

⁴² *Propositions made by the Five Nations*, 8-9, 13.

doe threaten them and strike them for Beaver” and “they have caught but a few Beaver to pay their debts.”⁴³ Bellomont again replied sympathetically and wrote Pieter Schuyler urging him to restrain the Albany merchants. The Schaghticokes did return, but the abuse was never forgotten, and fueled a bitterness toward Anglo-Dutch settlers that would contribute over the course of decades to the erosion of the community—and attacks on frontier settlements.

Peace and Pressure

The war had exacted a terrible toll on the upper Hudson and Mohawk valleys and beyond. A 1698 English report indicated that in the previous nine years the River Indian warrior population had declined from 250 to 90 and the Mohawks from 270 to 110.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, the League rejected English pretensions of suzerainty over their lands, and they continued raiding France's Native allies in the Ohio country and the *pays d'en haut*. They also struck French settlers between Montreal and Trois-Rivières.⁴⁵ By 1701, however, the French, the Haudenosaunee, and the Natives of the *pays d'en haut* were ready to make peace. By playing host to the treaty, the French hoped to project a French aegis—or, more accurately, the illusion of one—over the entente between the Haudenosaunee and the Western nations. The French also acquired the right to build forts on territories claimed by the Haudenosaunee and Haudenosaunee neutrality in its conflicts with England. The treaty, held at Montreal, was a grand affair indeed, attracting 1300 people of 39 Indigenous nations to Montreal (and Kahnawake, which functioned as a kind of Indigenous vestibule). Sensitive to the English pique at having been outmaneuvered, the League Mohawks stayed away. They trusted their interests would be minded by the other League nations and Laurentian Mohawks. A separate peace council between the Haudenosaunee (Mohawks included this time) and English took place amidst less fanfare in Albany.⁴⁶

The Grand Settlement of 1701 in Montreal helped lift the fog over the Saratoga region. Both the Haudenosaunee and France had tested their relative strength against one another and discovered their limits. Some Laurentian Mohawks returned to the upper Hudson valley as trade at Albany revived. In the words of two sachems from the St. Lawrence, Taquayanout and Sinjaderese, “Since the Peace between the two Crowns of England and France we have had the liberty to come here and trade, and have had the

⁴³ NYCD 4:575.

⁴⁴ NYCD 4:337.

⁴⁵ NYCD 9:599-603.

⁴⁶ Brandão and Starna, “The Treaties of 1701: A Triumph of Iroquois Diplomacy” *Ethnohistory* 43 (1996): 209-44; Parmenter, *Edge of the Woods*, 259-73; Richter, *Ordeal*, 190-212; Gilles Havard, *The Great Peace of 1701: French-Native Diplomacy in the Seventeenth Century* (Montreal, Qc. and Kingston, Ont.: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001).

benefite of hunting in Peace & safety.”⁴⁷ League Mohawks likewise brought goods to Montreal. The ongoing French proscription against their own subjects trading with Albany left this commerce entirely in the hands of the Mohawks, much to their profit. As Claude de Ramezay reported to his superior in 1707, “The merchants of Montreal sought an outlet at Albany, but since it was not permitted, made use of the Indians of [Kahnawake] to continue the trade under the pretext of going to visit their allies, the Mohawks.”⁴⁸

The durability of the Great Peace was such that even the outbreak of another war between France and England in 1702, Queen Anne's War, did not affect life on the upper Hudson. France steered clear of Haudenosaunee territories so as not to jeopardize it. New England became the focus of French aggression. In anticipation of attacks in that quarter, the Albany Commissioners asked the Schaghticokes “to be vigilant and to look out and be good spies.” Taking the opportunity to shore up their position, the Schaghticokes planned to invite more Algonquians from the eastward to reside there.⁴⁹ Although France mobilized Abenakis at its mission at Odanak (St. Francis) to attack settlements in Maine in 1703, and Kahnawakes to attack Deerfield, Massachusetts, in 1704, the Champlain-Hudson corridor remained notably peaceful.

However, because peace prevailed along the upper Hudson, Indigenous communities there found settlers pressing upon them with greater force. The mortgage taken out on Schaghticoke in 1686 was recorded in 1702, and Schaghticokes complained that white traders sold them liquor and that “There are sometimes Indians that in their drunken fitts will be apt to sell ye land at Schkakook.”⁵⁰ Some Schaghticokes had had enough. They left to “Setle with ye Mohogs [Mohawks] our friends In There Countrey Where wee may Bee Strenthend again it Is The Place where our Nation formerly Dwelt and kept there fyre Burning there so Now wee are Goeing Up to Setle & Kindle our fyres there again.” The move was a wise one for both Schaghticokes and Mohawks because they had suffered significant population declines.⁵¹

In August of that year, David Schuyler (an Indian Commissioner and Albany alderman) and Robert Livingston, Jr., (son of the New York Indian secretary) negotiated with League Mohawks for what members of the nation later recalled to have been “a small piece of Land (about enough for three Farms) along the Hudsons River

⁴⁷ NYCD 4:978; Hinderaker, *Two Hendricks*, 76-77; Thomas Eliot Norton, *The Fur Trade in Colonial New York 1686-1776* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1974), 27-59; Parmenter, *Edge of the Woods*, 273; Kees-Jan Waterman, “*To Do Justice to Him and Myself: Evert Wendell's Account Book of the Fur Trade with the Indians at Albany, 1695-1726*” (Philadelphia, Pa.: American Philosophical Society, 2008), 34.

⁴⁸ NYCD 9:813; Norton, *Fur Trade*, 36; Grabowski, “Les Amérindiens domiciliés et la ‘contrabande’ des fourrures en Nouvelle-France,” *Recherches amérindiennes au Québec* 24 (1994): 47-8.

⁴⁹ NYCD 4:991.

⁵⁰ NYCD 4:992.

⁵¹ LIR 188-9; Midtrød, *Memory*, 131. NYCD 4:337, 991.

above Saraghtoga.” The Mohawks accepted only “a trifling consideration” that was “not equal in value to the price of the smallest farm” because they regarded the sale as an act of goodwill. (Indeed, they never even received the token goods offered, as these had burned in a Schenectady building before they collected it.⁵²) The names of Hendrick Tejonihokarara (Wolf clan) and Joseph Dehanochrakhas (Bear clan) grace the original deed.⁵³ On October 4, 1704, another deed for “a Tract or Parcell of Woodland...known by the name of Kayadorosros” and other lands along and above the Saratoga Patent and to the “Albany River,” was signed to New York attorney general Sampson Shelton Broughton. This deed was also signed by Hendrick and Joseph, now joined by Amos Harogiechta (Wolf or Bear) and Gideon Tonidoge (Wolf).⁵⁴ All these men had been baptized by Dellijs, and the interpreter was, predictably enough, Hilletie van Olinda. The ‘Kayaderosseras Patent’ that the governor, Lord Cornbury, issued on November 2, 1708, on the basis of the above transactions, was for an astounding 800,000 acres. Discussing this transaction with Sir William Johnson in 1765, Cadwallader Colden, the acting governor of New York, observed that “not one of the great Tracts were fairly purchased.”⁵⁵

The Schaghticokes, meanwhile, continued to lose land on the east side of the Hudson. In 1707, a party visiting Albany sold a tract stretching two miles along on the east bank of the Hudson opposite and above Halfmoon and twelve to fourteen miles inland. The principal Mohican agent was Masseha, who had signed the mortgage with Sanders in 1686. The purchaser was the City of Albany—with David Schuyler (now Albany’s mayor) in attendance. The compensation for this tract was 2 blankets, 12 duffel coats, 20 Shirts, 2 guns, 12 pounds of powder, 36 pounds of lead, 8 gallons of rum, 2 casks of beer, 2 rolls of tobacco, 10 gallons of Madeira wine, and “some pypes.” Mayor Schuyler had been present at the meeting five years earlier when the Schaghticokes complained about the effects of alcohol. Masseha received more goods and a personal grant of a 12-acre tract of lowland on the Schaghticoke Creek, which was to be protected with a fence to keep settlers’ animals away from his crops. This parcel was to belong to him and his family in perpetuity.⁵⁶ The first white settlers arrived along the

⁵² Johnson noted that “The Indians alive at that time, many of whom, were living for several years after my arrival in this Country in 1738, repeatedly assured me, that no more was explained to those who signed the Deed, than a small piece of Land sufficient for three or four farms. From my first acquaintance with the Mohawks, they continued to make complaints, and to remonstrate against this Tract, and I as often assured them, that I had not the least doubt, that they should be redressed.” NYCD 7:576, 672.

⁵³ NYCD 4:978-94; JP 12:531.

⁵⁴ Sivertsen, *Turtles*, 196; Copy of Indian Deed to Kayaderosseras, Oct. 6, 1704, AHMC Kayaderosseras, NYHS.

⁵⁵ NYCD 7:576, 671; Colden to Sir William Johnson, June 13, 1765, *Collections of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1877* 10 (1878): 21.

⁵⁶ Dunn, *Mohicans and Their Land*, 160.

Hoosic in 1709. One of them was Arent van Curler's grandson and namesake. In 1711, he established a trading post on White Creek.

"Enterprize"

The peace between the League Mohawks and France broke down in 1709 after the French assassinated métis trader Andrew Montour to block the flow of furs from the Great Lakes to Albany. This coincided with the English crown's approval of a plan for a simultaneous naval expedition to Quebec and a land invasion via the Hudson-Champlain corridor. The plan was dubbed "the Glorious Enterprize" by its promoters, and David, Abraham, and Pieter Schuyler all visited Onondaga that year to win the support of the League. In May, three Schaghticoques and two Mohawks were dispatched to Quebec and Montreal respectively to assess fortifications, troops, and prices. To ensure that they were not detected, they were escorted four miles past Saratoga, the point considered to be "past all ye Christian settlements."⁵⁷

The Glorious Enterprize failed spectacularly. Owing to low water on the Hudson, all supplies had to be hauled by wagon to Fort Ingoldsby (built in that year at Pieter Schuyler's direction) and its store house at Stillwater. There, everything was loaded onto boats for an eighteen-mile journey to the portage. Maintaining the army's supply lines was a matter of "Extraordinary Pains Labour and charge," as Robert Livingston put it. The significant number of Native allies was the only promising sign. There were 150 Mohawks, 105 Oneidas, 100 Cayugas, 88 Onondagas, and 60 River Indians or Schaghticoques present.⁵⁸ By early August, they were assembled at Wood Creek, where a fort bearing the Schuyler name had been erected. In the absence of imminent action, many went "out ahunting in Severall places." Concerns began to arise. According to Livingston, "Severall of those Guns the Queen sent for Indian Presents, Prov'd very defective." As a result, he reported the Natives "are very indifferently arm'd, and Some have no guns (but Bows and arrows)." The condition of their arms was a metaphor for the general preparedness and cohesion of the colonial force, which was composed of men from New England, New York, and New Jersey. Livingston opined that "the generality both of Officers and Soldiers are unskilfull and unexperienced in Martial Affairs...and it is easily to be observed that some are very Indifferent how matters are Carried on." They were not "Brisk active men," and lacked the ability to build or even use canoes. They were also poor marksmen.⁵⁹ However, none of it mattered. To the consternation of all involved, England sent the fleet dedicated to North America to

⁵⁷ LIR 202-6.

⁵⁸ Peter W. Raxall, *An Abridgment of the Indian Affairs... Transacted in the Colony of New York* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1915), 69; Bruce T. McCully, "Catastrophe in the Wilderness: New Light on the Canada Expedition of 1709" *William & Mary Quarterly* 11 (1954): 441-56.

⁵⁹ McCully, "Catastrophe," 450, 451, 454.

Portugal instead. It was all off. Everyone was to go home. Once again, the English had discredited themselves in the eyes of the Natives.

“Four Indian Kings” go to London

Pieter Schuyler needed to restore English credibility. He also had to allay lingering English suspicions about the loyalties of Dutch subjects like himself and motivate them to counter the French in North America. Taking a party of Natives to Queen Anne's Court would offer each the opportunity to impress the other. The Natives would be awed by the multitudes and majesty of London. Her Majesty, meeting Indigenous people in person, would be less apt to dismiss them as untrustworthy savages—and more likely to trust her Dutch deputy.⁶⁰ The idea was not without somewhat recent precedent; in the late 1690s Governor Fletcher had reported that “When I came down from Albany, two of the Indian princes follow'd me and had some purpose of going for England but altered their mindes.” The proviso in the 1701 treaty that Robert Livingston present the League offer to the king personally also reflected the League's understanding that it enjoyed a channel of communication with the Crown.⁶¹

The four men Schuyler took were Mohican Nicholas (Etowaukum) and Mohawks Hendrick Tejonihokarawa, Brant Saquainquaragton, and Johannes Onigoheriago. There is no evidence of their communities supporting or opposing their trip. The men held no commission from the League, or from the councils of their own nations, so they did not constitute a ‘delegation’ or ‘embassy’ in even an informal sense. Although they were billed in England as the ‘Four Indian Kings,’ they possessed no such distinction (nor could have since no such distinction existed in their societies). The one Mohican in the party, Nicholas/Etowaukum (Turtle clan), may well have been a Schaghticoke. He had rallied to Schuyler in the 1690 and 1709 expeditions. The foursome's speaker was Wolf clan member Hendrick Tejonihokarawa (‘Open the Door’), who was about fifty years old and had been baptized by Dellius in July 1690.⁶² One of the signatories of the Kayaderoseras deed, Hendrick had helped Schuyler recruit Mohawk warriors for the recent aborted expedition to Canada, and so had shared in England's shame. Brant was a chief and had previously gone to Canada in 1703 to redeem captives and to Boston in 1709 to observe preparations for the expedition. He was a member of the Bear clan and had been baptized by Dellius in 1694. He died shortly after returning home. John is similarly obscure. He belonged to the Wolf clan

⁶⁰ Samuel Whiting, a New England ensign taken captive by the French, claimed that “Peter Schuyler received a letter in the name of Queen Anne to the effect that were he disposed to side with the French, he was to withdraw forthwith to them, but if he would be faithful to his party, she would appoint him Chief of the land expedition.” NYCD 9:836. Governor Vaudreuil was under the impression that Schuyler and Nicholson had had a falling out. NYCD 9:843.

⁶¹ NYCD 4:276

⁶² Sivertsen, *Turtles*, 22-23.

and hailed from the 'upper castle' of Canajoharie. As historian Barbara Sivertsen has noted, the Christian commitment of the group was unusual.⁶³ The upshot of the visit suggests this was not coincidental.

John Schuyler accompanied them to Boston for embarkation; Pieter and Abraham Schuyler and a Major David Pigeon boarded the HMS *Reserve* with the 'four kings' on the last day of February. They arrived in London in early April. The tour of the four created quite a sensation in England. They were wine and dined in the city and countryside alike, attended the theatre, sat for portraits, met with government officials, and visited everything from cathedrals to poor houses and a hospital. At their first audience with the queen, Major Pigeon read Abraham Schuyler's translation of Hendrick's speech. The speech recounted their service in the previous year's campaign. In explaining their disappointment that it had been aborted, they cited a concern that the French "should now think Us unable to make War against them." They nevertheless held out hope for "The Reduction of Canada" and asked that "We should have Free Hunting and a great Trade with Our *Great Queen's* Children." All four having been baptized, they also indicated that missionaries would be welcome, a message that was doubtless well-received.⁶⁴ The queen indicated her approval of the encounter, and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel was given responsibility for developing a plan to support the missionaries and teachers.⁶⁵

The travelers were back in America in July. The effect of the London tour on the Haudenosaunee and the Mohicans was limited. The four men were not suddenly catapulted to prominence, although they were no doubt thoroughly debriefed. Their reports may have informed an Onondaga's concern, expressed the following year, that the English and the French wished "to settle their Lands because Land is very scarce in Europe."⁶⁶ At a council with the Albany commissioners shortly after the return of the men, a League speaker expressed thanks for the hospitality shown the men, and generally positive feelings about the visit, but did not fail to point out that it was just a Mohawk group. (He did not even deign to mention the Mohican.) They looked forward to seeing what came of the visit in terms of English investments in their education and protection.⁶⁷ From the Schuylers' perspective, even this posture of wait-and-see was a relief after the 1709 fiasco. It bought them the second chance they sought, which was already in the works in London. Another important result of the trip was that the long-discussed religious mission was given the boost necessary to finally bring it into

⁶³ Sivertsen, *Turtles*, 37, 62-66, 136.

⁶⁴ The speech is reproduced in Richmond P. Bond, *Queen Anne's American Kings* (New York: Octagon, 1974), 94-95; Coll-Peter Thrush, *Indigenous London: Native Travelers at the Heart of Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 74-82.

⁶⁵ Fenton, *Great Law*, 369-77.

⁶⁶ Wraxall, *Abridgment*, 83; Norton, *Fur Trade*, 39.

⁶⁷ NYCD 5:224.

existence—although not at Saratoga as previously envisioned. Instead, a chapel and fort were built for the Mohawks at Fort Hunter, just opposite the ‘lower castle’ of Tiononderoge.⁶⁸ It was deemed wiser to situate it near the Mohawks’ village than at their more remote fishing station, in what remained a war zone.

A New Offensive

The reprise of the Canada invasion in 1711 started smoothly enough. In mid-August, the Schaghticokes contributed 38 men and were presented with supplies by Lieutenant-Colonel Johannes Schuyler. A party of 54 “Mahikanders or River Indians” led by Wampasa joined with Palatine Germans and Long Island Algonquians (possibly included among the 54), and went north under Pieter Schuyler. The arrival in Albany toward the end of the month of 182 Senecas (and 26 allied Shawnees), 127 Cayugas, 99 Onondagas, and 93 Oneidas was quite a coup, and represented the ongoing alienation of segments of those nations from the French.⁶⁹ Isabelle Montour, a métis trader and interpreter herself, had arrived to lend her weight to recruitment efforts to avenge her brother’s killing. Her influence was magnified by the fact that Governor Robert Hunter, who distrusted the Schuyler family, was thrilled to have an independent interpreter who worked in English and not Dutch.⁷⁰ There were 155 League Mohawks as well. The Onondaga sachem Dekannissore said, “We desire that the French praying Indians which were once our Children & are gone from us to live at Canada, if they will be neutral and sitt still in their Castles, or come over to us that they may be pardoned.”⁷¹ They had resurrected their former ethic of cooperation; this was not to be a conflict among Natives.

Governor Hunter reported that as September began, an English fleet was already at the mouth of the St. Lawrence “in good condition and with a faire wind” and 2300 men were raised for the land invasion, who were being followed north from Albany by 800 of “ye Five Nations with their Allies.” The Iroquois represented “a jolly crew...[of]

⁶⁸ Fenton, *Great Law*, 378-81. Andrews resided there from 1712 to 1719 to initiate what would prove over the coming decades to be an on-again, off-again affair. It was perhaps not coincidental that Etowaukum’s descendants went on to play an important role in the establishment of the mission at Stockbridge. I am grateful to Bonney Hartley for pointing this out.

⁶⁹ NYCD 5:254, 266, 270; Wraxall, *Abridgment*, 91.

⁷⁰ Alison Duncan Hirsch, ““The Celebrated Madam Montour”: “Interpreter” Across Early American Frontiers” *Explorations in Early American Culture* 4 (2000): 94-95; Simone Vincens, *Madame de Montour et son temps* (Montréal: Québec Amérique, 1979), 232-5, 238, 251. An account book from the campaign suggests Montour’s importance. Identified as an “interpretress,” she was given 1 5/8 yards of cloth, more than the 1 yard to a “chief Captain of Cayuga” (and the ¾ to the “Indian boy who presented a tyger to his Excellency”). She also received a shirt on the 24th, and her husband (identified not by name but only as her husband) received a scarlet suit. Account book, Peter van Brugh and Hendrick Hansen, 1711-1713, BV Vetch, NYHS.

⁷¹ NYCD 5:269.

very likely men, with all marks of a hearty disposition for the service.”⁷² As Hunter was effusing about his prospects, a letter written aboard the HMS *Windsor* was already making its way south to him. Hunter's heart no doubt sank when he laid eyes on its opening: “prepare your Self to hear a melancholly account of the disasters that have happend to us.” A dense fog had settled upon the fleet near the mouth of the St. Lawrence, causing eight transports to run aground. Hundreds of men were lost. Lost, too, was the English commanders' confidence in their New England river pilots. They decided to abandon the invasion. To Hunter's great mortification, his Indigenous allies, now massed at Wood Creek, would have to be dismissed once again.⁷³

The Laurentian warriors aligned with France wasted little time projecting their power back into the upper Hudson valley. In November, Hunter informed his superiors back in London that “Since the fatal miscarriage of the intended expedition our fronteers have been infested, and two familys cut off by the French Indians.”⁷⁴ One especially brutal attack took place in mid-October. Captain Johannis Bratt [Bradt] and David Ketlin [Ketelhuyn] were “going from their houses, towards Skacktege [Schaghticoke], Where ye Indians live.” The two men encountered a Native warrior, who shot and killed Bradt and struggled with Ketelhuyn before escaping. The warrior told Ketelhuyn, who spoke Mohawk, that there were twenty of them on each side of the Hudson. Some of them besieged Ketelhuyn's house. The household included his sixteen-year-old son, his brother's wife and two children, an Indigenous boy, and two or three Black slaves. The Natives were already quite familiar the Europeans' own captivity complex, which consigned Blacks and their descendants to perpetual labor and unfreedom. This made Blacks attractive targets for capture for the purpose of collecting ransom. The Blacks were accordingly taken prisoner, as was Ketelhuyn's son. Ketelhuyn's wife, his sister-in-law, the young children, the soldiers, and Ketelhuyn were killed and their corpses torn and mangled. The Native boy was wounded but escaped, and gave testimony about what had transpired, which ended with the warriors burning the house and corn cribs. His account was confirmed by “an old Lame Indian that lived near Ketlins house; When he heard the Guns fire he Crept out of his Wigwam and gott under and old ffallentree, And heard all that past.” We learn from this episode that those settlers who moved to stake a claim in the area did so at considerable risk to themselves (and the enslaved laborers to whom they unilaterally extended it). We also see that individual Natives continued to live very near—and sometimes even with—the settlers. The presence of settlers did not translate automatically into the absence of Indigenous people.⁷⁵ The campaign account book recorded compensation to Native warriors for

⁷² NYCD 5:254, 262-63.

⁷³ NYCD 5:272-77.

⁷⁴ NYCD 5:284.

⁷⁵ NYCD 5:281-2.

their pursuit of the raiding party. A 1713 entry noted a kettle to Pamolent—one of the Schaghticoke spies sent to Quebec in 1709—for his services going “to fetch David Ketelhuyn’s son from Canada.”⁷⁶

⁷⁶ Account book, van Brugh and Hansen.

SECTION TWO:
THE COLONIAL STRUGGLE FOR
SARATOGA

Part Five:

Trade, Colonial Settlement, And King George's War

Raiding to Trading

Events outside North America would determine the timing and terms of the treaty that ended Queen Anne's War. Among its various provisions, the 1713 Treaty of Utrecht authorized a commission to define a boundary between New France and New York. Such a boundary would cut straight across Mohawk territory. However, the treaty makers in Utrecht did not presume to redefine space for Indigenous peoples (whom they referred to as 'Americans'). Article XV of the treaty enshrined the Natives' right to free and unmolested movement for the purposes of trade. The Mohawks of Kahnawake, in particular, took advantage of this legal exemption to an imaginary barrier. They carved an economic niche carrying the furs that were more abundant in the French domain to Albany, where they exchanged them for English manufactures that were cheaper and of higher quality. Between Natives' border-crossing treaty rights, leverage as military allies, and skills as forest travelers, laws banning the trade were difficult to enforce. Prosecutions focused on Euro-American traders and were sufficiently rare that characterizing the trade as "smuggling" and "illegal" exaggerate its nefarious character (even if they do make it seem more exciting).¹ There were significant economic rewards for Mohawk men and women who traveled the corridor and maintained ties with their kin. The principal item they carried was woolen broadcloth called 'strouds.'² These were used for skirts, leggings, jackets, and 'wearing blankets.' They accorded with Indigenous aesthetics, or were easily refashioned to do so. The Indigenous population was clear about its preferences in terms of color, and merchants did their best to oblige. Philip Livingston noted not just color but selvage when he instructed his suppliers that "the Indians buy most blew strouds with a small white cord, so that 3 to 1 red is a good sortment."³

¹ Grabowski, "Les Amérindiens domiciliés," 47; Parmenter, "Onenwahatirighsi Sa Genthos Skaghnuhtudigh" Reassessing Haudenosaunee Relations with the Albany Commissioners of Indian Affairs, 1723-1755" in *English Atlantics Revisited: Essays Honouring Ian K. Steele* ed. Nancy Rhoden (Montreal, Qc., and Kingston, Ont.: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007), 252.

² For a detailed discussion of the fabric, see Cory Wilmott, "From Stroud to Strouds: The Hidden History of a British Fur Trade Textile" *Textile History* 36 (2005): 197-200.

³ Philip Livingston to 'Gentlemen,' June 18, 1735, Ludlow Papers, AIHA.

Before being recalled to England in 1719, Governor Hunter placed a garrison at Saratoga, and named Isabelle Montour as its interpreter.⁴ If the purpose of garrisoning Saratoga and placing Montour there was to stop the trade, it was a dismal failure. In February 1721, Philip Livingston wrote his father

there can hardly [a] law be made to bridle the people of these parts in matter of trade with ye Indians unless every person is oblidge to purge himself for oath for at this unseasonable time of ye year the Sherif is not able to go to Saraghtogue neither can he get any man to perform his office for him, they can send what Strouds they please.”⁵

A frustrated English official corroborated this in 1722: “I find notwithstanding an Act of Assembly prohibiting the Trade to Canada. . . that Trade was largely carried on from Seraghtoga [Saratoga] & Woodenfort about 40 Miles from Albany in the Road to Canada & that the Officer posted there with a Detachment of the Indept Company was expected to be concerned in the same.”⁶ She may have been present but disinclined to stifle the trade.

Hunter's replacement as governor, William Burnet, also sought to tighten enforcement. He posted soldiers at “Mount Burnet” on the eastern bank of the Hudson just north of the Batten Kill. On the 1st of October 1724, Sgt. Charles Buckley and Lieut. Edmund Blood were hunting along Fish Creek when they happened upon a party of 20 to 30 Mohawks. To their surprise, from one of the Natives' tents emerged Pieter Schuyler's nephew Nicholas and Jacob Wendell. A parcel of 58 strouds were sitting nearby. The two officers ordered the party to remain where they were and not to disturb the goods. When Schuyler and Wendell spoke to the Mohawks in Mohawk, Buckley and Blood marked the strouds as King's property, repeated their admonitions, and left to seek reinforcements. Of course, when they returned, Schuyler, Wendell, and the Mohawks were nowhere to be found. Nor were the goods, which belonged to Wendell's father and were being transported from Schenectady to Canada. Affidavits were sworn, but no prosecution appears to have taken place. Pieter Schuyler had died in early 1724, but the clout of the family remained intact. Three years later, in exchange for any

⁴ Preston, *Colonial Saratoga*, 40.

⁵ Philip Livingston to John Livingston, February 20, 1721, reel 4, Livingston Family Papers, General Correspondence 1719-1728, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, NY; Norton, *Fur Trade*, 139.

⁶ Wraxall, *Abridgment*, 141; The absence of documentary evidence that Montour ever took up her post at Saratoga has led Parmenter to speculate she never actually took up the post. When Montour reappears in the documentary record, she was in Pennsylvania, not New York. She did, however, had a wide network of family connections in the St. Lawrence Valley. Parmenter, “Madame Montour: Cultural Broker on the Eighteenth-Century Frontiers of New York and Pennsylvania” *The Human Tradition in Colonial America* ed. Ian K. Steele and Rhoden (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 1999), 141-59; Sivertsen, *Turtles*, 104-8.

charges being dismissed, they agreed to pay a fine of £200 that would be applied to retiring the debt for constructing the Fort Oswego trading house.⁷

As the Laurentian Mohawks increased their involvement in the carrying trade, so too did their salience at Saratoga. When the Albany Commissioners in 1722 wished to admonish a Kahnawake warrior who had been fighting in Virginia contrary to League commitments, they had to send a messenger to Saratoga to find him. They wanted to remind him that the Five Nations Council “Included the Indians of your Castle of Cacknawage as a bransh of themselves.”⁸ Three years later, some Indians from the recently established “Scawinnadie” (Kanehsatake) mission on Montreal island kidnapped an English soldier named Williams near Mount Burnet and killed him.⁹ The Laurentian Native communities saw this unfortunate event as their responsibility, and Rondax (Algonquin), Kahnawake, and Kanehsatake sachems went down to Albany “to wype off the Tears (after their manner) of those who are in mourning for the man who some of their vilest people have killed at Saraghtoge.”¹⁰

The year 1727 saw a serious bid to establish a year-round Kahnawake colony at Saratoga. An influential but discontented Kahnawake chief named Schonondo indicated that he wished to settle “Somewere at Saragtoqe with Eight men with their famyls if he can be Employed with lands.” Echoing the talk of decades past, he indicated that “a great many Indians would Come to Live there if there be land & a Minister.” The Commissioners responded favorably, even noting that there were lands to be distributed to them “within the bounds of Saratoga.” At a subsequent meeting with Schonondo they promised him “a fitt peice of land between still water & Saragtoque,” as well as provisions, for the sixty-odd people in his party. Schonondo left the meeting with a blanket, four pounds of gunpowder, twenty pounds of shot and lead, a keg of rum, a skipple of corn, and a coat and shirt for himself and a son.¹¹ Precisely what came of this plan is not known. In October, an Asikantskook (Odanak) messenger inquired with the Albany Commissioners about exchanging deerskins for “Necessaries” at Saratoga at Albany prices. He indicated that his people were presently hunting “at the End of the wood Creek & to the eastwd. of the Drowned lands [the Sacandaga River],” but that travel all the way down to Albany was hard on the older ones. The commissioners demurred, citing the cost of transporting goods to Saratoga, but encouraged the younger ones to carry their goods to Albany, where “goods are much Cheaper then Ever they had been.”¹²

⁷ MACIA, Oct. 3-10, 1724, I:102-103a; George Schuyler, *Colonial New York: Philip Schuyler and His Family* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1885), 2:314-15.

⁸ MACIA Jan. 17, 1722/3, I:7-7a.

⁹ MACIA, Aug. 12, 1725, I:141.

¹⁰ MACIA, Sept 28, 1725, I:151a-152.

¹¹ MACIA, Feb. 6, 1727, I:211.

¹² MACIA, Oct. 6, 1727, I:205-205a, MACIA, Aug. 3, 1727, I:195a

The Kahnawakes continued to trade along the corridor and resist any hindrance, be it French or English. In the summer of 1740, the Albany Commissioners presented a mourning gift to some Kahnawake sachems to condole them on the death of Casagichte, “one of their Sachims who was drowned last Spring above Saraghtoge.”¹³ French authorities continued to fret over the volume of trade between Montreal and Albany, which was orchestrated from a store at Kahnawake operated by a pair of French sisters named Desauniers and surreptitiously supported by the missionaries there. Indeed, much of the trade was conducted by women; the governor of New France reported that “the Squaws who visited Montreal carried away Beaver in their baskets.”¹⁴

Colonial Expansion In Northern New York *Lakes Ontario and Champlain*

Schonondo's interest in settling Mohawks at Saratoga was likely related to concerns he had earlier expressed about allowing the English to establish a trading post at Oswego. The English had done so in 1724 in concert with Albany and Schenectady merchants. The League had permitted it in hopes of improving trade, which was threatened by increased French activity at Niagara. The post was upgraded to a fort in 1727. Schonondo warned that “the English had built in the Moaks Country above Saraghtoge, and that all the land in the Moaks Country was gone & that the Intention of the English was to Deprive ym. Of all their Lands & that they Should Consider in what a Miserable Codition [sic] they May be brought to.”¹⁵ The removal of the locus of the English trade away from the Longhouse's eastern door to a smokehole in the roof altered the economic and strategic landscape much as the Mohawks' settlement of Kahnawake had. The Mohawks now had English forts on two sides. They had viewed large-scale European settlement of their land as a distant threat, but it now drew closer—and rapidly. Ominously, the consumption of alcohol in eastern Iroquoia increased with the creation of the post and fort at Oswego as well.¹⁶

¹³ Jean Lunn, “The Illegal Fur Trade Out of New France, 1713-60” *Report of the Annual Meeting/Rapports annuels de la Société historique du Canada*, 61-76; MACIA, July 23, 1740, II:187a.

¹⁴ Eugene Tesdahl, “The Price of Empire: Smuggling Between New York and New France, 1700-1754,” (PhD diss.: University of Colorado—Boulder, 2012), ; Lunn, “Illegal,” 71-74; Mémoire sur le Domaine d'Occident en Canada, [1741], Col C11A 66, f.171-202, 22761; Beauharnois and Hocquart to the Minister, Sept. 13, 1742, Colonel C11A 77, f. 19-20v., 24827; Beauharnois to Minister, Colonel C11A 79, f. 167-78v, 24957; same to same, Oct. 11, 1744, 25054, all ANOM; NYCD 9:1071.

¹⁵ MACIA, Aug. 3, 1727, I:195A.

¹⁶ MACIA Mar. 14, 1728 I:213a-14, Feb. 22, 1729, I:281; Parmenter, “Onenwahatirighsi,” 253.

The upper Hudson

During the 1730s, peace between the European powers led them to both intensify attempts to acquire lands in the Hudson-Champlain corridor and Mohawk Valley.¹⁷ Possibly conflating the Saratoga patent and the Dellius grant, French officials believed New York had given the entire area around Lake Champlain to Schuyler and his offspring.¹⁸ To counter this imagined grant, the French asserted their own claim to Lake Champlain and built a fort at Pointe-à-la-Chevelure in 1731. In doing so, however, they recognized lands south of Crown Point as the hunting ground of the Mohawks and pledged that “no French should settle there.”¹⁹

One John Henry Lydius promptly sprang into action. In his late twenties, Lydius was the son of the dominie who had replaced Dellius. Although orphaned at the age of ten, Lydius retained his father's connections with the Mohawks. He had been adopted by the Turtle clan and spoke Mohawk fluently.²⁰ He and some Mohawk allies claimed that he had performed some missionary work among them as a young man—but his passion clearly lay in commerce. By 1725, Lydius had taken up residence in Montreal, where he engaged in trade and married a Michilimackinac-born métis niece of Isabelle Montour. This extended his trade contacts westward, but also engendered hostility on the part of other Montreal traders, who in 1730 succeeded in getting him arrested and sent to France. Upon his release, he prudently did not return to Canada, but instead went via Holland to Albany, where he settled with his wife. Now, in early 1732, he successfully lobbied the League Mohawks for two very large tracts of land. Lydius sought to resurrect part of Dellius' claim in his own name. For the deed, Lydius secured the marks of League Mohawks, primarily from the Turtle clan.²¹ The cession included the falls on the Hudson near Lake George and followed Otter Creek into present-day Vermont. In exchange for releasing them from trading debts, he persuaded at least two Kahnawakes to petition the governor of Massachusetts to recognize the cession.²² The second tract ceded to Lydius by the Mohawks ran between Wood Creek and the Hudson, and stretched south along the river. If Lydius' claim did not reach all the way

¹⁷ Parmenter, “Onenwahatirighsi,” 253; Ruth V. Higgins, *Expansion in New York with Especial Reference to the Eighteenth Century* (Columbus: The Ohio State University, 1931), 46, 67; Edith M. Fox, *Land Speculation in the Mohawk Country* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1949), 12-15; Sivertsen, *Turtles*, 122-23.

¹⁸ NYCD 9:1022-23.

¹⁹ Joseph-André Senécal, “The Construction and Dismantling of Fort Pointe-à-la-Chevelure (Chimney Point, West Addison, Vermont), 1731-1735,” *Vermont History* 84 (2016): 119; La Corne St-Luc, Oct. 11, 1730. COL C11A 53/fol.362-363v, 17403, ANOM; NYCD 6:152.

²⁰ Sivertsen, *Turtles*, 53-6; Tesdahl, “Price of Empire,” 69.

²¹ Tesdahl, “Price of Empire,” 99-101.

²² Coolidge, *French Occupation of the Champlain Valley*, 82-84; “Indian Deed to John H. Lydius, Feb. 1, 1732,” *Collections of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1918* (New York: New-York Historical Society, 1919), 52-54; Herbert Williams Denio, *Massachusetts Land Grants in Vermont* (Cambridge, Mass.: John Wilson and Son, 1920), 52-58.

down to the Saratoga Patent and the Batten Kill, it did not stop far short. And as with many land transactions, the motivations of the Indigenous participants are obscure. They were certainly still making use of the area. With respect to the Otter Creek-Hudson cession, one Abenaki reported that he and two others of his nation had been hunting in the area of Little Fall (present-day Whitehall) and indicated that Indigenous “hunters. . . were somewhat numerous around the Little Fall and Lake St-Sacrement [Lake George].”²³ Lydius accordingly established a fortified trading post and sawmill at the Wood Creek portage, in present-day Fort Edward, which became known as “Fort Lydius.” Although he was doubtless looking forward to the day when large numbers of colonial settlers wanted to occupy these tracts, in the meantime he could satisfy himself with the profits that would accrue from his strategic location near hunting grounds and between Montreal and Albany. Nevertheless, the fortifications reflected the fact that his establishment may have aroused the ire of some, including merchants and officials in Albany and Montreal, not to mention Indigenous communities.

About ten miles south of Fort Lydius, the Natives also observed the rapid growth of a substantial European-African labor camp at Saratoga developed by Philip Schuyler on behalf of his aging and absent father, Johannes.²⁴ Many Schaghticokes moved away as settlers increased. Livestock killings were a perennial signal of Indigenous-settler strife, as the former kept no livestock and resented the colonists’ animals that sometimes damaged their crops but which they were not allowed to kill. There was a spate of violence against animals between Saratoga and Niskayuna in 1720.²⁵ In the summer of 1723, when hostilities between New England and Natives (particularly Kahnawakes and Abenakis) increased as part of Grey Lock’s War, some warriors went to Schaghticoke to recruit assistance. Schaghticoke was vacant but they found some of the community at Halfmoon. The Schaghticokes as a whole declined to join them against the New Englanders. Some Schaghticokes committed “Robberies” at Saratoga as a farewell gesture of defiance and contempt before withdrawing permanently to Odanak. The Schaghticokes who remained apologized to the governor but also explained that “we have no but little Land to plant on and that this is a very barren soil. . . and the Inhabitants there do anoy us in our quiet Possession of yt Land.” They were considering moving elsewhere along the Hoosic or upper Hudson. They also complained that some Schaghticokes hunting in New England had been taken to Boston and unjustly

²³ NYCD 9:1019.

²⁴ This was Philip Schuyler (1695-1745). The Revolutionary War general (1733-1804) was his nephew and inherited this estate.

²⁵ NYCD 5:566, 782; Hinderaker, *Two Hendricks*, 154-55; Virginia DeJohn Anderson, *Creatures of Empire: How Domestic Animals Transformed Early America* (New York: Oxford, 2004).

imprisoned. Only the fortuitous presence in Boston of Jacob Wendell—the trader who had been caught transporting strouds near Saratoga—had resolved the matter.²⁶

Back at Saratoga, the Schuylers cleared the surrounding forest and milled the trees to produce planks and staves and other products for local use or sale downriver. Fields were planted with buckwheat, wheat, and corn. Barns and stables were built for livestock. There was a blacksmith's shop and a gristmill. Their Saratoga estate had several counterparts in the Mohawk Valley, but was more isolated from the rest. Although the Schuylers rented out lands and hired free laborers and artisans, most of the labor was done by enslaved Africans, who constituted more than half the settlement's population.²⁷

The use of enslaved African labor was common in the Hudson Valley—slaves accounted for about fifteen percent of the population—and the Schuylers were deeply involved in bringing them there. Arent Schuyler had moved to Bergen County, New Jersey, where he discovered copper ore on his property. He imported slaves to work the property and ploughed his profits into co-ownership of a slave ship, the *Catherine*, built in 1730. In 1733, the *Catherine* set out from Loango (Congo) with 257 slaves. Twenty-seven died en route, 130 disembarked at Perth Amboy, and 100 at New York. The fact that Pieter Schuyler was co-owner of the ship makes it highly likely that some of this hundred men, women, and children were brought to Saratoga.²⁸

With the French active at Crown Point, the Albany Commissioners, including Myndert Schuyler (Pieter's cousin), called for the construction of a fortification at Saratoga for "the Preservation of our now naked Countrey People, as well as be a means to Draw and keep the Indians Firm to the British Interest and Encourage them to Settle."²⁹ While Natives remained present to trade, the resident Schaghticoke population continued to move away. This was partly attributable to interest in a new Indigenous community along the Housatonic at Stockbridge, Massachusetts.³⁰ There, the Schaghticoke joined other Mohicans, Wappingers, and other Algonquian peoples. Massachusetts authorities made public professions of support for a Native settlement under missionary auspices, so the Natives had a reasonable expectation of protection from future encroachments—more, at least, than they had enjoyed at Schaghticoke. Both the League Mohawks and Kahnawakes took an interest in this new community

²⁶ MACIA, Nov. 22, 1723, I:66-66a; NYCD 5:722-23.

²⁷ Corbett, *Clash of Cultures*, 119.

²⁸ The voyages are recorded as 16633 and 25318 in the Slave Trade Database, slavevoyages.org. Simeon F. Moss, "The Persistence of Slavery and Involuntary Servitude in a Free State (1685-1866)," *Journal of Negro History* 35:289-314 (1950): 293. The survival rate of the 1733 voyage was an improvement over the *Catherine's* 1731 voyage from Africa to Perth Amboy, in which 22 of the 152 who had departed Africa did not survive. These rates were within the normal range for the time.

²⁹ MACIA, Aug. 7, 1732, I:362.

³⁰ Starna, *Homeland*, 179-83.

and monitored its creation. The League Mohawks did so as part of their Eastern Door responsibilities as well as their Covenant Chain prerogative to maintain a measure of influence over the Algonquians on the east side of the Hudson.³¹ They also wanted to keep an eye on the English. Sachem Hendrick Theyanouguin of Canajoharie took a personal interest. His father was Mohican. He had spent considerable time in Massachusetts since his youth. The Kahnawakes, for their part, had become implicated in Algonquian affairs, particularly those of the Abenakis, through their mutual involvement with Jesuit missions on the St. Lawrence. Kahnawake ties to New England had also increased during Queen Anne's War, when they had taken captives from the region. While most of these individuals returned to English society, some of those who had been adopted used the linguistic and cultural knowledge they had acquired to become traders or missionaries. Some were involved in this new mission effort. However, colonial authorities did not usually give without first taking, and this was no exception. At the 1735 conference that laid the groundwork for the Stockbridge mission town, Schaghticokes with ancestral claims in the area signed deeds relinquishing lands in the Connecticut Valley.

Brushback

At the same time that Abenakis, Schaghticokes, and Mohicans were consolidating their numbers in mission villages during the 1720s and 30s, League Mohawks were growing increasingly unhappy as the English colonial presence expanded in the Mohawk and Hudson Valleys. Tensions were exacerbated by several land swindles. Although a treaty with the English was held at Albany in 1742 at which the Haudenosaunee reaffirmed their neutrality, the Mohawks were considering abandoning it and even enlisting their Algonquian neighbors to fight against the English.³² Their shared grievances became a common denominator.³³ The Mohawks also talked of moving north to join their Kahnawake kin, a strategy that portended serious future conflict since it was unlikely they planned to abandon their ancestral homeland permanently. In January 1745, Tiononderoge was evacuated amidst reports that an army of settlers was coming "to Cut them All in Pieces."³⁴ It was a false alarm, but the episode highlighted the distrust they felt toward the English. When gunpowder suddenly became scarce in Iroquoia later in the year, rumors spread that an all-out English invasion of the Longhouse was in the offing.³⁵

³¹ Midtrød, *Memory*, 137-40.

³² Parmenter, "Onenwahatirighsi," 257; Midtrød, *Memory*, 138.

³³ Brooks, *The Common Pot*, 39-46.

³⁴ Quoted in Hinderaker, *Two Hendricks*, 169.

³⁵ MACIA, Mar. 1746, II:343-343a.

When conflict broke out between Britain and France again in King George's War, the Kahnawakes made a peaceful overture to the Albany Commissioners that was, in their view, never requited.³⁶ They then took the opportunity to deliver a massive brushback to settlement along the Hudson-Champlain corridor, and they appear to have had the tacit approbation of their League kin. In September 1745, the Albany Commissioners barred two Kahnawakes from trading beaver pelts at Albany in deference to New Englanders' anger over the killing of some settlers in New England by Orondaxes (Algonquins) during the summer (as well as to defuse New Englanders' chronic suspicions that self-interested Albany traders overlooked Native threats). The minutes of the Indian Commissioners recorded that the pair of Kahnawakes "took it Very much Amis that they were not Allowed to trade here as usual."³⁷ They resisted being labelled guilty by association, even if they had come down from the St. Lawrence Valley with the perpetrators before parting ways.

The Kahnawakes and Kanehsatakes opted to openly violate the neutrality policy. Although they would later claim they had been responding to irresistible French pressure to go on the offensive following the fall of Louisburg, the extent of their participation and the discretion they exercised suggests otherwise. They likely saw the colonial war as an opportunity to reset power relations in the corridor. A war would inhibit trade, but it would also limit European settlement. Schonondo's earlier plans to settle Saratoga offer a likely motive: here was an opportunity to turn the clock back to the 1720s.

In the fall of 1745, France organized 500 to 600 Natives and colonists to besiege the English colonies. The Natives accounted for roughly half the force, and included Kahnawakes, Kanehsatakes (Mohawks and Nipissings), Hurons (from Lorette), and Abenakis. Upon setting forth, the Natives insisted to the commander, Paul Marin de la Malgue, that they pursue a different itinerary and a different target. This one steered clear of some hostile 'Loups' ('Wolves,' i.e., Mohicans) and led to the "Wolf River," likely an Algonquian reference that identified the Hudson with the Mohican people.³⁸ The proposal had been advanced by some Missisquoi Abenakis, and they and the other Natives were "obstinate" in their agreement.³⁹ According to Electa Jones, the nineteenth-century historian who made ample use of Mohican informants, this avoidance of the Stockbridge was part of the reason

³⁶ MACIA, June 13, 1744, II:275; D. Peter MacLeod, *The Canadian Iroquois and the Seven Years War* (Toronto, Ont.: Dundurn, 1996), 62.

³⁷ MACIA, Sept. 18, 1745, III:97; see also Wraxall, *Abridgment*, 239; NYCD 6:296.

³⁸ 'Journal de la campagne de Sarastaugue,' box 48, i. 73, 79, PSP, NYPL. Among those who attacked Saratoga were chief sachems Ondachsago, Skonondo, Tegcongachgwe MACIA, Apr. 20, 1746, II:363-363a; May 6, 1746, II:371a.

³⁹ 'Journal de la campagne de Sarastaugue,' 57, 59.

the Stockbridge Indians were felt and acknowledged to be a great protection to this and neighboring towns. Stockbridge lay in the direct route, and it was constantly feared that the French and Indians would be before them; but the tide divided, and passed to the east and west of us, the *hostile* not daring to encounter the *friendly* Indians.⁴⁰

An anonymous officer who kept a journal of the campaign acknowledged that the Indigenous leaders were in control, as “having only them to guide us, we found ourselves under the stern necessity of doing as they wished.”⁴¹ Marin was no green commander unfamiliar with Indigenous allies. His previous command had been in Wisconsin, where he had a productive relationship with the Sioux, Sac, and Fox locals—indeed, too productive perhaps: some accused him of serving his own financial interests rather than those of France.⁴² He understood the limitations of his authority. This was now a hybrid Indigenous-French army in which the former predominated. Merchant and military officer La Corne St-Luc was also present on this expedition. He would bring Indigenous warriors to fight in the upper Hudson on multiple occasions prior to—and including—1777.

On November 27 they reached Lydius' trading fort,⁴³ where his 12-year-old son and a “hired man” (likely a slave) were captured. A Schaghticoke, Cockensenet, was killed and two others escaped.⁴⁴ The trader and the rest of his family were in Albany. Lydius later reported that not only had his house been destroyed (and his alcohol drunk), but “there was not as much as A fowl Alive even my Apple trees the Enemy hath destroyed.”⁴⁵ The Natives continued to direct matters as they approached Saratoga. Marin had ordered that the assault wait for daybreak, but they “rushed to the attack, fired a gun and uttered their death yells,” according to the anonymous French officer's journal. He continued, “The Abenakis, who until then had awaited the signal, took upon themselves to make the attack and from that time it was not possible to exercise any control.” A dispute soon arose between two Frenchmen and a Native warrior over an

⁴⁰ Electa F. Jones, *Stockbridge, Past and Present, or, Records of an Old Mission Station* (Springfield, Mass.: Samuel Bowles & Co., 1854), 81.

⁴¹ ‘Journal de la campagne de Sarastaugue,’ 61.

⁴² W. J. Eccles, “Marin de la Malgue, Paul,” *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 3, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–. Accessed October 13, 2022. http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/marin_de_la_malgue_paul_3E.html.

⁴³ *Boston News-Letter*, Dec. 6, 1745.

⁴⁴ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Dec. 24, 1745. According to this account, the reason why the party diverted to the Hudson was snow; their original target was Deerfield. However, the informants (two Schaghticoques) were not present when that decision had been taken. J. Allen and John Foster to Roger Wolcott[?], Nov. 23, 1745, Law Papers, *Collections of the Connecticut Historical Society* 13 (1911): 117-18.

⁴⁵ ‘Journal de la campagne de Sarastaugue,’ 85; John Stoddard to [Roger Wolcott?], Law Papers, *Collections of the Connecticut Historical Society* 13 (1911): 115-17.

African seized at a mill. The next target was a blacksmith shop, “where a native unfortunately killed a child twelve or fourteen years old.”⁴⁶ The taking of captives and the torching of the settlement—including its unoccupied fort and barns full of livestock—was completed by mid-morning. The governor later reported that thirty had been killed and sixty carried off. The following February, an Albanian wrote, “I suppose you have heard Saratoga was destroyed 101 persons were killed and taken prisoners only 31 Escaped.” Enough time had passed for some fairly accurate numbers to circulate, but not enough to know the fates of the unfortunate.⁴⁷

The Natives' familiarity with Saratoga informed their work; the French chronicler wrote that “the Indians told us [Schuyler's brick home] was a sort of guard house when there were soldiers.” But there had been no soldiers present. Despite his own ill health, Philip Schuyler confronted a French officer who entered his home. The two men were personally acquainted, which is strongly suggestive of the existence of their clandestine trade links. Although the Frenchman offered him quarter, Schuyler responded with a volley of insults and shot and was fired upon in turn.⁴⁸ The Natives probably did not anticipate this death, but the lack of warning from them before the attack and its bloody outcome doubtless sent a shiver up the spine of every living Schuyler. Relations with the family had deteriorated greatly in the preceding decades, as their land acquisition and development activities intensified.

Most of the population surrendered peaceably. The most important captive, as it would turn out, was a boy of about five. He was the son of an Abenaki woman from Odanak and an enslaved man who reportedly belonged to a French merchant or official. The boy may even have been the subject of the dispute at the mill at the beginning of the attack; according to 19th-century historian Franklin Hough, whose information came from a Cook descendant as well as the Akwesasne Mohawk minister Eleazer Williams, “a French officer seized the boy, and would claim him as his property, but his mother incessantly cried out “uh-ni-ho-wa!,” that is, “he is my child.” No, no said the officer, he is a negro, and he is mine.” The mother convinced at least one Native war captain to intercede on her behalf and, once again, the French had to bend to Indigenous preference. The mother and her boy relocated to Kahnawake, where he became known as Louis Couc (Cook) by the French and Atiatoharongwen by the Mohawks. The fate of his father is unclear; if he indeed belonged to a Frenchman, he is not likely to have been present during the attack. Both the French and Natives clearly sought to take enslaved people to keep or to sell in Montreal's robust slave market, but that may not have saved him. Lydius reported finding two white scalps and a black one, as well as some charred bones.

⁴⁶ ‘Journal de la campagne de Sarastaugue,’ 97, 99.

⁴⁷ James Stevenson to unidentified correspondent, Feb. 6, 1746, Singles MS-586, AIHA; NYCD 6:306.

⁴⁸ ‘Journal de la campagne de Sarastaugue,’ 101, 99.



Fig. 4. Kahnawake prisoner halter, 1746.

Courtesy of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association's Memorial Hall Museum, Deerfield, MA.

In Indigenous terms, the Saratoga raid was a great success. They had gained captives and destroyed the settlement with little risk to themselves. They reported no casualties. Some reports indicated the raiders had carried off plunder, but the Natives would in any case have considered the captives they had taken as the most valuable—and portable—acquisition. For the journaling French officer, the raid was cause for pride, but he expressed a touch of disappointment at the lack of resistance. “Our achievement,” he wrote, “would have been much more widely known had the merchants of Saratoga not left their country houses and gone to spend the winter at Orange.”⁴⁹

Reluctant Allies

In the wake of the attack, the Albany Commissioners immediately informed the governor that “the whole Country lyes naked and exposed to the Enemy and all their Settlements and Effects lyable to be destroyed every Moment.” The settler inhabitants of Schaghticoke were “now the Northernmost Settlement of this Country.” They hoped to make a stand by building two small forts, but they would need reinforcement.⁵⁰ Albany officials also sent a request to the principal Haudenosaunee villages as far west as the Cayugas, as well as River Indian communities, that each nation send them ten men to help defend the province.⁵¹ Thirteen Schaghticoques presented themselves for service on December 20, but Albanians waited in vain for any warriors to come down the Mohawk River.⁵² After a week had passed, Nicholas Schuyler traveled to the Mohawk

⁴⁹ ‘Journal de la campagne de Sarastaugue,’ 105, 107.

⁵⁰ MACIA, Dec. 14, 1745, II:314a-15.

⁵¹ MACIA, Dec. 16, 1745, II:315-16.

⁵² MACIA, Dec. 20, 1745, II:316a-17.

castles to inquire why. Apparently discussions spanning Oswego, Onondaga, and the Seneca country had revealed a consensus that they would refuse both English and French requests for military assistance. They would “keep upon their Guard within their own Castles but would not come down. Each People must defend themselves as well as they can.” Those who had indicated a willingness to join the English had done so only on their personal behalf and in exchange for money.⁵³ The Oneidas later elaborated on their reluctance to assist the English by noting, “The french Indians and the Indians of the Six Nations are sprung of one blood. They have made Alliances & Marriages with each other One hath his father another his Uncle, another his Son, another his Brother and all of them some Relation or another living at Cachnawage so that they could not go to War against one another.”⁵⁴ As the Commissioners informed the Governor in early January, “without their Assistance it is Impossible to gett the Fort built at Saratoge.”⁵⁵

Hendrick Theyanoguin appeared in Albany with several Mohawk sachems and warriors to condole Philip Schuyler, but not until January 6. In referring to Schuyler as “the great Man the Patroon,” Hendrick alluded to Schuyler’s Dutch ancestry. However, this was no point of honor; Hendrick had previously identified the “Albany People”—i.e., the Dutch—as the source of his people’s problems. Nevertheless, he indicated he was there to polish the chain, and offer some scouts as token assistance.⁵⁶ They went to Saratoga under Nicholas Schuyler, with whom, it was reported, they “agree[d] extreamly well.”⁵⁷ Philipus Schuyler, whose “House [at Schuyler Flatts] is now our frontier” also had a good relationship with Mohicans, who helped form a small scouting party to assist in the defense of the settlements. The Commissioners asked the governor to make him a field officer because “it wou’d be very agreeable to the Indians.”⁵⁸

However, the Mohawks’ request that the scouts not venture beyond the compass of a day’s travel spoke to their desire to keep a safe distance from their Laurentian counterparts. Another hint of the sour state of relations was the Mohawk request “that we may go hand in hand as in former Times, not that the white People look on themselves as entirely our Masters and despise Us.”⁵⁹ By the end of February the League Mohawks had withdrawn most of their warriors from service to the English, as “they declared they would not fight with [i.e., against] the Cachnawage Indians,” leaving only

⁵³ MACIA, Dec. 30, 1745, II:320-21.

⁵⁴ MACIA, Feb. 25, 1746, II:339a-340.

⁵⁵ MACIA, Jan. 4, 1746, II:322; Jan. 24, 1746, 331a.

⁵⁶ MACIA, II:324a. Hendrick Theyanoguin has often been conflated with Hendrick Tej Snow, “Searching for Hendrick: Correction of a Historic Conflation” *New York History* 88 (2007): 229–53.

⁵⁷ MACIA, Jan. 24, 1746, II:332.

⁵⁸ MACIA, May 10-12, 1746, II:375[a]-377a; June 19, 1746, II:385. Philipus Schuyler (1696-1758) was known as ‘Colonel’ but this does not appear to have held a formal military rank.

⁵⁹ MACIA, Jan. 6, 1746, II:326-27. The Commissioners also noted that “Our Governour has ordered a Fort to be built at Saratoge for a [Shift] for this Winter because the foundations of the old Block Houses yet remain.”

River Indians at Saratoga.⁶⁰ In addition, the rewards of service had apparently not been satisfactory to the Mohawks. They were being paid the same wages as during peacetime—three shillings per day—in spite of the fact that now the risk was higher, as were prices for goods. Their withdrawal also reflected indignation over one of their number being fined 18 shillings for having killed a hog.⁶¹ If they were not afforded the respect they felt they deserved for undertaking dangerous work, the security of settlers along the Hoosic and Hudson was not their business.

The Mohawks' concern that they would encounter warriors from the Laurentian mission communities was real. As soon as spring arrived, a party of 14 Kanehsatakes raided the environs of Albany, taking prisoners and scalps, while a party of equal size from Kahnawake, led by Ontassago, "son of the grand Chief of that village," scouted around Saratoga. Small parties continued to leave Montreal for that purpose through the spring, with Abenaki and Nipissing parties also sent out against Albany and Schenectady. These parties usually were of a single nation.⁶²

One of Schuyler's Native scouts was taken prisoner by a French and Native party. He was interrogated and released, albeit with apologies because "they intended no hurt to any Indian."⁶³ They did, however, demoralize civilians, disrupt food production, and hamper routine military activities along the upper Hudson, foreshadowing 1777. In April, the Albany Commissioners reported the killing of Harmen van Veghten near Schaghticoke to the governor thus:

A few People who were together in a Little fort. . .heard two musket Shott, but did not think it an Enemy[.] His Negroe Boy who was at some Distance plowing on his Land heard two Indian Shouts, He unyoked the Horses from the Plough came home and found his Master Dead He was shott betwixt his Shoulders with a Ball which came out at his Breast he had two Stabs one on Each Side of his Breast, Two Cutts on his forehead with a Hatchett and his Scalp taken off And they had sprinkled his Blood on the Gavel End of his House.⁶⁴

In May, the *New-York Gazette* published a report originating in Albany that

three Men belonging to the Garrison of Saraghtoga, were fishing near that Fort, they were surprised by a Party of Indians, who kill'd one of

⁶⁰ MACIA, Feb. 28, 1746, II:341a.

⁶¹ MACIA, Mar. 22, 1746, II:346-348.

⁶² NYCD 10:32-33

⁶³ MACIA, Mar. n.d., 1746, II:344.

⁶⁴ MACIA, Apr. 22, 1746, II:364a-365; Wraxall, *Abridgment*, 246.

them...and took another of them Prisoner...while the third made his Escape... So daring and insolent are those People as to come daily in Sight of the Settlements, and yet none of them are either kill'd or taken.⁶⁵

A week later, the Albany author of a letter printed in the same newspaper amplified the panic but warned against letting anti-Native sentiment get out of hand: "I used to be of the Opinion of many of you, and say, D—mn 'em, kill 'em, and such like; but Experience has taught me [of] ...the dreadful Consequences of being concerned in an Indian War, and no Indians to assist you."⁶⁶ Two days later, the General Assembly of New York appropriated funds for "450 Men of the militia of this Colony, and 50 Indians, to be posted on the Northern Frontier."⁶⁷

In early summer, a scouting party of seven Schaghticokes that had been at Saratoga, led by Sohquans, fell in with a number of Laurentian warriors, including Kahnawake Thomas Wildman, somewhere near Wood Creek. The Laurentians took the colonial officer captive but allowed the Schaghticokes to keep their weapons and depart. However, the two parties traded barbs. Tensions were running high. When the same Schaghticoke party, joined by another warrior who had been at Saratoga, encountered a Kahnawake warrior twenty miles north of Albany, they demanded he halt. He did not, and they opened fire, killing him. They took his scalp and redeemed it for twenty-five Spanish dollars per the bounty offered by the New York Assembly. For warriors on both sides of the conflict, patience with those on the other was growing thin. Their patience with their European allies had limits, too. A League Mohawk party complained that actionable intelligence they brought to the commander at Saratoga about the whereabouts of the enemy had been allowed to expire due to the weakness of the garrison.⁶⁸

In June, the British had recruited the services of four Mohawks as spies: Moses, Seth, Killian, and an unidentified fourth. Interestingly, the three identified Mohawks had sold land to Lydius and were now being paid by a relatively new arrival in the Mohawk Valley, William Johnson. Since he had taken up residence in the Mohawk Valley in 1738 to attend to the landholdings of his uncle, Admiral Sir Peter Warren, Johnson had prospered greatly. He had one foot in the land business and another in the fur trade. He had won Hendrick's favor in large part because he represented a non-Dutch conduit to the New York and English governments.⁶⁹ Johnson's very conviviality

⁶⁵ *New-York Gazette*, May 26, 1746.

⁶⁶ *New-York Gazette*, June 2, 1746.

⁶⁷ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 19, 1746.

⁶⁸ MACIA, July 4-19, 1746, II:392a-395. Aaron (Mohawk) went to Kanehsatake and Kahnawake; while traveling between the two, he met some Orondax [Algonquin] Indians who had obtained two scalps from "Mahikanders" who had taken them at Greenbush. These may have been Schaghticokes.

⁶⁹ Hinderaker, *Two Hendricks*, 176.

and openness to Mohawk culture also drew a contrast with the Dutch, including the Schuylers.

Johnson steadily increased the number of Indigenous warriors he could field, primarily because of the expense he was personally willing to bear.⁷⁰ The League Mohawks who were supporting the English brought intelligence from the field but limited their involvement. At the end of July, a party of unidentified Indian scouts working for Johnson “Went as far as Collo. Schuyler’s House [at the Flatts], And from thence...thro' the Woods to the fly or meadow about Six Miles on this Side Saratogue where they saw Tracts as they Judge of the Enemy.” Near the Carrying Place, smoke from their fire disclosed their location to the party of 30 French-allied Natives they had been tracking. Outnumbered, they withdrew, but on their way back to Albany they detected eight Indians skulking around Halfmoon.⁷¹ In August, seven Mohawks returned from a scout to Crown Point with a report that the French were assembling an army there, and the rebuilt fort at Saratoga was their target. Ambivalence, however, had prevailed over aggression. When asked why they had no captives or scalps they answered

Because the Sachims of our Nations will not allow us to do it. They told us to kill French if we could but order'd us not to molest any Indians till the Six Nations have come to a Resolution about that matter.⁷²

The French Return

The French strike proceeded in August 1746, but it was not against Saratoga. Instead, the target was Fort Massachusetts, about forty miles away. François-Pierre Rigaud de Vaudreuil commanded about 400 Frenchmen, and was accompanied by La Corne St-Luc. His party included about 150 Abenakis, Kahnawakes, and Kanehsatakes, and another 150 from the *pays d'en haut*. The latter contingent was a subset of 520 warriors who had come down to Fort St-Frédéric to help the French launch raids toward Boston, Albany, and Schenectady. These included Menominees, Ojibwes, Potawatomes, Illinois, Pawnees, and even Sioux—a foreshadowing of participation in future wars in the corridor, including as part of the British coalition in 1777. Rigaud captured the lightly-defended fort on August 20, although not without the loss of four Frenchmen, four Kahnawakes, and five warriors of other nations, according to Lydius. The French soldiers, Natives, and captives returned along the Hoosic. According to John Norton, a Puritan minister who was among the captured, on the 23rd they left the

⁷⁰ JP 9:15-31.

⁷¹ MACIA, July 28-Aug. 5, 1746, II:398-400.

⁷² MACIA, Aug. 5, 1746, II:401.

river and turned on to “something of a path, and [had] good traveling for the wilderness, something east of north, about fifteen miles.” They were likely heading north along the east side of the Hudson. Along the way, the Abenakis “were alarmed by discovering the tracts of a scout from Saratoga.” Norton reported it “put them into a considerable ruffle, fearing that there might be an army after them”—but he had no such hope. The next day they crossed “the Sarratago River,” which he described as 20 rods (about 330 feet) wide and shallow. Whether or not this large French-Native party and their captives were detected is unknown, but their retreat to Wood Creek and Crown Point proceeded without impediment or pursuit. Sixty Abenakis detached to deal with any English reinforcements brought in an Englishman, an African, and seven scalps.⁷³ Jean-Baptiste de Montigny (who had served as an officer in the previous year’s raid on Saratoga), two cadets, and 25 Abenakis and Kahnawakes then returned to Saratoga, where they attacked a detachment of 20 men who were carting clay to erect a chimney. The warriors scalped four and took four prisoners.⁷⁴ Schuyler attempted a rescue, but his force was beaten back. According to the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, “had they succeeded in cutting off Captain Schuyler’s Retreat, they would have taken the Fort.”⁷⁵

The English response amounted to a single scalp being taken by a Mohican party outside Fort St. Frederic.⁷⁶ English attempts to involve the Six Nations had been neutralized by French and Laurentian Native diplomacy. When an Odawa party took an Onondaga and Mohawk prisoner, the Mohawk was immediately released and the Onondaga sent home with eight Kanehsatakes and a belt of wampum. When Mohawks were present on the British side, France’s Indigenous allies could be balky. In October 1746, a party of four French officers and 33 Indigenous warriors detected a large supply train en route to Saratoga from Albany. The Natives among them, led by Kanehsatake chief Nautagarouche, resisted the French request that they set an ambush. (The Odawas present were, according to the French, more amenable to the idea.) In the end, two wagons were attacked and one scalp taken.⁷⁷ A party of three Frenchmen and four Abenakis sought prisoners or scalps around Saratoga in the late fall, but the changing season prompted them to return home empty-handed. Assessing English efforts to fortify Saratoga, Lydius expressed frustration that “They have only added two Blockhouses to the Fort of Saratogue” and invoked the Greek fable: “after all the preparations. . .the mountain hath bro’t forth only a mouse.”⁷⁸

⁷³ John Norton, *Narrative of the Captivity and Burning of Fort Massachusetts* ed. Samuel G. Drake (Albany: Joel Munsell, 1870 [1748]), 18-23; NYCD 10:35; Lydius to John Stoddard, Nov. 24, 1746, NYHS. Lydius notes a different number of persons killed than the official report.

⁷⁴ NYCD 10:35.

⁷⁵ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Sept. 18, 1746.

⁷⁶ NYCD 10:35.

⁷⁷ Beauharnois to the Minister, Sept. 15, 1746, COL C11A 85/fol. 190-96, ANOM; NYCD 10:34, 75.

⁷⁸ Lydius to Stoddard, Nov. 24, 1746.

The Albany Commissioners, taking in a report from Hendrick upon his return from an expedition to Canada in November, concluded that they “cannot help thinking by what Hendrick has said and by what we have heard the others did say, That the Six Nations intend not to enter into the War against the french Indians, but the Ind.^{ns} on both Sides will continue their Depredations ag^t the Christ[ians].”⁷⁹ Citing the governor’s and assembly’s lack of confidence in them, the Albany Commissioners resigned in November.

In February, 1747, a mixed French-Native party of 30 attacked a foraging party outside the fort at Saratoga, killing six and capturing four. One of the captives was taken to Montreal but the other three were kept by the Mohawks.⁸⁰ In April, another party was ambushed, with nine killed, nine wounded, and six taken prisoner. This time, however, the British engaged their enemy. An unknown number were killed. The French and Natives abandoned some goods in their camp, which were inventoried by a British officer to document “their lurking unmanly Way of fighting.” He tallied one scalp, 5 kettles, 23 deerskins, 12 blankets, 19 pair of moccasins, 15 knives, 3 looking-glasses, one gun, one pistol, five pounds of powder, four pounds of ball, and bags of meal, bread, chocolate, and paint.⁸¹ In May, a party of teamsters heading from Schaghticoke to Stillwater under escort was attacked and seventeen taken prisoner.⁸²

Johnson improved Britain’s ability to put Indigenous warriors in the field in 1747, but these still amounted to fewer than 100. Those who rallied to his side were primarily his Mohawk neighbors and trading associates. Veteran Pennsylvania Indian agent Conrad Weiser suspected Lydius was playing a role as well. Johnson and Lydius had fallen out, but they had been business partners at the outset of Johnson’s arrival in America. Weiser opined as follows:

Colonel Johnson and Mr. Lidius did not prevail upon the Counsel of the Six Nations to Declare Warr against the French, but only upon some Stragling poor Fellows, to Inlist themselves, and take Service, by taking the Presents, and going to war with the Mohocks.

Weiser thought that Johnson was being manipulated by the Mohawks. He observed that

The Indians. . .make Nothing of our Valour, and think we the English will leave them in the Lurch. At least a ship Load of Goods will not engage

⁷⁹ MACIA, Nov. 27, 1746, II:406.

⁸⁰ NYCD 10:93; *Pennsylvania Journal*, Mar. 10, 1747; *New-York Gazette*, April 13, 1747.

⁸¹ *New-York Gazette*, Apr. 13, 1747. For a different version, see *Boston Evening Post*, Apr. 20, 1747; *Boston News-Letter*, Apr. 23, 1747; *Pennsylvania Journal* Apr. 16, 1747.

⁸² *Boston News-Letter*, May 31, 1747.

them in the warr, If their own Reasons Dont, for they say the English has Goods enough, Let us take the presents, and promise a Great Deal, and Do little, according to the Custom of the white people. . .who have frequently learned them to tell Lies in public treaties, and to the Commissioners and Governors that treated with them. . . .⁸³

However, if Johnson was being played, he was also playing his superiors, Governors Clinton of New York and Shirley of Massachusetts. He did so in part with theatrics. Cadwallader Colden famously recorded that, at a council in 1746, Johnson “dressed himself after the *Indian* Manner, made frequent Dances, according to their Custom when they excite to War, and used all the Means he could think of, at a considerable Expence. . .in order to engage them heartily in the War against *Canada*.”⁸⁴ Weiser viewed the situation philosophically, feeling “sorry that Governour Shirly is Deceived, but it is Like he believes what he wishes to be True, like the rest of our fellow Creatures.”⁸⁵

Another French campaign against Saratoga got underway in June under La Corne St-Luc, with the goal being the capture of the now-repaired and reoccupied fort, called Fort Clinton. There were 125 Canadian soldiers and 78 Natives, principally Abenakis and Kahnawakes, but also Nipissings, Algonquins, Wendats, and Menominees. St-Luc spoke several Indigenous languages, and evidence of St-Luc's experience as a leader of Indigenous fighters is present in the verbs he used in his report of the campaign. His meetings with Indigenous captains involved “consulting,” “proposing,” “inviting,” “asking,” and “exhorting” rather than “ordering” or “commanding.” Lacking wampum, he offered rifles and hatchets as incentives. However, British fishing and foraging parties had grown better at not being caught unawares, and it was only with some difficulty that St-Luc's Indigenous allies succeeded in drawing them out of the fort. The warriors quickly got out of the way when the main French force arrived to unleash a volley and then engaged the English hand to hand, despite the latter being supported by an artillery barrage. In the end, the siege was lifted but the Natives acquired some glory and prizes.⁸⁶ Another raiding party in August killed two woodcutters near the fort.⁸⁷ Even though the English held Saratoga, the French and Native campaign of harassment ultimately depleted the area of its civilian population, and soldiers were unwilling to risk their lives to defend empty farmland. In October, Fort Clinton was abandoned and burned to

⁸³ Conrad Weiser to Richard Peters, July 20, 1747, *Pennsylvania Archives* ed. Samuel Hazard (Philadelphia, Pa.: Joseph Stevens, 1852), 1:761.

⁸⁴ Colden quoted in Hinderaker, *Two Hendricks*, 176.

⁸⁵ Weiser to Peters, July 20, 1747.

⁸⁶ La Corne St.-Luc, “Journal de la campagne de Sarastangué, 1747,” v. 243, ANOM. See also NYCD 10:78-79, 112.

⁸⁷ NYCD 10:122.

prevent the French from seizing it and turning it into their own forward base. The Mohawk, Abenaki, and Mohican hunters who returned to the upper Hudson to hunt that fall and winter likely enjoyed the peace of a landscape largely free of conflict—and settlers.

Part Six: Settlers and the Seven Years' War

Resilience

The Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle signed in October 1748 ended King George's War but, as in King William's War, the formal peace failed to resolve geopolitical tensions in northeastern North America. This did not deter some people from resuming their previous lives. Swedish botanist Pehr Kalm was on hand to observe the return of Dutch- and Anglo-American settlers to the upper Hudson in the June 1749. He wrote that at Saratoga "We lay over night in a little hut of boards erected by the people who were come to live here."¹ On an island a little bit north of the mouth of the Mohawk, Kalm had encountered a Native community, likely Schaghticokes. At the shallows, both Native and Dutch fishers were (separately, it seems) catching sturgeon by the light of burning pine knots. Kalm noted, "As we went further up the river we saw an Indian woman and her boy sitting in a boat of bark, and Indian wading through the river, with a great cap of bark on his head." Kalm was especially attentive (which is saying a lot, since he was a botanist). He offered a detailed description of both women and men and their houses, food, productive activities, and bodily presentation:

We went to their huts to try if we could get one of them to accompany us to Fort St. Frederic [Crown Point]. On our arrival we found that all of the men were gone into the woods a hunting this morning, and we were forced to engage their boys to go and look for them. They demanded bread for payment. . . . The island belonged to the Dutch, who had turned it into corn-fields. But at present they had leased it to the Indians, who planted their maize and several kinds of melons on it. They built their huts or wigwams on this island, on a very simple plan. Four posts were put into the ground perpendicularly, over which they had placed poles, and made a roof of bark upon them. They had either no walls at all, or they consisted of branches with leaves, which were fixed to the poles. Their beds consisted of deerskins which were spread on the ground. Their utensils were a couple of small kettles, and two ladles, and a bucket or two of bark, made so close as to keep water. The sturgeons were cut into long slices,

¹ Peter Kalm, *Travels into North America; Containing Its Natural History* (London: T. Lowndes, 1771), 2:291.

and hung up in the sunshine to dry, and to be ready against winter. The Indian women were sitting at their work on the hill, upon deer-skins. They never make use of chairs, but sit on the ground; however, they do not sit cross-legged, as the Turks do, but between their feet, which, though they be turned backwards, are not crossed, but bent outwards. The women wear no head-dress, and have black hair. They have a short blue petticoat, which reaches to their knees, and the brim of which is bordered with red or other ribbands. They wear their shirts over their petticoats. They have large ear-rings: and their hair is tied behind, and wrapped in ribbands. Their Wampum, or Pearls, and their money, which is made of shells, are tied round the neck, and hang down on the breast. This is their whole dress. They were now making several kinds of work of skins, to which they sowed the quills of the American Porcupines, having dyed them black or red, or left them in their original colour. [...] [describing men] Their hair was black, and cut short; they wore rough pieces of woollen cloth, of a bright green colour, on their shoulders, a shirt which covers their thighs, and pieces of cloth, or skins, which they wrap round the legs and part of the thighs. They had neither hats, caps, nor breeches. Two of them had painted the upper part of their foreheads, and their cheeks, with vermilion. Round their neck was a ribband, from which hung a bag down to the breast, containing their knives.²

The overall impression is of a people living in time-honored fashion, raising, catching, and preparing foods. They had adopted some European items that were particularly useful, like kettles and knives, or attractive, like dyed cloth. The fabric, while manufactured in Europe, was cut and worn in Indigenous fashion, and further accented with ribbons in a manner derived from the use of feathers or dyed fibers or quills.

It was far from obvious that Natives' material needs would motivate them to supply Europeans with the many commodities which the latter desired from them, namely skins, furs, and even ginseng. But, as Kalm indicates, the men were indeed out hunting for an Englishman. Why? The seasonal mobility of these encampments made its people reluctant to buy more from Europeans than they could carry, and their culture did not measure their worth by their material possessions. To be sure, knives and hoes and hatchets went dull, kettles became worn, and guns required a constant supply of lead and powder, as well as skilled repair. However, meeting these needs did not require the Indigenous population to go to great lengths in harvesting animals and ginseng from the forest, let alone ultimately relinquishing the land itself. In explaining why he was

² Kalm, *Travels Into North America* 2:279-82.

deprived of Native guides—and we of a rich description of them—Kalm recorded how the traders overcame Indigenous non-acquisitiveness. He observed the following:

The merchants of Albany . . . are highly pleased when they have given a poor Indian a greater portion of brandy than he can bear, and when they can after that get all his goods for mere trifles. The Indians often find when they are sober again, that they have been cheated, they grumble somewhat, but are soon satisfied when they reflect that they have for once drank as much as they are able, of a liquor which they value beyond anything else in the whole world, and they are quite insensible to their loss, if they again get a draught of this nectar.³

It took a little longer, but Indigenous Laurentian traders reappeared on the river as well. On July 2, 1751, Weiser noted that “this day above twentieth Canoes arrived with French Indians they came loaded with Beavers. they the french Indians went and paid their Compliment to Govr Clinton.” He observed that “it is well Known that the french praying Indians are all or Most all Mohocks and are allways Kindly received in the mohockS Country.”⁴ Boasting to the Lords of Trade, Clinton put the number of “French Indians” there at “near 200” and claimed that they had extorted a French *laissez-passer* by “threatning that otherwise they would leave the French, and settle with the Six Nations.”⁵

The Stockbridge School Fiasco

The Mohawk residents of Tiononderoge and Canajoharie were dismayed by the resumption of settler pressure. Some departed for the Ohio country. Others went to Canada.⁶ Still others looked back east across the Hudson. Hendrick Theyanoguin’s daughter apparently lived on the Hoosic, and he continued to be a regular visitor to Stockbridge. After the visit of a Mohawk delegation to Stockbridge, nearly 100 young men—mostly Mohawks, but with Oneida, Tuscarora, and Onondagas, too—were sent there to a new boarding school at the Mohican mission.⁷ This was a tremendous commitment by the League Mohawks, one that was facilitated by the presence of Rebecca Kellogg Ashley on the mission’s staff. Ashley was a New England-born woman

³ Kalm, *Travels into North America*, 2:260.

⁴ Paul A. W. Wallace, *Conrad Weiser: Friend of Colonist and Mohawk* (Philadelphia, 1945), 326.

⁵ NYCD 6:714; Jonquière, Oct. 15, 1751, ANOM.

⁶ Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania 6:180-3; MACIA, July 19, 1746, II:394-96a.

⁷ Hinderaker, *Two Hendricks*, 212-3; Sivertsen, *Turtles*, 137, 145.

who had spent twenty-five years at Kahnawake after being taken in the Deerfield Raid and adopted. She was most likely the mother of at least one child at Kahnawake.⁸

The head of the Stockbridge mission was none other than the famed Congregationalist evangelical minister Rev. Jonathan Edwards. Edwards had accepted the post in 1751 after having been dismissed by his previous congregation at Northampton because of a dispute over criteria for church membership. That dispute had placed him at odds with the Williams family, the most powerful family in the Connecticut Valley. However, the move to Stockbridge and an Indigenous congregation was not enough for Edwards to escape the Williams's reach. Many of the school's staff, suppliers, and overseers were members of, or had close ties with, the family. They proved eager to use school resources to their own benefit. The Williamses had also cheated the Stockbridges of land.⁹ (This was despite the fact that the famed 'unredeemed captive' of Kahnawake, Eunice Williams, belonged to that family and remained in contact with them.¹⁰) Rebecca Ashley's brother, Martin Kellogg, had been employed as a translator and teacher at the school since its opening. However, his eagerness to collect his salary far surpassed that to perform his duties. Little instruction took place, and accusations were made about the insufficient feeding and clothing of students, as well as the farm labor they were made to perform. The situation deteriorated further when one Mohawk student was struck with a cane by a staff member; then, a school building burned in what was rumored to have been an arson. The Mohawks began withdrawing their boys in 1753, but some were still present when a colonist murdered a Stockbridge man, causing further antagonism. By 1754, all the Mohawk students were gone, and Rebecca Ashley as well. The Stockbridge boarding-school experiment was sadly prescient of the more coercive 19th- and 20th-century versions across North America, beset as it was by some of the same conflicts of interest and mixed motives. However, it also strengthened the bond between Mohawks and Mohicans on the eve of another imperial war.¹¹

⁸ Joy A. J. Howard, "Rebecca Kellogg Ashley: Negotiating Identity on the Early American Borderlands" in Thomas A. Foster, ed., *Women in Early America* (New York: New York University Press, 2015), 118-38.

⁹ Frazier, *Mohicans*, 88. See also Lion G. Miles, "The Red Man Dispossessed: The Williams Family and the Alienation of Indian Land in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, 1736-1818," *New England Quarterly* 67 (1994): 46-76.

¹⁰ John P. Demos, *The Unredeemed Captive: A Family Story from Early America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994).

¹¹ For an overview of the boarding school fiasco, see Frazier, *Mohicans*, 96-104.



Fig. 6. Portrait of Hendrick Theyanoguin. Fisher Howe Collection of Williamsiana, ca. 1755.
Courtesy of the Williams College Library, Williamstown, MA.

Kayaderosseras

Mohawk disgust with the English over Stockbridge was compounded by recent developments in the Kayaderosseras patent. According to Johnson, “about the year 1754...they heard...that a Patent comprehending all the land, between the Mohawk & Hudsons River (except a few old pattents of about one mile in depth each) was actually taken out many years before in consequence of the Deed. This, of course, greatly alarmed them...”¹² In a July 1754 council, the Tiononderoge Mohawks lodged a complaint with Lieutenant-Governor DeLancey, who recommended the grant be dissolved. The Lords of Trade and governor agreed, but the legislature declined to act—probably because, as Canadagara noted, the claimants “are so great a Number we cannot name them.”¹³

Of course, although claimants were many, settlers remained few so long as the area remained exposed to Indian raids. Since 1750, militant Abenakis had been resisting white settlement in northern New England, and this conflict spilled into New York in 1754. Johnson’s budding protégé Daniel Claus noted from Canajoharie that, according

¹² NYCD 7:671.

¹³ Doing so in the short term would placate the Mohawks, but DeLancey thought the old claim was such a tangle that starting over would ultimately facilitate settlement. NYCD 6:851, 866; Nammack, *Fraud, Politics, and the Dispossession of the Indians: The Iroquois Land Frontier in the Colonial Period* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1969), 58-59.

to reports from Oswego, “about one hundred of the Six Nations [have] gone to Canada” after the French victory over the Virginia militia at Fort Duquesne in the spring of 1754. Claus noted “never was the like seen how quick the said Nations turned after Colonel [George] Washington’s defeat.”¹⁴ For the Natives, the prospect of France rolling back English settlement was electrifying.

A party of Abenakis from Odanak and Bécancour (Wôlinak), with Nipissing and Algonquin help, attacked settlements all along the Hoosic at the end of August 1754. They burned settlers’ structures, killed livestock and, according to one account, took five scalps. That there were fewer English casualties or captives than there might have been reflected a pledge by the Abenakis to the governor of New France not to do anything that might provoke a war with New York. James DeLancey, now governor of New York, erroneously assumed the attack was a result of French incitement, but the Abenakis had had their own reasons. Among these was to carry off the fifty or sixty remaining residents of Schaghticoke. According to the Abenakis, the Schaghticokes were frustrated with English domination and eager to be missionized by the French.¹⁵ The raiders may have been encouraged by those Schaghticokes who had withdrawn earlier from the Hoosic to move in with the Abenakis at Missisquoi or Odanak or Wôlinak. The seizure of the Schaghticokes may simply have been a way for those communities to augment their numbers, but two Kahnawakes who visited the Commissioners of Indian Affairs reported that “the Schachkok Indians have Several times Sent to the Annagungas Indians of St. frensway, to Come and Assist them to take Revenge, for one of their Bretheren, Killed By Negroes in Albany and flang in the River.” That some of the raiders included the Schaghticokes is suggested by a report that some of the warriors spoke Dutch amongst themselves.¹⁶ The episode precipitated much discussion between the Albany Commissioners and the League Mohawks and Kahnawake Mohawks. Delegates from the League were perturbed by rumors that “the Stockbridge Indians are All in Goal.”¹⁷ The Marquis Ange Duquesne, governor of New France, reported that a scout he dispatched to the southward in the spring of 1755 “found the whole Saraste [Saratoga] countryside deserted, it is, so they said, because they feared a raid by the Abenakis and even more so the Loups [in this case Schaghticokes] who withdrew to St. Francois.”¹⁸

¹⁴ Daniel Claus to Richard Peters, Oct 29, 1754, *Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg: Theo Fenn, 1851), 6:182.

¹⁵ Preston, *Colonial Saratoga*, 92-3; NYCD 6:909; Calloway, *Western Abenakis*, 165-8; JP 1:413; *Collection de manuscrits. . . relatifs à la Nouvelle-France* (Québec, Qc.: A. Côté, 1883) 3:515-17; Frazier, *Mohicans*, 107-09.

¹⁶ MACIA, Aug. 31, 1754, Ser. 1, Lot 680, 64; Sept. 5, 1754, Ser. 1, Lot 680, 65-6.

¹⁷ MACIA, Sept. 28, 1754, Ser. 1, Lot 680, 80.

¹⁸ Duquesne to Contrecoeur, Apr. 27, 1755, Donald Kent translation of Fernand Grenier, ed., *Papiers Contrecoeur et autres documents concernant le conflit Anglo-Français sur l’Ohio de 1745 à 1756* (Québec,

Roads to Lake George

Kahnawakes continued trading at Albany in 1755. Observing British preparations to move up the Hudson against New France, including the construction of fortifications at Lydius' site at the Carrying Place (Fort Edward) and Fort William Henry, at the lower end of Lake George, the Kahnawakes informed the French—repeatedly.¹⁹ From the Laurentian perspective, such forts posed an existential threat. As they put it to some Cayugas, Oneidas, and Turscaroras in 1754:

Are you not aware, our Brothers, what difference there is between our Father and the English. Come and see the forts that our Father has built, and you will see there that the land under the walls is still good for hunting. . . . When the English on the contrary are no sooner in possession of land than the game is forced to flee, [and] the woods fall before them.²⁰

Thus, when the French recruited warriors to march south with Baron Dieskau to protect Fort St-Frédéric (Crown Point), Nipissings, Abenakis, Kahnawakes, Kanehsatakes, Algonquins, and Ojibwes joined. To the traditional motivations to fight, such as sustaining an alliance, obtaining goods (and maybe captives and scalps), and winning glory, had been added that of countering English expansionism.

The Mohawks as usual hoped their service would not involve fighting their own kin.²¹ That would prove more difficult than in the previous war. While most of the Haudenosaunee supported France, some League Mohawks, primarily from the faction led by Hendrick Theyanoguin, now proved more willing to mobilize to repel the French. Influenced by William Johnson, they accepted the inevitability of a future dominated by the British and sought whatever leverage—and emoluments—available. On multiple occasions in 1753 and 1754, Hendrick had proclaimed the Covenant Chain broken precisely to alarm British authorities and force them to renew their commitment to their Indigenous allies. New York made some modest commitments to remedy fraudulent land claims, including Kayaderoseras.²²

Johnson, with Hendrick's help, was able to raise between 200 and 300 warriors to accompany a campaign against Crown Point in 1755. Unlike the British campaigners

Qc.: Les Presses Universitaires de Laval, 1952), typescript, Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg, Pa., n.d., 208-9.

¹⁹ Duquesne to Contrecoeur, Apr. 27, 1755.

²⁰ Quoted in MacLeod, *Canadian Iroquois*, 155.

²¹ NYCD 10:317; Steele, *Betrayals: Fort William Henry and the "Massacre"* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 44.

²² Timothy J. Shannon, *Indians and Colonists at the Crossroads of Empire: The Albany Congress of 1754* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000).

with whom they had rallied at Wood Creek in earlier wars, Johnson reported that his officers and soldiers “seem to be animated with becoming Resolution & Courage.”²³ They would soon be tested. Dieskau was heading south with 2300 French and Canadian regulars and militia and 600 Indigenous warriors, in particular Kahnawakes, Kanehsatakes, and Abenakis.²⁴ Unbeknownst to either the League and Laurentian Iroquois, they were moving directly toward one another on the road between the Hudson River and Johnson’s encampment at Lake George. When Dieskau detected a British detachment, he secured the Natives’ agreement to lay an ambush. Writing in 1816, John Norton recounted what he had been told took place. A Scots-Cherokee adopted Mohawk living on the Six Nations reserve at Grand River, Norton was probably presenting the League Mohawk recollection of events. He wrote:

when they [the League Mohawks] came to a Spring of Water, all of them ran down to drink, without any orders:--at this place, the French had ranged an ambuscade in the form of a Half Moon,--& the Mohawks had thus fallen in to the Middle of it. In this Situation, they were surprised by a Caghnawage man rising up—and calling out in their Language,--“Of What Nation are you?” They answered “We are Mohawks and Five Nations,--of what People are you?” He replied,--“We are Caghnawagues & other Tribes,--the Children of Onontio [the French governor]; Stand aside,--for our Father only makes War against the English, and does not desire to hurt any of his Children,--the Native Tribes.

However, a shot rang out, precipitating a melee. Norton underscored the unnaturalness of the situation with the following anecdote:

In this confusion, a Mohawk Warrior happened to encounter his friend, a Caghnawague,--they saluted each other, and shook hands,--in the meantime another came up,--who making a Blow at the Mohawk,--the latter parried it and killed him,--a Second instantly rushed on, making a similar attempt,--he killed him also;--His Friend stood a passive Spectator of the slaughter of his Comrades:--so strong was the Band of Friendship, that even when meeting in hostile array,--it obliged them to spare each other.²⁵

²³ JP 1:880 (quote), 882-3, NYCD 6:993-7.

²⁴ Steele, *Betrayals*, 44.

²⁵ John Norton, *The Journal of Major John Norton* ed. Carl F. Klinck and James J. Talman (Toronto, Ont.: Champlain Society, 1970), 266.

The League Mohawks and British retreated to their fortified position at Lake George, with the French and Laurentian warriors in pursuit. Hendrick had been at the fore of the British force when it was ambushed and had fallen from his horse. Wounded, he was overtaken by the enemy and killed and scalped—possibly by Indigenous women camp followers. Not all Kahnawakes and Mohawks were friends. The French assault on the British position came up short, making a hero in England of William Johnson, who would be knighted, and a martyr of Hendrick, after whom a Mohawk Valley fort was named (and a London pub renamed). The losses at the ambush and in the fighting that followed were significant on both sides. Thirty-two League warriors (primarily Mohawk and Oneida) were killed and twelve wounded; the Indigenous casualties on the French side were not counted. The battle had a chastening effect. Like the Battle of Oriskany in the Revolution and the Battle of Chippawa in the War of 1812, the Natives on both sides subsequently took more care to avoid spilling one another's blood. Dieskau, taken prisoner after the French attack on the fortified British position at Lake George failed, sought the same scoundrel's refuge that Burgoyne later would, falsely blaming his defeat on abandonment by his Native allies. William Johnson refuted this categorically.²⁶

Defenders of Saratoga, Raiders of Odanak

The British position at Lake George had held in 1755, but the upper Hudson remained vulnerable.²⁷ In June of 1756, Lieut. William Hervey reported "We had an account that 9 men belonging to the Provincials who had crossed the river at still water to cut timber were attacked by a party of Indians, and eight of 'em were killed." A Boston newspaper reported two separate similar incidents, one of which involved chasing a pig.²⁸ Several days later, settlers were killed opposite Albany by 'French Indians,' prompting a fruitless pursuit by a party that included 22 Stockbridges. Stockbridge warriors remained active on the Hudson. Hervey reported that at Saratoga there were "about 300 of the Provincials [under Colonel Lee], and Captain Jacobs' Indian Company," which comprised about forty men.²⁹ Jacob Cheeksaunkun held a Massachusetts commission as a captain and was one of the selectmen of the town of Stockbridge. The Stockbridge company was then divided between Cheeksaunkun and his lieutenant, Jacob Naunauphtaunk. From Saratoga, Cheeksaunkun moved upriver to Rogers Island at Fort Edward and Naunauphtaunk went to Fort William Henry. Both contingents spent the rest of 1756 scouting around Fort Ticonderoga and taking

²⁶ MacLeod, *Canadian Iroquois*, 77.

²⁷ Preston, *Colonial Saratoga*, 129.

²⁸ *Boston News-Letter*, June 17, 1756.

²⁹ William Hervey, *Journals of the Hon. William Hervey* (Bury St. Edmunds, Eng.: Paul and Mathew, 1906), 23-24, 27 (quote); *Boston News-Letter*, June 24, 1756. The attack described here was likely the same as "Extract of a Letter from an Officer at Stillwater dated June 10, 1756" *New-York Mercury*, June 21, 1756.

scalps—for which they were given cash rewards by the British—with Cheeksaunkun participating in a foray to Canada.³⁰ The motivations of the men in the Stockbridge company were similar to those of other Indigenous participants: politically, to bolster their standing with the government that controlled their lands; economically, to collect the relatively generous rewards offered by the colony and extricate themselves from debt; and culturally, to gain prestige through martial activity.

The Stockbridges would be engaged in scouting the upper Hudson, Lake George, and Lake Champlain for the duration of the war, primarily as part of the famed Rogers' Rangers. Rogers would issue his famous, still-in-use 'Rules of Ranging' in 1757, incorporating lessons from his Indigenous partners. The Stockbridges' service with Rogers also brought them into direct conflict with the Laurentian Mohawks, since the latter were (perhaps arbitrarily) designated scouts by the French by virtue of being "original proprietors of this region."³¹ The Mohicans would also face warriors whom France had recruited from the *pays d'en haut*, including Odawas, Ojibwes, Potawatomes, and Menominees. Kisensik, a Nipissing chief from Kanehsatake, thanked some of the western nations for "coming in order to help defend our lands against the English who want to usurp them."³² The Rangers and Stockbridges encountered this contingent near present-day Whitehall in early July of 1757. The Rangers struck first, killing several. Pursuing the attackers, the Western Algonquians captured two Mohicans and an Englishman. According to a French officer, one Mohican was captured, killed, and eaten. They indicated the other Mohican would be burned and the Englishman killed.³³ Although fellow Algonquians, these peoples had fewer connections to the Mohicans and hence fewer reasons to show them leniency.

³⁰ Frazier, *Mohicans*, 116-20; *Boston News-Letter*, Sept. 2, 1756; Caleb Stark, ed., *Memoir and Official Correspondence of General John Stark* (Concord, NH: G. Parker Lyon, 1860), 403-05.

³¹ Louis Antoine de Bougainville to d'Argenson, Aug. 19, 1757, quoted in MacLeod, *Canadian Iroquois*, 99.

³² "Journal militaire tenu par Nicolas Renaud d'Avène des Méloizes... 8 mai 1759 au 21 nov." *Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec pour 1928-1929* (n.p.: Rédempti Paradis, 1929), 45.

³³ Bougainville, *Adventure in the Wilderness: The American Journals of Louis Antoine de Bougainville* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964), 122.



Fig. 6. Detail from Thomas Davies, *View of the Lines at Lake George, 1759, 1774*. Fort Ticonderoga Museum Collection. Courtesy of the Fort Ticonderoga Museum.

The upper Hudson remained subject to raids by Indigenous warriors in the employ of France in 1758. According to a French officer's journal, in January, "M. de Langy had been with the Indians on the Sarasteau [Saratoga] road; that the Iroquois, having taken an onion pedlar, wanted to return home; that four Outaoius [Odawas] had attacked a convoy which they dispersed, killed four men, took one prisoner, and plundered several sleighs."³⁴ In April, four men en route from Saratoga to Fort Edward were killed and scalped "a little above Fort Miller."³⁵ In July, two waggoners preparing to transport hay from Schaghticoke to Stillwater were killed by a scouting party, and their horses eaten.³⁶

In early March 1759 it was reported that Rogers and 300 of his men had come into Fort Edward having taken "5 Prisoners and six Scalps, and killed about 30 of the Enemy: Our Loss it is said, is three Men killed, one Mohawk wounded, and about 14

³⁴ NYCD 10:837.

³⁵ *Boston News-Letter*, Apr. 27, 1758.

³⁶ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Aug. 10, 1758.

Men Frost-bit." According to the prisoners, "70 French Indians were sent out from Ticonderoga to cut off our Convoys between Still Water and Saraghtoga."³⁷ The veracity of the intelligence was borne out in May when 17 men escorting wagons from Schaghticoke to Stillwater were carried off "by a large party of the Enemy Indians."³⁸

In July, four Rangers and 22 Stockbridge and Mohawk warriors were spotted and pursued by French-allied warriors on Lake Champlain. The latter took four scalps and four prisoners. French officer Nicolas Renaud noted that this was a significant engagement because it demonstrated a weakening of the bond between League and Laurentian Mohawks. Renaud observed that one of the captives was a Mohawk who had resided at Kahnawake but returned to the League. One of Renaud's Kahnawake allies commented that he would have taken the captive's scalp if he could have gotten it.³⁹ While this might have been bluster, some bloodletting among Natives was in the offing. In August, six Mohicans and Captain Cheeksaukun were tasked with escorting two British officers from Amherst to Wolfe. Encountering a hostile Abenaki party en route, the English officers demanded Abenaki neutrality in the imminent hostilities on the St. Lawrence. The Abenakis' reply was to seize them and hand them over to the French.⁴⁰ However, they killed one of the Mohicans.⁴¹ By way of retaliation, Amherst ordered an attack on Odanak. Mohican warriors were among the 140 Rangers under Rogers' command. According to Abenaki tradition, a celebration was taking place in one of the larger structures in the village on the eve of the assault. A Mohican appeared outside and warned an Abenaki girl of the impending attack before disappearing into the night. Most fled immediately; those that remained either did not believe the warning or sought to resist the assault.⁴² Rogers and his men attacked before dawn and burned the town. Major discrepancies exist between Rogers' estimate of the number of Abenaki dead—200—and French reports, which put it at 30. The French figure should carry more weight given the fact that Odanak lay near French settlements and had a resident missionary. One Mohican attacker died of wounds sustained during the assault. The village was devastated, and some Abenakis, including the Schaghticoke contingent, decided to move to the Mohawk village of Akwesasne at the St. Regis mission on the St. Lawrence.⁴³ Although separated by the Adirondack Mountains, they were now much closer to Saratoga, and would be active in the area thenceforward.

³⁷ *Boston Evening Post*, Mar. 26, 1759.

³⁸ *Boston News-Letter*, May 31, 1759; Calloway, *Western Abenakis*, 189-90.

³⁹ MacLeod, *Canadian Iroquois*, 137-38; *Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec pour 1928 et 1929* (n.p.: Rédempti Paradis, 1929), 44-45.

⁴⁰ MacLeod, *Canadian Iroquois*, 146, 221n49.

⁴¹ *JP* 3:281, 660; 10:409-11, 431.

⁴² Day, "Rogers' Raid in Indian Tradition" *Historical New Hampshire* 17 (1962): 9.

⁴³ Day, *The Identity of the St. Francis Indians* (Ottawa, Ont.: National Museum of Man, 1981), 47; *Memoir and Correspondence of Stark*, 448-49.

After the Fall

Although the fall of Quebec in 1759 set the stage for the war's endgame, the French and their Indigenous allies were still contesting the upper Hudson in the spring of 1760. News circulated of a captive taken at Fort Edward and of a party skulking around Saratoga. However, the capitulation of Montreal that September cemented Britain's control of the upper Hudson.⁴⁴ Indigenous communities would no longer be able to leverage the imperial conflict to their benefit. The risk to settlers of sustained violence by Indigenous warriors was now largely obviated, and it was not long before the machinery of colonial settlement creaked back to life along the upper Hudson. While the treaty ending the conflict between Britain and France would not come until 1763, the Saratoga region saw the return of colonial settlers well before. More relevant than the Anglo-French treaty was the agreement between the British and the Laurentian Native communities negotiated at Kahnawake in September 1760. At Kahnawake, the Laurentian Native communities agreed to permanently withdraw their military support for France and join the Covenant Chain in a status subordinate to the League (who sent representatives to the meeting). However, they were also to enjoy free passage through the Hudson-Champlain corridor, heralding the return of the fur trade.⁴⁵

The Treaty of Kahnawake was not the first time that the Natives residing along the St. Lawrence treated collectively with a European power, but it was certainly the most important. By 1763, this new confederation would be styled the "Seven Nations." The council fire was placed at Kahnawake. This was partly because Kahnawake was the largest of the member communities, but also because Johnson wished the fire to be located where his influence was greatest. Privileging the Mohawks had the effect of marginalizing the more militant Abenakis, who were divided between Akwesasne and Odanak and the smaller community of Wôlinak.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, Kahnawakes complained that the trading paths were stumpy rather than smooth.⁴⁷ Although the 1760 treaty ostensibly supported Indigenous trade, it suffered greatly. By dissolving the inter-imperial border, British control of Montreal rendered moot the legal basis of the

⁴⁴ *Boston Evening Post*, May 26, 1760; Preston 89 "Saratogaw...is a pretty good post...a small fort with barracks for 100 men has been constructed there, it is a sizable enough magazine; the surroundings are pleasant...it was inhabited some years ago, but the inhabitants were obliged to abandon it during the last war as well as Schaghticoke" (Prevost).

⁴⁵ Denys Delâge, *Les Traités des Sept-Feux avec les Britanniques* (Montreal, Qc.: Septentrion, 2001), 71-76; Jelles Fonda journal, Fonda Family Papers, NYHS.

⁴⁶ Despite longstanding Abenaki occupation of the area, and French and settler recognition of such, the Kahnawakes asserted prior ownership on the grounds of their being the successors of the "Antient Mohawks," who controlled the entirety of Lake Champlain. The British decided the matter in the Kahnawakes' favor. Sawaya, *Alliance et dépendance*, 87-88, 195-98; Haviland and Power, *Original Vermonters*, 240-41.

⁴⁷ Delâge, *Traités*, 76-78.

Natives' competitive advantage. British officials did encourage intercolonial trade—but using British merchants and personnel. With the Hudson-Champlain corridor still a military zone, General Thomas Gage, the military governor at Montreal, initially ignored the treaty's free-passage guarantees and denied travel passes to members of the Seven Nations.⁴⁸ The Kahnawakes also complained bitterly of abusive treatment at the hands of British soldiers residing in their neighborhood and even reported harassment traveling in their canoes.⁴⁹ Johnson recognized the short-sightedness of this behavior, and worked to soften the harsh treatment. A more effective postwar reconciliation took place between the Abenakis and Stockbridges, after the former sent wampum and a Native slave in 1761 to atone for wartime killing.⁵⁰

Settler Proliferation

In western Massachusetts, the fall of New France had unleashed a settler invasion of Indigenous land in which colonial authorities permitted one legal safeguard to Native landholding after another to crumble. In the 1750s, the Stockbridges' land base had been reduced by 500 acres; in the 1760s, they parted with more than 7000. By 1774, they retained only 1200.⁵¹ Similar developments were taking place to the north and the west. In 1766, a Seven Nations Iroquois spokesman told the governors of New York and Quebec that “since this Lake & Country is in your Possessions, we find there have several Settlements been made upon.” While these were tolerable, he expressed “surprize” and “alarm.” As he explained,

Some of these new settlers have told to some of our People, that they should not hunt within their Right. Should this be the Case, & they have it in their power to do so, it would at once frustrate our present Hopes of His Majesty's good Will towards us, & deprive us of our Principal Subsistence and Livelihood.⁵²

Indeed, so extensive was the settlers' disruption that Seven Nations hunters were extending their hunting into Lake George and the upper Hudson, irritating League Mohawks, who considered this their hunting territory.⁵³

True to form, Lydius had acted without delay. He had begun issuing deeds to settlers on the basis of his decades-old Mohawk grants a month *before* the Treaty of

⁴⁸ Sawaya, *Alliance et dépendance*, 25-29; MacLeod, *Canadian Iroquois*, 183.

⁴⁹ MacLeod, *Canadian Iroquois*, 188-89.

⁵⁰ Calloway, *Western Abenakis*, 189-90.

⁵¹ Miles, “Red Man Dispossessed,” 55-72.

⁵² Sawaya, *Alliance et dépendance*, 197.

⁵³ JP 11:876, 917-9, 985, 12:843.

Kahnawake.⁵⁴ Robert Rogers and associates requested a tract on the west side of Lake George in March 1761.⁵⁵ Philip John Schuyler, to whom the Saratoga estate had devolved, also moved quickly. To augment his roughly 2000 acres of inherited land within the Saratoga Patent (including the mills and labor camp) and several parcels elsewhere in the Hudson Valley, he participated in several speculative combinations in 1760 and 1761. They petitioned for lands in the upper Mohawk valley as well as on the east side the Hudson north of Saratoga. He even fantasized about obtaining land at France's erstwhile western entrepôt, Detroit. While these did not bear fruit, he made other purchases in 1761 and 1762. A survey and contract for the sale of lands within the Saratoga Patent that had sat in a drawer for a decade was finally taken out and recorded in 1763.⁵⁶ Schuyler's development of his grandfather's work camp at the confluence of Fish Creek and the Hudson began at this time as well. In addition to raising crops and livestock, Schuyler directed the labor of soldiers, settlers, and slaves to revive logging, sawing, spinning, milling, and fishing there.⁵⁷ However, even if the Schuyler plantation was the most prominent venture on the upper Hudson, Lydius was not to be outdone for ambition. Around 1764, he drafted a petition to the Crown. He requested the area north and east of Saratoga be broken off for a new colony that would stretch to the Connecticut River and north to the border with Canada.⁵⁸

Johnson reported that in 1761 or 1762 Kayaderoseras Patent landholders "encouraged some familys; who, according to the best information, do not exceed a dozen in Number, to settle on some parts of the Patent toward Fort Edward, and in the Neighbourhood of Saraghtoga Lake." Not surprisingly, conflict ensued. "Mohawk Hunters, having come across their hutts last year, warned them off, and some of them have complied." Their sachems complained and threatened violence on the settlers. Colden talked them down, only to have their anger flare anew when land advertisements appeared in the newspapers. In 1763, Johnson noted that the Kayaderoseras claimants had sat on their rights "till last year a few poor people were placed on it, which has greatly alarmed and revived the Indian's [sic] uneasiness, who

⁵⁴ Cadwallader Colden, *A proclamation: Whereas it appears that John Henry Lydius...claimeth property in two large tracts of land* (New York: William Weyman, 1761). See also Thomas Young, *Some Reflections on the Disputes between New York and New Hampshire, and Colonel John Henry Lydius of Albany* (New Haven, Conn.: Benjamin Mecom, 1764).

⁵⁵ Hough, *Journals of Major Robert Rogers* (Albany, Munsell 1883), 268.

⁵⁶ Philip Schuyler's holdings are reviewed in Gerlach, *Philip Schuyler and the American Revolution in New York, 1733-1777* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1964), 46-49. Gerlach estimated that in 1763 Schuyler had between 10,000 and 20,000 acres, but this did not include his share in lands not yet surveyed. Sylvester, *History of Saratoga County* (Philadelphia, Pa.: Evarts and Ensign, 1878), 259, says it was 1762; Schuyler, *Colonial New York*, 2:105, apparently discussing the same document, gives the year as 1763.

⁵⁷ Gerlach, *Philip Schuyler*, 49-53; Philip Schuyler Account book, 1764-1770, NYHS.

⁵⁸ "Considerations &c respecting a New Jurisdiction between the antient limits of N.Y. and Canada Line &c.," [ca. 1764], NYHS.

never dreamed they would have attempted to settle what was so surreptitiously obtained. . . .”⁵⁹ Settlement activity was also seen on tributaries like the Batten Kill, especially after Colden issued a large grant touching the northeast corner of the Saratoga Patent, the Argyle Patent, in 1764.⁶⁰ In 1765 League Mohawk war captain of Tiononderoge Little Abraham (Teiorhenhsere) came to Johnson complaining of “a considerable number of men from different parts, cutting down, and Carrying away Saw logs, and the best of Timber from off their land” around Saratoga.⁶¹ Abraham noted that “it is only since you have got the better of the French that you have made settlements thereon, imagining as we suppose that you think you could now do as you please.”⁶² In June 1768, Johnson convened a council with the Mohawks to discuss the patent. Both Philip Schuyler and Governor Henry Moore were in attendance. When the patentees’ representative suggested the Mohawks agree to a boundary between the head of Kayaderosseras Creek and Fort Miller on the Hudson—only a few miles north of Saratoga—the Mohawks declined on the grounds that “they had Settled sevl Mohawk families thereabouts, which might occasion future contention.” Their counteroffer (“from Tingtanoonda to the head of the nearest branch of Kayadarosseras, and thence by a direct Line, to the Falls above Fort-Edward”⁶³) suggests that those families were somewhere along the Hudson. The matter was settled in the summer of 1768, with the Mohawks and patentees settling on a boundary and the former accepting a payment of 5000 dollars. Resolution of this dispute helped clear the way for the grand treaty at Fort Stanwix in the fall where the Haudenosaunee negotiated a western boundary for colonial settlement. A partition of the Kayaderosseras Patent was advertised in October of 1768. The first settlers of the Kayaderosseras Patent arrived east of Snake Hill, on Saratoga Lake near Stillwater, in 1771.⁶⁴

The end of the Seven Years’ War had also unleashed settler activity at Saratoga, which was directed by Schuyler. He produced boards, lumber, flax, flour, and tar.⁶⁵ A 1765 advertisement for “New Lands. . . in the Patent of Saragtoga” included a lot “near the Fish Kill, well known for the vast Quantity of Fish usually taken there every

⁵⁹ NYCD 7:672, 576-77.

⁶⁰ Paul R. Huey, “Charlotte County,” in Joseph S. Tiedemann and Eugene R. Fingerhut, eds., *The Other New York: The American Revolution Beyond New York City* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005), 201; “The Argyle Patent and Accompanying Documents,” in Jennie M. Patten, *History of the Somonauk Presbyterian Church* (Chicago, Ill.: n.p., 1928), 297-342; for the text of the patent, see 311-24.

⁶¹ SWJM 7/3/258 Jan. 31, 1758, quoted in Gail D. MacLeitch, *Imperial Entanglements: Iroquois Change and Persistence on the Frontiers of Empire* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 182; see also SWJM 7/2/177 Sept. 20, 1764; see also JP 4:652-4, 11:923-26; NYCD 7:712.

⁶² SWJM June 21, 1766, 7/4/381 quoted in MacLeitch, *Imperial Entanglements*, 182.

⁶³ JP 12:535.

⁶⁴ Moore to the Earl of Hillsborough, Aug. 17, 1768, NYCD 8:92; Johnson to Hillsborough, Aug. 17, 1768, NYCD 8:94-95; *New-York Gazette*, Oct. 24, 1768; Stone, *Reminiscences*, 72.

⁶⁵ Gerlach, *Philip Schuyler and the American Revolution*, 53-58.

Summer—Many hundred Barrels have been pickled and sent off as Merchandize.”⁶⁶ An advertisement for “herrings by the quantity, or single barrel, cured at Saratoga” held that the fish were “allowed by very good judges to be preferable to any Scotch or Dutch herrings.”⁶⁷ In 1770, Philip Schuyler oversaw the sale of parcels belonging to a deceased landowner to acquit the dead man’s debts. The advertisement opined that “If any Farmers upon the Sea Coast are desirous to move up Hudson’s River, ‘tis probable they cannot purchase any Lands to a greater Advantage than these.”⁶⁸

⁶⁶ *New-York Gazette*, Feb. 25, 1765.

⁶⁷ *New-York Mercury*, Apr. 30, 1764.

⁶⁸ *New-York Gazette and Weekly Mercury*, March 19, 1770.

SECTION THREE:
THE REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE
FOR SARATOGA

Part Seven:

Native Americans and the Imperial Crisis

Choosing Sides

During the years settlement activity was accelerating, a crisis of political authority was unfolding among the colonists that pitted them against Britain itself. Awareness of the strategic significance of Quebec as a British stronghold grew, causing attention to the Hudson-Champlain corridor to increase in equal measure. In 1775, Indigenous communities suddenly found themselves being courted once again. Somewhat to their surprise, the leverage they had lost in 1760 was returning. However, the best use of that leverage was less than obvious. Like the colonists who had to choose between the rebels and the British, or to remain neutral, Natives found themselves making complex calculations that produced different results.

The Seven Nations' loyalties were in play. The presence of British soldiers and settlements loomed large, and the influence of Indian agents and missionaries remained substantial. Consensus within the Laurentian communities coalesced around an initial stance of neutrality or nominal support for the British, but cracks appeared quickly. Among the Abenakis and Kahnawakes in particular, the presence of adopted colonists and their descendants represented a fault line that paralleled the fracture in Haudenosaunee communities that brought the Wendats to the St. Lawrence a century earlier. The adoptees were sufficiently assimilated that one of them, Ayonwahtha (born John Stacey in Massachusetts), was a chief at Kahnawake, but this subgroup demonstrated a contrarianism or residual loyalty that led them to favor the rebels.¹ Louis Cook was among them. While hunting in June of 1775, he encountered a party of rebels near Lake Memphramagog. According to the rebels, he offered to spy for them around Montreal and even proposed

the manner he will go in, that they might not mistrust him to be a friend to us: Says he will take part of his hunt that he hath got at a time, and go into Canada, and sell that as usual, and tell them he hath got some more Moose

¹ Mark R. Anderson, *Down the Warpath to the Cedars: Indians' First Battles in the Revolution* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2021), 8.

skins in the woods, and must go and fetch them; and so in like manner as long as we should want to have him go.²

While it is not known whether or not they took him up on the offer, Cook was in the rebel employ before long. On August 2, the Massachusetts House of Representatives created a committee to interview him “to gain from him all the intelligence they can, respecting the temper and designs of the Canadians and Indians towards these Colonies, or any other matters that it may be of importance for us to know.”³ Cook visited George Washington while there.⁴

In contrast to the Seven Nations, the Mohicans of Stockbridge were not in the least equivocal. Stockbridges of Wappinger descent had particular reason to view the Crown with contempt. In 1766, a delegation including Jacob Cheeksaukun, Daniel Nimham, Solomon Uhhaunauwaunmut, and some of their spouses, had traveled to London seeking recognition of their title to lands in present-day Dutchess and Putnam counties. These lands had been taken by highly dubious means during the land rush at the end of the Seven Years’ War. The Lords of Trade acknowledged the problematic handling of the case to that point as well as “frauds and abuses in respect to Indian lands. . .in this colony in particular.” Whitehall remanded the case to the colonial governor for reconsideration. When he ignored his superiors’ prodding and proceeded to uphold the Wappingers’ dispossession, the Stockbridges were indignant. The silence from London in response to his inaction was deafening. Despite initial indications to the contrary, their Atlantic crossing had been in vain, leaving them disillusioned with the King.⁵

Given the level of support for independence in western Massachusetts by 1775, a Stockbridge decision to support the British would have made life along the Housatonic untenable. However, New Englanders’ zeal for the rebellion at least presented an opportunity. If the colonists had forgotten their debt to the Stockbridges for the land upon which they lived, the Revolution now offered a chance for them to contract a new one. A little more than a week before the Battle of Lexington, chief sachem Uhhaunauwaunmut proposed the Mohicans “run to the Westward, and feel the minds of my *Indian* brothers, the *Six Nations*, and know how they stand.” Beyond service as an intermediary, he also offered military assistance, with the proviso that “if you send for me to fight. . .you will let me fight in my own *Indian* way. I am not used to fight *English*

² Edward Bucknam and Seth Wales to Colonel Jacob Bayley and Colonel John Hurd, June 20, 1775, *Documents and Records Relating to the Province of New-Hampshire* ed. Nathaniel Bouton (Nashua, NH: Orren C. Moore, 1873) 7:525-26.

³ Council of Massachusetts House of Representatives AA 4/3:301-304.

⁴ PGW I:229; John Adams, *Diary and Autobiography of John Adams* ed. L.H. Butterfield 2:226-27

⁵ Frazier, *Mohicans*, 146-70 (quote 163).

fashion. . . point out to me where your enemies keep, and that is all I shall want to know.”⁶

Shortly after the battles of Lexington and Concord, at least two dozen Stockbridges had joined Massachusetts militia companies that were participating in the siege of Boston, some with considerable gusto.⁷ Uhhaunauwaunmut was dispatched to Onondaga in April 1775 with a message from the Massachusetts Provincial Congress to the League. He returned with the favorable news that they were taking a neutral stance.⁸ Another embassy, led by Abraham Nimham, headed to Kahnawake. The British captured Nimham and an unidentified Stockbridge companion, tried them in an ad hoc military court, and sentenced them to hang. This caused a furor at Kahnawake, and men were dispatched immediately to rescue the captive Stockbridges from the British. It was bad enough that the British had seized the men, violating their liberty to travel freely throughout their hunting grounds and between their settlements. The British compounded their transgression with the sentence of hanging, which remained as anathema to them as it had been during the days of Marie de l’Incarnation. According to the anonymous rebel, “High threatening words passed between the General and the Indian Sachems.”⁹ The Stockbridges were released, but the damage was done.

Treating the Stockbridges so harshly had run counter to the inclinations of Quebec Governor Guy Carleton and he had chided the officers. Carleton preferred a more diplomatic approach to relations with Indigenous communities. In the summer of 1775, he hosted a treaty at Montreal in which 1600 Natives were present and accepted a war belt.¹⁰ The assembled peoples (primarily Kahnawake and Kanehsatake Mohawks, Nipissings, Mississaugas and Abenakis) agreed to place some warriors at Britain’s disposal. Underlying these agreements were (mostly) implicit threats of occupation, dispossession, and an interruption of trade. Nevertheless, Carleton agreed the Natives’ service would be limited to the defense of the province. For the Natives, this could still be spun as neutrality, and it appealed Carleton, whose first priority was protecting the colony—a tall task considering he had only about 800 regulars at his command.

⁶ Speech of the Chief Sachem of the Stockbridge Indians, Apr. 11, 1775, AA 4/2:315-16.

⁷ Frazier, *Mohicans*, 198-200; Calloway, *The American Revolution in Indian Country: Crisis and Diversity in Native American Communities* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 92-93.

⁸ Mark R. Anderson, “Wampum Belts to Canada: Stockbridge Indian Ambassadors’ Dangerous Peace Mission *Journal of the American Revolution*. Accessed May 27, 2021. <https://allthingsliberty.com/2021/05/wampum-belts-to-canada-stockbridge-indian-ambassadors-dangerous-1775-peace-mission/>.

⁹ “Extract of a letter from a gentleman at Stockbridge,” June 22, 1775, AA 4/2 (1839): 1060-61; “Answer to a Speech to the Caughnawagas. . . returned 15th June 1775,” AA 4/2:1002-03. Jan Grabowski, “French Criminal Justice and Indians in Montreal, 1670-1760,” *Ethnohistory* 43 (1996): 420.

¹⁰ Barbara Graymont, *The Iroquois in the American Revolution* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1972), 75; [James Dean,] *Short Account of a Tour*, box 13, PSP.

The 1775 Albany Council

In 1775, the Continental Congress named Philip Schuyler both a major general and a commissioner of Indian affairs. Schuyler's military career had been a quiet one. During the Seven Years' War, he raised a company of volunteers and served under William Johnson but he left prior to the Battle of Lake George to get married. He resigned entirely in protest after the loss of Fort William Henry but eventually rejoined and served effectively in the commissariat. With respect to Indigenous diplomacy, Schuyler could draw upon his training as a frontier trader in furs and land. As a teenager, he had been sent to live with a Huguenot tutor in New Rochelle to learn French, after which he spent a season, perhaps a year, with Oneidas in the upper Mohawk valley.¹¹ It was perhaps at this time that he was given the name Tanientakaion ("his legs/shanks/shins are old"), reflecting the intermittently debilitating effects of what he termed "rheumatic gout."¹² His interactions with Indigenous hunters and traders continued at his homes in Albany, "the Flatts" north of the city, and Saratoga. This is not to say he relished his Native contacts. While Schuyler wrote Washington with some justice that "my presence was indispensably necessary" at a council with Natives in August, it was also the case that he disliked them.¹³ "To transact business with Indians at any time," Schuyler would write in 1777, "is a most disagreeable task."¹⁴ He arrived from Saratoga in Albany in time to join all the grandees of the City of Albany in welcoming the Six Nations delegation at Cartwright's Tavern on August 23, 1775. Hymns were sung by Oneida Christians—and quite well by one surprised officer's account. Another officer recorded the following about the Patriot welcoming committee:

[We] presented them with smoking impliments Shook hands & desired to see them dance, at night, if agreeable to ye waryers which they Accepted of, and at 8 oClock appeard, a drum of solemn sound the rapping of sticks together were there musick, while they daunced naked, were painted differently – performed with Decoram & great exactness gave them a little weak grog & broke up at 11 P.M.¹⁵

¹¹ Gerlach, *Philip Schuyler*, 10-19.

¹² Gerlach, *Proud Patriot: Philip Schuyler and the War for Independence, 1755-1783* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1987), 533-34n86. I use the spelling offered by James Dean, the best linguist to record it and whose attestations of Iroquoian-language words are many. Dean to Schuyler, Mar. 18, 1776, 64c, Samuel Kirkland Papers, Hamilton College Archives, Clinton, NY. I am grateful to Karin Michelson for the translation.

¹³ Gerlach, *Proud Patriot*, 28-52; Schuyler to Washington, Aug. 27, 1775 AA 4/3:442.

¹⁴ "Extract of a Letter to Congress, dated Albany January 25, 1777" *Proceedings of a General Court-Martial...of Major General Schuyler* (Philadelphia: Hall and Sellars, 1778), 68.

¹⁵ Adonijah Strong to Andrew Adams, Aug. 26, 1775, Henry Stevens Collection, 11067, NYSL. Another account appears in *Memoir of Lt. Colonel Tench Tilghman* (Albany, NY: Munsell, 1876), 91-92.

Despite the friendly preliminaries, there was tension in the air. The Haudenosaunee participants had required and received an armed escort from German Flats and were kept under protective guard during their stay.¹⁶ Clearly, relations between settlers and Natives in the Mohawk Valley were not good. The fact that most of the Natives present were Mohawks and Oneidas suggested that relations the Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas were in grave jeopardy. Since their lands lay on the boundary negotiated with Johnson in 1768, the Oneidas were under tremendous pressure to appease the rebels. Perhaps to minimize the significance of the fact that the gathering had only attracted the more proximate nations, the commissioners highlighted—even celebrated—the diverse but unified polity of which the Mohawks and Oneidas were a part. They recalled the words of the Onondaga chief Canasatego at the 1744 Treaty of Lancaster, when he described the Six Nations as “a powerful confederacy,” and urged the colonies to “observe the same methods our wise forefathers have taken. . . [in order to] acquire fresh strength and power.” Alluding to the Continental Congress, the commissioners proclaimed, “Our old men have done so. . . they have tied twelve [arrows] together with strong cords.”¹⁷

An Oneida sachem, Conoghquieson, stated, “We shant take notice of any hostile propositions that may be made to us, for we bear an equal proportion of Love to you and the others over the great Waters in the present dispute, and we shall remain at Peace, and smoke our Pipes.” This was very satisfactory to the commissioners. They responded with a statement of thanks that also included a clumsy appeal to the Indians to sympathize with settlers who “laid out their Money here, built Houses, cleared Fields, raised Crops and thro’ their own Labour and Industry grew tall and strong.”¹⁸

Schuyler was not present to hear the Natives’ reply. He was instead en route to Ticonderoga, which Benedict Arnold had described in May as being “in a most ruinous condition” that had not improved much by July. Schuyler acknowledged the awkwardness of his untimely departure, but some intelligence from the north alarmed him.¹⁹ His absence must have been especially conspicuous because the Mohawk speaker, Abraham, announced that the Six Nations would henceforth regard Schuyler as their official liaison with Congress. Although Schuyler already had a Mohawk name, they now bestowed upon him the honorific council title for the head of the Albany Indian commissioners, Quider. In so doing, they sought to remind the current Quider

¹⁶ Proceedings of the Commissioners appointed to treat with the Six Nations of Indians in 1775, German Flats, *IAP*, 9, 12; in a similar vein, Schuyler to Albany Committee, Aug. 11, 1775, *AA* 4/3:87.

¹⁷ “Speech of Senghnagenrat (Oneida), an Oneida Chief, addressed to the Albany Committee, Reply of the Committee, who promise to answer the Speech,” *AA* 4/3:480. The treaty is analyzed by Fenton in *Great Law*, 591-94.

¹⁸ *IAP*, 18.

¹⁹ Arnold to the Massachusetts Committee of Safety, May 11, 1775, *AA* 4/2:557; Walter Livingston to New York Congress, July 29, 1775, *AA* 4/2:1753; Schuyler to Washington Aug. 27, 1775, *AA* 4/3:442.

that he should tread carefully in his dealings with them, as he had a legacy to uphold. Schuyler's absence was also notable because the Six Nations demanded that the "Quarrels" between colonists and government be kept "to the Sea Coasts" and that "all that Distance" of the "path of peace" between Six Nations country and Kahnawake "may not be defiled with Blood." It was a pointed demand, since everyone present knew that Schuyler was preparing the rebels' invasion of Canada.

The Six Nations' speakers agreed to American requests that they remain neutral, but they also conveyed just how little of Congress' speech rang true to them. Indeed, Abraham told the commissioners, "we request...that you observe the same Regard to Truth when you write to the King about these Matters. For we have Ears and shall hear if you represent any thing in a wrong point of Light." By highlighting illegitimate seizures of property, Congress' words had teed up the issue of their own dispossession. Abraham did not let the opportunity pass. He said:

You say you are uncertain of holding your present possessions and that you do not know who may enjoy the product of your Labour. Now therefore Brothers attend...

You our Brothers of Albany have taken two pieces of Land from us, without any Reward not so much as a single pipe. We therefore desire you will restore them and put us into peaceable possession again. If you refuse to do this, we shall look upon the prospect to be bad, for if you conquer you will take us by the Arm and pull us all off.²⁰

Abraham was followed by Stockbridge sachem Solomon Uhhaunauwaunmut. A New Jersey officer who met Uhhaunauwaunmut described him as "remarkable free & Easy in conversation" and wrote that he "has been to Europe & Introduced to His Majesty."²¹ Uhhaunauwaunmut deviated from the Six Nations and announced the Stockbridges' support for the rebel cause: "Wherever you go we will be by your Side. Our Bones shall lay with yours. We are determined never to be at Peace with the Red Coats while they are at Variance with you." However, any contrast between Haudenosaunee neutralism and Stockbridge commitment only underscored a similarity in their expectations. Reflecting on an alliance with the rebels, Uhhaunauwaunmut said, "If we are conquered our Lands go with yours, but if we are victorious we hope you will help us recover our just Rights." Like the Mohawks, the Stockbridges wanted their land back. If Uhhaunauwaunmut predicted that "Our Bones shall lay with yours" that was because the expropriation of their former lands in New York and even their new ones at

²⁰ *IAP*, 31.

²¹ Mark E. Lender and James Kirby Martin, eds., *Citizen-Soldier: The Revolutionary War Journal of Joseph Bloomfield* (Newark: New Jersey Historical Society, 1982), 79.

Stockbridge had been so thorough that they barely had a graveyard left to themselves. Uhhaunauwaunmut had lands on the upper Hudson in mind when he spoke. The Stockbridges would petition the New York Assembly in 1782, asserting their claims “are from Hudsons River, Wood Creek and Lake Champlain, to the mouth of Otter Creek on the north eastward.”²²

The Invasion of Canada

According to Schuyler’s modern biographer, Donald Gerlach, “the general’s attendance at the conference perhaps delayed the 1775 invasion of Canada by as much as two weeks.”²³ It was not until September 4 that Generals Montgomery and Schuyler would be encamped at Île-aux-Noix with approximately 1700 men. Due to illness, this was as far as Schuyler’s invasion of Quebec would proceed. From his bed, he drafted an address to the peoples of Canada. He expressed his confidence that they would rally to his side, insofar as he “could not conceive that. . .you could calmly sit by, and see those chains forging which are intended to bind you, your posterity, and ours, in one common and eternal slavery.” He also appended an apology to the Kahnawakes for a recent incident on the Richelieu River in which a Green Mountain Boy scout by the name of Remember Baker defied his orders and initiated a firefight in which two Kahnawakes perished and he was killed. Having just been warned at Albany not to defile the path with blood, this was an unfortunate stumble, and Schuyler fretted about it greatly.²⁴

On the 6th, the rebels approached Fort St. John, which was defended by approximately 600 regulars and militiamen and about 120 Indigenous warriors. At a stream crossing, a fierce skirmish took place with Native scouts.²⁵ A listing of the seven warriors who lost their lives illuminated the composition of the force: two League Mohawks, three Kahnawakes, a Kanehsatake, and a Wendat. (Abenakis participated as well, but escaped harm.) The gravest loss was that of Sotsienhowane, a Kahnawake chief who had rushed forward and killed three rebels. The rebels withdrew. They would not resume the assault for another two weeks and would not take the fort for another two months. While the reasons for the delay were various, had the Native scouts not successfully repulsed the assault on the 6th, the fort would doubtless have fallen much sooner. Carleton expressed his “thanks to the Indian Chiefs and Warriors who behaved

²² The connection between the 1775 address and the 1782 petition is made stronger by the similarity in the language of the petition and 1775 message to John Hancock, president of the Continental Congress. The texts of both are reproduced in Frazier, *Mohicans*, 196-7, 234-5.

²³ Gerlach, *Proud Patriot*, 54.

²⁴ Gerlach, *Proud Patriot*, 59-60; “To the Inhabitants of Canada” AA 3:671; Schuyler to Washington, Aug. 31, 1775, AA 3:467; Extract of a Letter from Albany to a Gentleman in New York, Sept. 5, 1775, AA 3:630; Stannard Baker, “Remember Baker” *New England Quarterly* 4 (1931): 625-8.

²⁵ Record of Indian Transactions 1775, Bancroft Transcripts, 328-30, NYPL; NYCD 8:660-61; Graymont, *Iroquois*, 75.

so gallantly.”²⁶ However, while the British might rejoice, the Natives mourned—and seethed. Only those officers who were assigned to the Native units had been involved. Dismayed by what they perceived as a lack of support, the great majority of Native defenders promptly left Fort St. John. They had fulfilled their stated commitment, and at considerable cost. The only thing that could arrest the invasion was for the local habitants to rise to the aid of the Crown, but Natives saw little evidence that their settler neighbors were about to do so.

The decision to withdraw from Fort St. John was reinforced by the arrival of a delegation of Oneidas that had traveled north from Albany to brief the Seven Nations at Kahnawake on what had transpired at the Albany council. They were accompanied by a rebel interpreter, George Fulmer, and had stopped to consult Schuyler en route, so their leanings were clear. They brought messages from both the Congressional Indian commissioners and the Mohawks and Oneidas recommending that they join the Six Nations’ formal neutrality. The Kahnawakes had every reason to agree. They declared a neutrality that would be in effect at least until the fall of Fort St. John and promised to send a delegation to the next confederacy council at Onondaga, as well as to visit Schuyler.²⁷ Even Carleton accepted their shift, saying “I cannot blame these poor people for securing them selves, as they see multitudes of the enemy at hand, and no Succours from any part. . . .”²⁸ Carleton’s strategy ultimately hinged on the security of the citadel at Quebec City. This did little to protect Kahnawake and the numerous other Seven Nations villages—or even Montreal. Pro-rebel Natives like Louis Cook and Kachnechtago visited with General Montgomery, who gave them cash and goods to maintain their goodwill and allow him to continue with the siege. Cook had already forged ties with pro-rebel Montreal merchant Thomas Walker. Most Kahnawake warriors turned their attention to the coming winter hunt. The only Indigenous assistance the British would receive would come from some League Mohawks, including Joseph Brant of Canajoharie and John Deserontyon of Tiononderoge, who had traveled north in company of Daniel Claus and Guy Johnson, the late Sir William’s nephew and successor as Britain’s Superintendant of Indian Affairs. They attempted to intervene with the Mohawk-Oneida emissaries on behalf of the British by inviting them to Montreal. Despite the fact that the invitation was accompanied by a string of wampum, the Kahnawakes counseled against compliance “lest they should be served like the Stockbridge Indians.”²⁹ When Fort St. John finally surrendered to Montgomery

²⁶ Quoted in Graymont, *Iroquois*, 78.

²⁷ Report of the Deputies of the Six Nations of their mission to the Caughnawagas, Sept. 24, 1775 AA 4/3:798; Journal of the Proceedings of the four Indians, Sept. 30, 1775, AA 4/3:1275

²⁸ Quoted in Stevens, “His Majesty’s “Savage” Allies: British Policy and the Northern Indians During the Revolutionary War. The Carleton Years, 1774-1778.” (Ph.D. diss., SUNY-Buffalo, 1984), 437.

²⁹ “Report of the Deputies,” 798.

on November 3, the fall of Montreal was imminent, and the League Mohawks, including John Deserontyon and William Johnson (a Mohawk son of Sir William), returned to the Mohawk Valley.

While the Americans took control of the St. Lawrence Valley, Schuyler returned to Albany, where he and the other Congressional commissioners met as many as one hundred Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, and Tuscaroras in early December. They surrendered to Schuyler the war belt some of their fellows had accepted from the British over the summer. This was a significant symbolic move, but quite problematic from a protocolary perspective, since they were not the ones who had formally accepted it. A more correct course of action would have been for the recipient to return it to the giver. Now Schuyler cited the belt as “full proof that the Ministerial servants have attempted to engage the savages against us.”³⁰

In Quebec, the rebel army’s progress met little further resistance from Indigenous or French Canadian communities, or even the outnumbered British regulars. However, it proved no match for two other foes: winter and infectious disease. Smallpox spread through the ranks of Montgomery’s and Arnold’s men.³¹ With their enlistments beginning to expire in the new year, the soldiers’ hopes turned from a glorious victory to simply the ability to return home before *they* expired. Pressed for time, Montgomery rallied his men for a siege of the Quebec citadel on December 31. The result was disastrous. A blizzard struck, he was killed, and Arnold was wounded. The British remained safely ensconced within the city walls. The Americans’ grip on the Province of Quebec would only last until the arrival of British reinforcements from across the ocean.

Schuyler’s March on Johnstown

Word of the failure of the siege on the citadel in Quebec City had not yet reached Albany when Cook and some Kahnawakes visited Schuyler in Albany in the first days of January.³² On January 13, still ignorant of Arnold’s fate, Schuyler set out with several hundred militiamen to quell an emerging threat close to home. Numerous reports asserted that Sir John Johnson was organizing an armed force of loyalists and Natives from his family seat at Johnson Hall. Despite the brutal cold, Schuyler was joined by local men all along the route until they numbered as many as 3000.³³ The Mohawks were angered. Johnson Hall may have been situated on lands they had relinquished to New York, but they had gathered there often, especially prior to Sir William’s death in 1774, and the Mohawks considered Sir John to be kin. Schuyler may not have

³⁰ Schuyler to Hancock, Dec. 14, 1776, AA 4:260.

³¹ On the epidemic and its strategic implications, see Elizabeth Fenn, *Pox Americana: The Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1775-82* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2001), 62-69.

³² [Jan. 1-3], Indian Papers, PSP, NYPL; Washington to Schuyler, Feb. 1, 1776 AA 4:908.

³³ Schuyler to Hancock, Jan. 23, 1776, i153-I-414ff, PCC.

technically violated any treaties by leading an army up “the ambassador road” through the Longhouse to seize someone, but they regarded it as a transgression nevertheless.

A sachem from the Mohawk village of Tiononderoge, Little Abraham (who should not be conflated with the Abraham of the August 1775 council) intercepted Schuyler and addressed him in what Schuyler described as “a very haughty tone.” Ever the status-conscious patrician, Schuyler hated being spoken to as an equal. He once said he “would rather be the proprietor of a potato Garden & literally live by the Sweat of my Brow, than be an Indian Commissioner at a Time when you cannot prudently resent an Insult given by these haughty princes of the Wilderness.”³⁴ Little Abraham questioned the threat posed by Sir John to the rebels and noted that “if this company, who are now passing by, should go up, and any thing bad should happen, we shall look on you as shutting up the path” of peaceful relations. After protracted and tense negotiations in the Mohawks’ presence, Johnson agreed to a variety of constraints, including the surrender of his arms and those of his tenants, as well as offering six of his supporters as hostages.³⁵ Schuyler had not been incorrect to surmise that Sir John was up to no good, but his actions undercut Little Abraham and the other Haudenosaunee who supported neutrality. As Kirkland put it, “Many of the Indians have observed to me, that they never knew a debate so warm & contention so fierce to have happened between these two Brothers, Oneida’s & Cayuga’s, since the commencement of their union.”³⁶ Kahnawakes, accompanied by representatives from other Seven Nations villages, participated in a Six Nations council at Onondaga in March and generally aligned themselves with the Oneidas, who argued for neutrality. Interpreter James Dean indicated they wished to meet Schuyler en route home.³⁷

While the Haudenosaunee debated, Sir John plotted at Johnstown. A list of Johnson associates whom the Patriots hoped to seize showed his influence in the Saratoga area. The list included four men from Stillwater: a Mr. Clyde, Isaac Mann, and Mann’s two sons, Joseph and Samuel Anderson. Also named were James Grey, Thomas Swords, Captain McAlpin, John Munroe and Hugh Munro. The latter three were all from the Saratoga-Ball’s Town (Ballston) area.³⁸ Schuyler decided to seize Johnson in May. Although Schuyler proceeded more discreetly this time, Tiononderoge leader John Deserontyon had observed the preparations in Albany and hurried back to Johnson Hall. Sir John and 170 of his tenants escaped to Akwesasne in the company of four Mohawk guides. The trek was an arduous one during which time they “almost

³⁴ Quoted in Gerlach, *Proud Patriot*, 183.

³⁵ General Schuyler to President of Congress, Jan. 23, 1776, AA 4:818-29.

³⁶ Dean to Schuyler, Mar. 10, 1776, i89-III-22-25; Samuel Kirkland to Philip Schuyler, Mar. 12, 1776, r. 172, i153-2-97, both PCC.

³⁷ Dean to Schuyler, Mar. 18, 1776, SKP 64c.

³⁸ Sullivan to Dayton, May 17, 1776, AA 4/6:493.

starved & wore out for want of provision being three days without any thing to subsist upon but Wild Onions Roots & the leaves of the Beech Trees.”³⁹

Organizing Native Support in the West

Meanwhile, Claude-Nicolas-Guillaume de Lorimier, a military officer with Kahnawake ties, and fur trader John Stanley Goddard set out to recruit assistance from Indigenous communities far to the west of the Hudson-Champlain corridor.⁴⁰ Goddard went to Niagara, where Lieutenant-Colonel John Caldwell issued orders for Captain Arent Schuyler de Peyster, the British commandant at Michilimackinac, to recruit warriors around his post for an expedition against the rebels. (A nephew of General Philip Schuyler, DePeyster had visited Saratoga in 1773 or 1774.)⁴¹ Goddard delivered the orders and proceeded to convey similar instructions to métis Captain Charles-Michel de Langlade at Green Bay. The roughly 47-year-old Langlade must have been intrigued by the idea of a Laurentian campaign. As a young ensign in the French army during the Seven Years’ War, he had played a role in defending Quebec City and—more controversially—the capture of Fort William Henry on Lake George. In the intervening years, he had been able to trade on his Odawa kinship connections to prosper in the fur trade.⁴²

The response De Peyster and Langlade received from the peoples of the Great Lakes was positive. For most of the previous decade, they had watched the spread of colonial settlers into the Ohio Valley with concern. Nevertheless, the British had largely succeeded in prevailing upon them to refrain from intervening.⁴³ The rebel capture of Montreal represented a surprising new eruption of this settler expansionism—and an especially dangerous one, for it threatened to cut off British trade. The situation certainly warranted a closer look, and they had the leverage to demand good compensation for their service. In the month of July, de Peyster was able to dispatch two

³⁹ John Johnson to Daniel Claus, Claus Papers Jan. 20, 1777, DCF v.1:231-32, LAC. Schuyler sent a note to Gansevoort at Fort George in the wake of Johnson’s escape. He wrote, “It is Conjectured that Sir John Johnson and his party are in a starving condition they may probably be drove by hunger [to] Attempt some post on the Communication.” Gansevoort-Lansing Papers, June 12, 1776, NYPL.

⁴⁰ De Lorimier boasted that he had slipped out of Kahnawake with the help of Louise Schuyler, a Mohawk woman whom he claimed was related to the Albany Schuylers, a claim that is apparently false. De Lorimier later married her. Anderson, *Down the Warpath to the Cedars* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2021), 21.

⁴¹ Stevens, “Wabasha Visits Governor Carleton 1776: New Light on a Legendary Episode of Dakota-British Diplomacy on the Great Lakes Frontier,” *Michigan Historical Review* 16 (1990), 37; Armour and Keith R. Widder, *At the Crossroads: Michilimackinac During the American Revolution* (Mackinac Island, Mich.: Mackinac Island State Park Commission, 1978), 51.

⁴² McDonnell, *Masters of Empire: Great Lakes Indians and the Making of America* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2015).

⁴³ McDonnell, *Masters of Empire*, 274-77. Carleton to DePeyster, June 25, 1776, *Michigan Pioneer Historical Collections* 10 (1886): 261-64, 270-71.

large groups downriver. The first, composed of 150 Ojibwes and Odawas, left early in the month. The second was even larger, and brought as many as 250 Sioux, Fox, Menominee and Ojibwe warriors from as far away as the Mississippi Valley.⁴⁴

Closer to Montreal, de Lorimier had traveled to the Mississauga Ojibwe hunting grounds on the north shore of Lake Ontario, where he recruited warriors to join him on a campaign in the spring.⁴⁵ In April they rendezvoused at Oswegatchie with 40 or 50 Haudenosaunee warriors who were exercising their right to ignore the Grand Council, which continued to assert the Confederacy's neutrality. They joined 38 light infantrymen of the 8th Regiment and 11 British and Canadian traders and two officers from that post under Captain George Forster, and proceeded to Akwesasne. There, despite the failure to win a community declaration of support, they picked up another forty-odd warriors. They would be joined by a Kanehsatake party as well. By the time they approached the rebel post at The Cedars, there were over 500 men, more than three-quarters of whom were Natives.⁴⁶

The Almost Battle of The Cedars

The Americans who held Montreal were not unaware of their vulnerability on their western flank. On April 20, Arnold reported that he had "found it necessary to order Colonel Timothy Bedel, with two hundred men, to the Cedars, a very important post, fifteen leagues above this, to prevent any goods being sent to the upper country, and to guard against a surprise from the enemy or their Indians."⁴⁷ Bedel had attended Moor's Charity School, the precursor of Dartmouth, and developed strong relationships with some of the Indigenous students there.⁴⁸ By June, the number of defenders had risen to four hundred but many were suffering from smallpox. The only Native help at their disposal was a handful of pro-American Kahnawakes, who agreed to scout for Bedel but had no intention to engage other Natives in combat. Despite having been warned by these scouts about Forster's approach, Bedel—himself suffering from smallpox—departed the fort, ostensibly in response to an invitation to attend a meeting with the chiefs at Kahnawake. He left Major Isaac Butterfield in command. Forster began his assault soon afterward. After several hours of intermittent skirmishing, Forster sent a message to Butterfield inviting the latter to surrender. He specifically

⁴⁴ Stevens, "His Majesty's," 681-83, 2102. Sauk and Ho-Chunk warriors were likely present as well.

⁴⁵ Pierre Aichinger, ed. *At War with the Americans: The Journal of Claude-Nicolas-Guillaume de Lorimier* (Victoria, BC: Press Porcépic, n.d.), 45.

⁴⁶ Aichinger, *At War*, 20, 46, 51-52. There are disparities in the numbers in various sources.

⁴⁷ Arnold to Schuyler, Apr. 20, 1776, *AA* 4/5:1099.

⁴⁸ Colin G. Calloway, *The Indian History of an American Institution: Native Americans and Dartmouth* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2010), 43; idem., "Sentinels of the Revolution: Bedel's New Hampshire Rangers and the Abenaki Indians on the Upper Connecticut," *Historical New Hampshire* 45 (1990): 277-78.

warned Butterfield that, were the fort to fall, he had too few White soldiers with him to control the warriors and prevent a massacre. After several hours of reflection, Butterfield agreed to evacuate the fort and allow Forster to take its defenders as prisoners in exchange for a promise that they not be harmed. So ended the confrontation.⁴⁹

As historian Alan Taylor has pointed out with regard to General William Hull's even more precipitous surrender of Detroit during the War of 1812, "Indian hating was double-edged. It initially aroused white men to fight, but ultimately invited them to fear." The terror felt by their enemies was a strategic boon for Native warriors, magnifying the image of ferocity they assiduously projected through war paint and war cries. Butterfield capitulated to avert his greatest fear: that his men would be massacred. His fear was not baseless; he was no doubt familiar with sensational versions of the very real story of the bloody end to the siege of Fort William Henry during the Seven Years' War.⁵⁰ Forster encouraged Butterfield to think in binary terms: would the European norms surrounding prisoners of war held by Forster and his very few British and Canadian fighters prevail over those of the many Natives, which could lead to torture, scalping, and death? Bedel might have proven a more difficult mark. Given his experience with them, Bedel would have understood the Natives' interest in seizing goods and using prisoners as bargaining chips or objects for ransom.⁵¹ Euro-American prisoners might be worth more alive than dead.

As it was, the Natives at The Cedars were mostly appeased with the right to take booty: they cleaned out the fortification and stripped the soldiers of their possessions—including some of their clothes.⁵² White observers who looked down on the "plundering" ways of Indian warriors did not appreciate the material dimension of their war complex—and probably gave little thought to the poor wages of their own soldiery, for that matter. The Native warriors had come a great distance, and incurred a significant opportunity cost, so they considered this their due.

⁴⁹ The day after Butterfield's surrender, 60-80 warriors under de Lorimier, assisted by a party of Canadians, defeated a rebel relief column under Major Henry Sherburne at Quinze Chênes. Stevens, "His Majesty's," 618-622; Mark R. Anderson, *The Battle for the Fourteenth Colony: America's War of Liberation in Canada, 1774-1776* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2013), 320-22; Graymont, *Iroquois*, 94.

⁵⁰ Taylor, *Civil War of 1812: American Citizens, British Subjects, Irish Rebels and Indian Allies* (New York: Knopf, 2011), 157. Taylor was describing Hull's surrender at Detroit, a scenario with parallels to the Cedars. On Fort William Henry, see Steele, *Betrayals: Fort William Henry & the "Massacre"* (New York: Oxford, 1993).

⁵¹ Brett Rushforth, *Bonds of Alliance: Indigenous and Atlantic Slavery in New France* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012).

⁵² Aichinger, *At War*, 53. As a Cayuga speaker at a 1776 council stated, "We apprehend that our people were rather induced by the hopes of procuring clothing for themselves." "General Schuyler's Conference with the Indians of the Six Nations, [August] 1776" AA 5/1:1048.

The British Indian Coalition Takes Shape

Britain reasserted control of the colony after troops began landing by the shipload at Quebec City beginning on May 8. The rebel occupation force in Quebec quickly dispersed. Winter and smallpox had taken a horrific toll on the rebel army. Nearly 800 of the 2500 American soldiers in Canada were reported sick at the end of March. Indeed, some units reported many more sick men than effectives. Schuyler sent a message to the Six Nations in the late winter accusing the British of having intentionally introduced the disease to Bostonians, likely intending the comment to suggest a sense of identity between the American-born rebels and Natives.⁵³ (The settler population had lost their immunity as they were far enough removed from the Old World that smallpox was no longer endemic.) However, the rebels' early hopes that French Canadians would join the rebellion had long since faded into oblivion, and the smallpox epidemic eclipsed any remaining prospects of success.⁵⁴ Men went home as their enlistments expired.

As rebel domination along the St. Lawrence weakened, Native communities moved quickly to the British side. The Wendat of Lorette, near Quebec City, had already been shuttling back and forth to Akwesasne and providing Carleton with intelligence of doings to the west. He quickly held a council with them, as well as Abenakis, Micmacs, Kanehsatakes, and Nipissings. Carleton enlisted Natives to scout and screen his army's roll up the St. Lawrence toward Montreal—much as they would be asked to do along Lake Champlain and toward Saratoga later in that year and the next. In late June, Carleton held a council with the Seven Nations in the Jesuit church in Montreal at which they agreed to assist him.⁵⁵ Two more parties of Natives from the West arrived in July, about three weeks apart, but the invading Patriot army they had been recruited to fight had already left. However, Carleton was careful to praise and reward those who had come so far in support of the British. They would be needed in 1777. As many as two dozen western warriors decided to pass the winter near the St. Lawrence, where they would be better able to gauge the events taking place. Carleton sent the rest home with presents and promised to deliver more. Per his orders, they were to travel via Niagara and Detroit to showcase British influence to the largest possible Native audience.⁵⁶

Rebel defeats at Quebec and The Cedars gave the upper hand to those of the Seven Nations who felt their interests lay with the British. They steered their communities toward a policy of mutually beneficial cooperation with Crown forces.

⁵³ Schuyler to the Six Nations, Mar. 1776, i53-2-93, PCC.

⁵⁴ Fenn, *Pox Americana*, 87.

⁵⁵ Max von Eelking, ed., *Memoirs and Letters and Journals of Major-General Riedesel* trans. William Stone (Albany, NY: Munsell, 1868) I, 47-48.

⁵⁶ Stevens, "His Majesty's," 695-96.

Meeting with Carleton in Montreal shortly after the American evacuation, they excused their recent toleration of the rebel occupation by saying they were just following the advice of an “elder,” referring to the Oneidas.⁵⁷ The previous year, Carleton had been quite understanding of the Kahnawakes’ predicament, and he remained favorably disposed—but he now insisted they prove their bona fides by taking positive action. De Lorimier accompanied them to the Richelieu River and observed that “They succeeded in destroying a boatload of Americans, killed or taken prisoner.” Having executed their mission, Carleton formally pardoned them. From that point onward, they remained firmly on the British side, although other nations occasionally harassed them. De Lorimier complained, “we had a good deal of difficulty in preserving the Caughnawagas from the insults of the other nations, because they had decided to consider the Caughnawagas as enemies of the King.”⁵⁸ Carleton was pleased to see that, piece by piece, his Native coalition was falling into place for the following year’s campaign. Carleton was not incorrect—except to assume that *he* would be leading them. By then, it would be Burgoyne’s coalition.

One Kahnawake who could not be brought back within the British fold, however, was Louis Cook. After the Patriots evacuated Fort St. John, Arnold sent the army upriver toward Lake Champlain. Then, Arnold, Cook and Captain James Wilkinson headed along the road to Chambly until they encountered Burgoyne’s advance guard. According to Wilkinson, they

reconnoitred it a few minutes, then galloped back to St. John’s, and stripping our horses, Arnold shot his own, and ordered me to follow his example, which I did with reluctance. The sun was now down, and the enemy’s front in view, when we took an affectionate leave of. . . Louis [Cook], the faithful chief of the Cachnawaga tribe, and the only Canadian who accompanied the army in its retreat from Canada: he cast a sorrowful look at our boat, and retired precipitously into the adjacent forest. He continued firm in his attention to our cause throughout the revolutionary contest.⁵⁹

But Cook had to make himself scarce at Kahnawake now. He went to New York City, where he saw Washington, and then moved on to Oneida.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Eelking, *Riedesel*, 48.

⁵⁸ Aichinger, *At War*, 60.

⁵⁹ James Wilkinson, *Memoirs of My Own Times* (Philadelphia: Abraham Small, 1816) 1:54-55.

⁶⁰ Washington to Schuyler, Oct. 10, 1776, *Writings of Washington*, ed. John C. Fitzpatrick (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1931), 6:192-93.

Prelude to 1777

The Patriots had retreated far southward but continued to patrol Lake Champlain with what Carleton described as “a considerable naval force.” To “clear the Lake,” he assembled his own.⁶¹ The construction of the fleet consumed much of the summer and fall and reflected Carleton’s characteristically deliberate way of proceeding. The enemy took the opportunity not just to escape, but to regroup. Carleton’s construction extravaganza surely appeared downright bizarre to the Natives.⁶² However, it got the British off their backs. Many returned home. Major-General William Phillips’ General Orders of September 8 admonished soldiers against giving the Natives liquor and specifically stated that “any Women who shall be detected in having given or sold Rum to the Indians, shall be directly turned out of the Camp.”⁶³ As historian Paul Lawrence Stevens observed, the leisurely start to proceedings gave Generals Burgoyne and Fraser plenty of opportunities to observe Native auxiliaries and ponder their use. Fraser opined that “the nature of the country can admit of their turning large corps of the enemy, surprising convoys and making them uneasy in their rear.”⁶⁴ In September, parties of warriors from farther afield, including Odawas and Abenakis, reconnoitered and harassed the rebels, causing Arnold at Isle La Motte to complain that “the woods is full of Indians.”⁶⁵ Fraser essentially saw the Indigenous warriors as fit for surprise attacks on enemy detachments and stragglers, which gave them the felicitous ability to “fatigue the enemy exceedingly by constant alarms.”⁶⁶ Burgoyne agreed, but was also fascinated with the psychological impact they might have on the enemy. Carleton was more circumspect. Although he wished to use them as Fraser articulated, he was of the opinion that terrifying the opponent was counterproductive in a conflict where the hearts and minds of the civilian population were part of the contest.

It was already October when Carleton arrived and the 90-gun fleet was ready to sail. No fewer than 641 Native warriors turned out to assist the British force of 7000, and they brought their own fleet of birch bark canoes, which they no doubt found more nimble than flatboats. Natives accounted for as much as a quarter of the British forces

⁶¹ Carleton to De Peyster, Oct. 6, 1776.

⁶² Piers Mackesy, *War for America* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992 [1964]), 94-95.

⁶³ These strictures apparently did not quell the problem, as the orders of the 13th stated, “There being reason to suspect that some of the Soldiers sell their Allowance of Rum to the Indians, it is ordered that all Rum... be mixed with Water, under the Inspection of an Officer before they receive it.” *Hadden’s Journal*, 278, 281.

⁶⁴ *Hadden’s Journal*, 278.

⁶⁵ Benedict Arnold to Horatio Gates, Sept. 16, 1776, AA 5/2, 532; J. F. Wasmus, *An Eyewitness Account of the American Revolution and New England Life* trans. Helga Doblin ed. Mary C. Lynn (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1990). 30; Digby, *British Invasion*, 142-45 for Indians both scouting and guarding against rebel scouts around this time.

⁶⁶ Quoted in Stevens, “His Majesty’s,” 792.

who took part in the action on the lake, and were accompanied by two British captains—Christopher Carleton and Alexander Fraser, the Mohawk-speaking nephews of the generals. Prefiguring their work in the 1777 campaign, Natives tracked and fired on the Patriot boats from the shore, most notably during the Battle of Valcour Bay, and were a scourge to anyone seeking supplies or respite on land. As Arnold withdrew, he burned his fleet, including one vessel with his dead on board, thereby depriving the warriors of scalps. Indeed, a rumor circulated among the British that some had still been alive, and that Arnold was sparing them capture by Natives, but there is no evidence for this.⁶⁷

With much of their fleet destroyed by the superior British one, the Patriots retreated to Fort Ticonderoga. Natives helped the British reconnoiter the area around Crown Point and Ticonderoga. Carleton decided against making an attempt on Ticonderoga or settling in on the lake for the winter. He saw little gain for the resources it would require to hold it over the winter and called time on the expedition. After all, Quebec City was safe. Burgoyne dissented, and set off on a swift round-trip visit to London to see to it that he would have his chance in 1777's campaign.⁶⁸

Meanwhile, among the Native nations, the political status quo held through the first half of 1777. Patriot victories at Trenton and Princeton were enough to shore up confidence among pro-American elements, while self-interest—reinforced with lobbying, gifts, and threats—was enough to keep the Seven Nations and Mohawks, Cayugas, Senecas, and some Onondagas behind Britain. Any diplomatic movement was stymied by an epidemic. The culprit was probably the smallpox that had decimated Patriot forces earlier in the year. Now it claimed 90 lives at Onondaga, causing the extinguishment of the council fire.⁶⁹ The deliberative institution that strove for consensus and cohesion was suspended, leaving each nation free to pursue its inclinations.

⁶⁷ Aichinger, *At War*, 61; Hadden's *Journal*, 24; Eelking, *Riedesel*, 68-69, 79-80; Christopher Ward, *War of the Revolution* (New York: Macmillan, 1953), 392, 394, 396; John R. Bratten, *The Gondola Philadelphia and the Battle of Lake Champlain* (College Station: 148 Texas A & M Press, 2002), 58, 59, 64, 65, 70 (on Arnold's act); J. Robert Maguire, "Dr. Robert Knox's Account of the Battle of Valcour, October 11-13, 1776" *Vermont History* 46 (1978): 145-46, 148.

⁶⁸ Eelking, *Riedesel*, 79-80; William B. Willcox, "Too Many Cooks: British Planning Before Saratoga" *Journal of British Studies* 2 (1962): 56-90.

⁶⁹ Graymont, *Iroquois*, 113; Fenton, *Great Law*, 14.

Part Eight:

Native Americans and the Northern Campaign Of 1777

Canada to Fort Edward

British officer Lieutenant Thomas Anburey described the passage of Burgoyne's army southward along Lake Champlain in June 1777 as "the most complete and splendid regatta you can possible conceive." At the front were "the Indians...with their birch canoes, containing twenty or thirty in each."¹ This Indigenous fleet would have counted more than twenty vessels, as the 500 warriors from across the Seven Nations, as well as Ojibwes, were accompanied by women, children, and dogs. This was about half the number of Indigenous auxiliaries Burgoyne had planned for, but an equal number of warriors from the *pays d'en haut* were gathering in Montreal.² At the Boquet River, Burgoyne delivered them a patronizing speech which, although the translators did their jobs, was easily enough ignored.

Indigenous warriors fanned out toward the Connecticut River, Otter Creek, and Wood Creek, scouting and striking fear into Patriots. They greatly facilitated Burgoyne's approach to Fort Ticonderoga by preventing Patriot reconnoitering of his advancing army. The US commander there, Arthur St. Clair, expressed his distress to Schuyler that "the woods are so full of Indians, that it difficult for parties to get through." The immediate environs of the fort were hardly safer. Scouts and foragers were sufficiently likely to be scalped or taken prisoner in the vicinity that their activity was severely reduced. St. Clair continued, "We cannot venture the teams now without a strong guard, and so many parties as we are obliged to make, with the fatigues, will very soon wear down our men. We can do nothing but form conjectures about the force of the enemy, for I cannot find a single person, on whom I can depend to venture amongst them for intelligence."³ On July 2, Seven Nations warriors alongside Fraser's Rangers and Jessup's King's Loyal Americans prevailed against the Patriots in a skirmish near the fort.⁴ On July 4, de Lorimier, scouting with five Kahnawakes, climbed Mount Defiance and identified an eminence that could support artillery. The placement of cannon there

¹ Anburey, *With Burgoyne from Quebec*, 131.

² William Digby, *The British Invasion From the North: The Campaigns of General Carleton and Burgoyne from Canada, 1776-1777* ed. James Phinney Baxter (Albany, NY: Joel Munsell's Sons, 1887), 201; Stevens, "His Majesty's," 1012.

³ Arthur St. Clair to Philip Schuyler, June 28, 1777, *Collections of the New-York Historical Society* 12 (1880): 18-19. See also same to same, June 26, 1777, 17-18.

⁴ Schnitzer and Troiani, *Don Troiani's Campaign to Saratoga—1777* (Guilford, Conn.: Stackpole, 2019), 45.

would compromise the security of the fort below. Fraser immediately ordered the Natives and engineers to prepare the spot.⁵ St. Clair, seeing the activity and realizing his danger, hastily but stealthily withdrew his men overnight between July 5 and 6.⁶ The escape from Fort Ticonderoga was a remarkable feat, but its seemingly sudden abandonment demoralized the Patriot movement. Indeed, the criticism of St. Clair and Schuyler was so intense that both officers requested and received courts martial to clear them of wrongdoing.

Burgoyne had sent most of the Seven Nations warriors east to threaten New England, so relatively few were present to detect or pursue the withdrawing Patriots, or to plunder the fort when it fell. While some of those who were stayed back to collect spoils, most joined the pursuit, led by Captain Alexander Fraser. They caught up to some of the Patriots at Hubbardton. They fought a fierce battle on July 7, during which most of the Patriots escaped.⁷ The following day, de Lorimier and a Seven Nations party protected the retreat of Lieutenant-Colonel John Hill's forces, who had been surrounded by a superior number of Patriot soldiers sent out from Fort Anne. According to de Lorimier, the warriors' war whoops sent the rebels into retreat.⁸ But what came next—nothing much—was a reminder to the Seven Nations of what it meant to travel as auxiliaries to a European force. As soldier Roger Lamb noted, the army was “now obliged to suspend all operations for some time, and wait at Skenesborough for the arrival of provisions and tents.”⁹ During this period, Burgoyne sent some of his Indigenous allies to make contact with St. Leger's diversionary expedition.¹⁰ Still others returned to Fort Ticonderoga and some just went home. What they did not do was harass the Patriots felling trees and putting debris in Burgoyne's path per Schuyler's orders.¹¹

On the Patriot side, the impact of what Native help they enjoyed to that point only underscored its paucity. Brockholst Livingston, an aide to Schuyler, wrote from Fort Edward on July 21 that “An Indian scout of ours returned this morning and

⁵ De Lorimier, “Mes services pendant la Guerre Américaine” in H.A.B. Verreau, ed., *Invasion du Canada: Collection de Mémoires* (Montreal: Eusèbe Senécal, 1873), 288.

⁶ Stevens, “His Majesty's,” 1139-42.

⁷ Colonel John A. Williams, *The Battle of Hubbardton: The American Rebels Stem the Tide* (Montpelier, Vt.: Vermont Division for Historical Preservation, 1988).

⁸ Verreau, *Invasion*, 289; Lamb stated the warriors balked at engaging the Americans, and gave credit for the whoop to a British captain, but this seems implausible. Roger Lamb, *An Original and Authentic Journal of Occurrences During the Late American War* (Dublin, Ireland: Wilkinson and Courtenay, 1809), 142; Michael Jacobson, “Fort Anne: Remembering the Continental Army's First Stand Against Burgoyne” *Journal of the American Revolution*. Accessed Nov. 14, 2022. https://allthingsliberty.com/2017/03/fort-anne-remembering-continental-armys-first-stand-burgoyne/#_edn31.

⁹ Lamb, *Journal of Occurrences*, 144.

¹⁰ Burgoyne to Germain, July 11, 1777, *Documents of the American Revolution 1770-1783* ed. K. G. Davies ([Shannon]: Irish University Press, 1972-1981), 14:141, for warriors sent to St. Leger.

¹¹ Stevens, “His Majesty's,” 1153-57.

brought with them five prisoners. The enemy, not knowing we had Indians in our service, were decoyed, thinking them their own. The prisoners were taken near Skenesborough.” The scout involved was in all likelihood composed of Stockbridges. Livingston was in no celebratory mood, however. He added glumly that “Our strength is considerably reduced since my last, a great part of the militia being dismissed to reap their harvests. They were a most disorderly set, and deserted by whole companies.”¹² Livingston’s situation was about to become much worse.

Native assistance to Britain had received a jolt on July 17 with the arrival at Burgoyne’s camp of the contingent from the *pays d’en haut*. Four hundred Chippewas, Odawas, Menominees, Ho-Chunks, Sauk, Fox, Potawatomes, and Santee Sioux arrived with La Corne St-Luc.¹³ Perhaps only a few hours after Livingston had written, Patriot Captain Benjamin Warren, also at Fort Edward, reported that five men from Patriot Captain Daniel Lane’s 34-man scout to the north came in after “they were surrounded by the Indians.” The fate of the remaining 29 men became somewhat clearer the next day when seven more escapees arrived. They stated the rest had been killed or taken prisoner. On the 23rd, one of the fort’s sentries was killed and scalped and the other carried off in broad daylight, prompting the rapid mobilization of the brigade. According to Warren, the pursuit ended in “a smart engagement. . .that lasted 28 minutes” between the Massachusetts soldiers and a force that “consisted mostly of Indians.” (The precision of the timekeeping was not explained.) The Americans killed ten and wounded another ten, but sustained eight killed and 15 wounded among their own.¹⁴ The harassment continued as they withdrew from Fort Edward down the east bank of the Hudson. About four miles south, at their first stop, “a place called mount Pleasant though wrongly named,” they were joined by a hundred men. Two were killed and scalped the next morning. On the 26th, warriors “came so near our encampment that the century [sic] fired on them.” The warriors then attacked a guard near Fort Edward, killing seven of the twenty men and wounding others. The household of a farmer named John Allen was also attacked; six of his family died, as well as two enslaved people. Benjamin Warren also noted that “They also took two women out of a house, killed and scalpt them.”¹⁵

In fact, only one of the pair had been killed—the famous Jane McCrea. Her scalping would become a cause célèbre, despite the mysteries and ironies of her case.

¹² Frederic Kidder, “Lieut. Thomas Blake’s Journal, History of the First New Hampshire Regiment in the War of the Revolution (Albany, N.Y.: Joel Munsell, 1866), 29; Brockholst Livingston to William Livingston, July 21, 1777, Sparks, ed., *Correspondence of the American Revolution* 2:515.

¹³ Stevens, “His Majesty’s,” 1157-58.

¹⁴ Benjamin Warren, “Diary of Captain Benjamin Warren,” *Journal of American History* 3 (1909): 203-4; Schnitzer and Troiani, *Campaign*, 83.

¹⁵ [Asa Fitch], “The Massacre of the Allen Family,” *NYG&BR* 73 (1942): 83-95; Warren, 205; Warren’s relation of events is corroborated by Blake, “Journal,” 30.

The reason for the killing itself remains unclear. She was presumably seized in order to be presented to the British as a prisoner, for which her captor could claim a reward. It is ironic that she belonged to a Loyalist family. According to a Western chief, her killing had been precipitated by a dispute between two warriors over who could claim her. As had been the case at Saratoga in 1745, a dispute had erupted over the disposition of a captive. Given the Indigenous practice of killing captives for their scalps, these disputes could endanger the captive and disrupt relations among fighters. To the misfortune of the British, their Indigenous allies, and McCrea especially, both outcomes took place. The warriors at least temporarily suspended their dispute by scalping her, but the sight of her scalp distressed some British soldiers. Burgoyne escalated matters by calling for the warrior's execution by hanging. His proposed solution was born of the harsh exemplary justice of the British Army. Not just the sentence but the specific method in turn violated Indigenous sensibilities, much as it had at Kahnawake earlier in the war and Quebec City before that. The McCrea affair strained relations between Burgoyne and his Native allies. McCrea's story eventually spread widely among the settler population and became a prominent and persistent element in the popular discourse of Native savagery. However, contrary to popular belief, it did not do so quickly enough to spark a mass mobilization in time for the Battles of Saratoga.¹⁶

The soldiers from Fort Edward continued their retreat. Captain Benjamin Warren reported that as they proceeded to Fort Miller, about halfway to Saratoga, "the Indians crept between our rear guard and the body and killed and scalpt an inhabitant that was watching his pigs." Despite precautions they took as they attempted to fortify an encampment on the 29th, "the Indians crawled up, shot one of our sentrys through the neck: Same day killed and scalped a serjant." With 400 Natives pressing on either side, the Patriot army was ordered to continue the retreat all the way to Saratoga, where Schuyler was at his estate.¹⁷ Sometime during these days, a Seven Nations party in the company of some Canadian habitants surrounded a house in Easton, probably that of Zebulon Hoxsie. Recognizing the people inside as Quakers, they entered, shook hands with the congregants, conversed with one who spoke French, ate some bread and cheese, and left.¹⁸

¹⁶ Stevens, "His Majesty's," 1174n29-31; Colonel John Peters, Defence of the Provincials and Indians against Burgoyne's charges, Dec. 9, 1779, BV Peters, NYHS; Brian Burns, "Massacre or Muster? Burgoyne's Indians and the Militia at Bennington," *Vermont History* 45 (1977): 133-44.

¹⁷ Schnitzer and Troiani, *Campaign*, 86; Warren, "Diary," 204-06; Blake, "Journal," 30-31.

¹⁸ Joseph Bruchac, *The Arrow Over the Door* (New York: Dial Books, 1998) offers a fictionalized account of this episode. Dorothy M. Williams, "Feathers of Peace" *Quaker History* 65 (1976): 32-34; *The Friend* 7 (8) (Nov. 30, 1833): 60; "Washington County, N.Y. Quaker Records," New York Genealogical and Biographical Record 46 (1915): 122-23, provides a more sensationalistic, and decidedly un-Quaker, version. These Quakers were recent immigrants from Dutchess County and New England.

Indigenous activity on behalf of Britain reached its crescendo on the upper Hudson in the first half of August. Massachusetts militiaman Simeon Alexander described how “the Indians were all around us in the woods and frequently shot down our sentries while on duty.” On August 3, Captain Fraser, his Rangers, and their Seven Nations allies ambushed Schuyler’s advance guard at McNeil’s Ferry, just north of Saratoga. Alexander survived, but seven rebels were captured and about twenty killed and wounded. A similar number were lost in another engagement to the south and west.¹⁹ A downbeat Schuyler wrote Governor Clinton the next day from Stillwater asking him to hasten reinforcements because of the “extreamly weak Situation we are in, and a powerful army, flushed with success advancing with hasty strides towards us.”²⁰ A soldier at Stillwater, William Weeks, lamented on August 6 that “One Hundred Indians in the Woods do us more harm than 1000 British Troops.” He specifically complained about the toll the scalp-hunting took on soldiers and civilians alike—and the fact that the Indigenous warriors enjoyed the assistance of local Loyalists.²¹ Warren noted two majors and three soldiers were taken on the 8th—and hailed the first Indigenous scalp taken by the rebels.²² On the 11th, Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., deplored how “200 Indians now strike terror & dismay not only on the inhabitants but into a whole army” and wrote of the “depression of spirits” in Albany. In his estimation, “This town is just falling”—only at “Still Water where. . . [was there] any hope of stand^s against an approach^s enemy.”²³

But then the attacks slowed. The entire Indigenous contingent from the *pays d’en haut*, as well many of the Seven Nations warriors, decided to return home. So far as they were concerned, they had collected sufficient trophies, rewards, and plunder to have made their efforts worthwhile to their communities and themselves, and they had acquitted their obligations to the British. The harvest, fall hunt, and ceremonies required their attention. They had already informed Burgoyne of their intentions on August 5. While he allowed some of the Seven Nations warriors to depart at that time, he convinced all the others to stay on to help him reach Albany by the end of the month. However, the campaign’s Indigenous participants reconsidered matters after the disastrous Battle of Bennington on August 16. On August 9, about 150 Seven Nations warriors had departed with Lieutenant-Colonel Friedrich Baum’s men to gather supplies and warn off New Englanders coming to join the rebels. Heading toward Bennington, the warriors grew uneasy as it appeared to them that Baum was unprepared

¹⁹ Dann, *Revolution Remembered*, 108-09; Schnitzer and Troiani, *Campaign*, 88; Blake Journal, 31.

²⁰ Schuyler to Clinton, Aug. 4, 1777, 2pm, CX555/f. 1, AIHA.

²¹ William Weeks to Clement Weeks, Aug. 6, 1777, in *Five Straws Gathered from Revolutionary Fields*, ed. Hiram Bingham, Cambridge, Mass.: n.p., 1901); Schnitzer and Troiani, *Campaign*, 89.

²² Warren, “Diary,” 207.

²³ Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., to Jonathan Trumbull, Aug. 11, 1777, *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 7th ser. 2 (1902): 109-10.

and overmatched by the Patriots, whose numbers and enthusiasm under General John Stark exceeded expectations. In an initial skirmish, two Seven Nations chiefs were killed.²⁴ De Lorimier delivered the Seven Nations' advice to Baum to retreat. Baum ultimately decided that his orders precluded doing so and opted to wait for reinforcements or orders from Burgoyne himself. A relief force, led by Captain Breymann, was en route, but it had left late and traveled slowly—much too slowly. The Seven Nations warriors took up a somewhat more defensible position in the hopes of parrying Stark's predictable assault. While most of Baum's force was killed or captured, they fled, but still suffered at least seven deaths and more wounded.²⁵ Only about thirty (including Asseragoa [Martin] and Jakonowe) returned with a wounded de Lorimier to Burgoyne's army, while the rest went directly home to Odanak, Kahnawake, and other Laurentian communities. On the 19th, an ill-tempered council ensued at the Batten Kill. Speaking through St-Luc and Langlade, the Indigenous warriors from the Western nations bade Burgoyne adieu. They considered Burgoyne an "evil spirit," faulting him not simply for failing to reinforce Baum, but also for not retrieving his dead. Burgoyne declined to provide supplies for their return trip. He would go on to pin blame for his defeat on the Western nations' desertion, but Baum's failure had made it easy for them to predict his. A British soldier at Ticonderoga, witnessing the Indigenous warriors streaming back toward Canada, recalled that "the return of the Indians we thought a bad omen, as they seldom leave a victorious army." Carleton was careful not to repeat Burgoyne's faux pas of not supplying as the Western warriors passed through Montreal "as it is a matter of importance to the King's service that these Indians go home fully satisfied."²⁶

Meanwhile, the fifty warriors of the Seven Nations who remained with Burgoyne took an increasingly conservative approach to their work. Scouts went out to appease an irascible and frustrated general but, taking fewer risks, they saw less and created fewer disturbances. Britain's soldiers felt the change. According to Daniel Claus, the warriors' departure "emboldened the rebels to assemble in such numbers ab[ou]t it, when before they were in awe of the Indians."²⁷

²⁴ Stark to the Council of New-Hampshire, Aug. 18, 1777, in *Memoir and Correspondence of Stark*, 127. As the Stockbridges' missionary Timothy Edwards wrote, the warriors of that community had "set out too late to reape any of the glory of our late victory there." Edwards to Gates, Aug. 26, 1777, Gates Papers, NYHS.

²⁵ Stevens, "His Majesty's," 1205.

²⁶ Digby, *British Invasion*, 253; St. Luc to Burgoyne, Oct. 23, 1778 in Horatio Rogers, ed. *Hadden's Journal and Orderly Books* (Albany, NY: J. Munsell, 1884), 530-31; quoted in Ostola 100. The Western Indians were sufficiently satisfied that DePeyster was able to recruit another 550 from the Great Lakes to go to Montreal the following year. They were ultimately not needed. *Wisconsin Historical Collections* 11 (1888): 111.

²⁷ Claus to Knox, Nov. 6, 1777, NYCD 8:726.

Repercussions from the Mohawk Valley

Deserontyon and his Tiononderoge Mohawk warriors had taken up exile at Lachine. Deserontyon had traveled to Quebec City and met Burgoyne in early May 1777.²⁸ The following month, he was leading thirty to forty warriors scouting around Fort Schuyler, on the portage between the Mohawk River and Wood Creek, in support of brevet Brig.-General Barry St. Leger's planned diversionary campaign down the St. Lawrence and Mohawk Rivers. They had supplied accurate information about the fort's defenses, but the British did not prepare accordingly. Senecas, Cayugas, Mohawks, and western Indians including Ojibwes, Potawatomes, and Wyandots, set an ambush for a relief column of Tryon County militiamen en route to the fort. Unbeknownst to some (but not all) of the Natives lying in wait, the militiamen had the benefit of an Oneida vanguard. When the ambush was sprung, brutal hand-to-hand fighting took place that was reminiscent of the events at 'Bloody Pond' near Fort George during the Seven Years' War. The overall number of men killed was around 500—and included as many as thirty Oneidas as well as 65 Natives on the British side. Between their losses, regret over fighting other Natives, and exaggerated reports of a much larger American relief force on the way, St. Leger's Indigenous allies withdrew their support for his campaign. Furious with each other, the Mohawks and Oneidas exacted revenge by promptly sacking one another's villages along the Mohawk. The losses catalogued from the Mohawk villages in particular demonstrate the degree to which some Mohawks had adopted the material culture of the English. Claims were filed for the loss of framed houses, ploughs, cattle, books, and even carriages.²⁹ This retribution had been swift, but it was conspicuously bloodless. Although some individuals dissented, Haudenosaunee communities on both sides of the conflict accepted that killing one another ran counter to their interests and ideology.

As St. Leger returned to Montreal, attention shifted toward the action along the Hudson. On August 22, Joseph Brant and three other Mohawks hastened to the upper Hudson. They joined Burgoyne somewhere between the Batten Kill and Fort Edward on the 29th.³⁰ Neither personal observation of the army nor a meeting with the general improved Brant's opinion of Burgoyne's prospects. He consulted with the Seven Nations in Burgoyne's camp to urge them to continue to support Great Britain.³¹ Then he left. As Brant's biographer, Isabel Thompson Kelsay, noted, "Apparently Joseph did

²⁸ "Account of Captain John's Service, Dec. 1809," Draper Manuscripts 14F49, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis.

²⁹ NYCD 8:725. David Guldenzopf, "The Colonial Transformation of Mohawk Iroquois Society" (Ph.D. diss., SUNY-Albany, 1986), 199-208; Wonderley, "An Oneida Community in 1780: Study of an Inventory of Iroquois Property Losses during the Revolutionary War" *Northeast Anthropology* 56 (1998): 19-42.

³⁰ Francis Napier, "Lord Francis Napier's Journal of the Burgoyne Campaign" ed. S. Sydney Bradford *Maryland Historical Magazine* 57 (1962): 311.

³¹ Daniel Claus, *Anecdotes of Joseph Brant*, DCF, v. 2:58-59, LAC.

not like what he saw at Burgoyne's camp, for he soon returned, and escorted Molly, and perhaps his mother, to their relatives among the Cayugas."³² If the rest of the world greeted the outcome of the Battles of Saratoga with a sense of shock, the Mohawks were already amply skeptical of Burgoyne's odds of success.

Deserontyon also came down from Oriskany, but had stopped at Tiononderoge to collect any Mohawks willing to join Burgoyne. Deserontyon had already met Burgoyne in Quebec Approaching Burgoyne's camp on September 4, Deserontyon's warriors ambushed a large Patriot scouting party, killing nine and scalping four while losing three of their own. With Deserontyon's reinforcement, Burgoyne now had about 200 Natives in his camp, of whom 90 were warriors. Most of the warriors were Tiononderoge and Kahnawake Mohawks, with some Abenakis present as well. (That these Abenakis were resident at Akwesasne seems likely, since they had the closest ties with the Mohawks. The people of Odanak and Wôlinak, sensing British defeat in upper New England, were at this time moving to the upper Connecticut valley and seeking a closer relationship with the Patriots.) On September 10, a scout composed of League Mohawk, Kahnawake Mohawk, and Abenaki warriors reported the Continental Army's presence at Stillwater.³³

The repulse of St. Leger at Fort Stanwix had strengthened the case of those Natives who supported the Patriots. General Horatio Gates, who succeeded Schuyler as commander of the Continental Army's Northern Department, had between 26 and 29 Mohicans among his troops. Most had set out from Stockbridge to join Stark at Bennington but, as their missionary Timothy Edwards observed, they had left "too late, to reap any of the glory of our late victory there." About half of them served together under Abraham Nimham and Jehoiakim Mtohsin while the others were scattered among different regiments.³⁴ Meanwhile, Louis Cook was helping the Patriots enlist more Indigenous support. On the 7th, he met with Schuyler, who continued in his capacity as commissioner of Indian Affairs. Schuyler wrote Gates to advise him to give Louis and the others a tour of his encampments and to stress the good prospects for reinforcement from New England. Doing so would be a "means of inducing [them] to join you."³⁵ Schuyler's tone when he wrote Congress was more petulant. His pique at their having had his command taken away now added to his usual expressions of ennui regarding his responsibilities for Indigenous diplomacy. He declared his intention to resign all his commissions, and urged them to attend to his replacement as Indian

³² Isabel Thompson Kelsay, *Joseph Brant 1743-1807: Man of Two Worlds* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1984), 208.

³³ Stevens, "His Majesty's," 1360, 1387-88.

³⁴ Timothy Edwards to Horatio Gates, Aug. 26, 1777, Gates Papers, NYHS. One deserted to the British on September 1. Bradford, ed., "Napier's Journal," 312-13.

³⁵ Schuyler to Gates, Sept. 7, 1777, Letterbook 3:368, PSP.

commissioner “without delay.” He complained that “the Indian affairs...daily engage much of my attention, from the very frequent Messages and Belts I receive from them.” He reminded them to take care to find someone with the requisite experience in Haudenosaunee diplomacy, as “The business to be transacted with them will be of the first importance, and require some address to be presented with propriety.”³⁶

Having blown off some steam, Schuyler was of course present to meet the 300 Haudenosaunee men, women, and children, who began arriving on September 14th. He notified Gates on the 15th that he was initiating the condolence ceremony (“the usual Ceremony of mutual Congratulations, which they will not dispense with”) and expressed his hopes “to procure some of them to join you.”³⁷ Gates was of the opinion that “Some Faithful Indians would be of Infinite Service to this Army, to Assist Colonel [Daniel] Morgans Corps as Spies & Guides.”³⁸ To that end, during the course of the council proceedings, Schuyler presented them with a wampum belt emblazoned with a hatchet and held a war feast. According to the few Onondagas present, the “Oneidas and Tuscaroras told the Onondaga’s that they really meant to use the hatchet against the King’s Troops, and that they did intend by so doing to get the three Prisoners of the Mohawk, Seneca, and Onondago Nations released and to continue in peace with all the Indians.”³⁹ In other words, even if they were fighting for the United States, they wished to avoid harming Natives fighting for the British and would even, if possible, help them. The warriors were being equipped on the 19th when word of the Battle of Freeman’s Farm arrived that evening.⁴⁰

Native Americans at the Battles of Saratoga

As part of a detachment of Loyalists and Canadian militiamen under Riedesel’s command, the Seven Nations warriors were involved in the first engagement of September 19: a skirmish on the flats near Mill Creek. The British losses there were significant: thirteen dead and thirty-five captured. Other warriors were scouting for Riedesel that day, crossing large swaths of territory to report enemy movements.⁴¹ There were no complaints about their performance, but the same cannot be said of the Abenaki warriors supporting General Simon Fraser’s attack on Morgan’s riflemen at the outset of the fighting.⁴² Amburey reproached the Seven Nations warriors for not

³⁶ Schuyler to Hancock, Aug. 15, 1777, i153-v3-p246-47, PCC. This letter was written at “Fort’s 3 Miles south of Stillwater.”

³⁷ Schuyler to Gates, Sept. 15, 1777, Letterbook 3:371, PSP.

³⁸ Quoted in Joseph T. Glatthaar and James Kirby Martin, *Forgotten Allies: The Oneida Indians and the American Revolution* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2007), 178.

³⁹ Report of a Council Held at Niagara with the Senecas, Cayugas, Onondagas, Tuscaroras, Oneidas, &c, June 10, 1778.

⁴⁰ Schuyler to Hancock, Sept. 27, 1777, i153,v3:252, PCC.

⁴¹ Stevens, “His Majesty’s,” 1403, Eelking, *Riedesel*, 148.

⁴² Stevens, “His Majesty’s,” 1408-9. Schnitzer and Troiani identify these men as Abenaki.

conforming to the European model of soldiering, noting that while “[t]hey were of vast service in foraging and scouting parties, it being suited to their manner; they will not stand a regular engagement. . . .at the very first fire, the Indians ran off through the wood.”⁴³ Lamb made a similar observation: “as a party of our troops posted near a wood were severally galled on the right of our line by the fire of the enemy, the Indians who accompanied us, seemed to hold a consultation among themselves, precipitately retreated, and abandoned the army altogether.”⁴⁴ When invited to sacrifice themselves under inauspicious conditions—560 of Burgoyne’s men would be dead, missing, or wounded at the end of the day—the Indigenous warriors declined. Their communities could not afford for them to take such great risks on such dim prospects of success. It was far better to stick to custom and collect valuables from the dead and captured. Lamb noted, “one of our soldiers rescued an American Captain, of Colonel Morgan’s riflemen, from the Indians, who were proceeding to scalp him, after depriving him of his pocket-book.”⁴⁵ The battlefield was the site of much cross-cultural perplexity. For the Europeans, Natives’ collecting goods from the dead seemed a ghoulish enterprise, while the Natives wondered at the whites’ insistence upon wantonly losing lives on such a scale in the first place.

Nearly 150 Haudenosaunee warriors (primarily Oneidas and Tuscaroras, with Louis Cook now ensconced firmly among the former) arrived at Gates’ camp on the night of the 20th. They had missed the Battle of Freeman’s Farm, but Schuyler reported that during their first week of activity, they took about 30 prisoners and intercepted Burgoyne’s dispatches back to Ticonderoga.⁴⁶ (In fact, their haul of prisoners was likely higher.) Lieutenant Colonel Ezra Badlam wrote that they were “of great service to our army for scouting parties; for they go out every day and lay in the woods and bushes near the enemy’s camp, and take more or less prisoners every day, and give us intelligence of all Burgoyne’s movements, which is of great service to us.”⁴⁷ Their activity is reflected in entries from the journal of a Connecticut soldier in General Arnold’s division, Oliver Boardman.

Sunday 21 This Afternoon a scout of our Indians took a Tory, the Gen^l gave him to them for a while they took him & Buried him up to his Neck & had their Pow wow around him, after that, they had him up and Laid him a

⁴³ Anburey, *With Burgoyne From Quebec*, 178.

⁴⁴ Lamb, *Journal of Occurrences*, 194.

⁴⁵ Lamb, *Journal of Occurrences*, 191; Stevens, “His Majesty’s,” 1400-7. The captain was Van Swearingen, who was taken to Gates for interrogation.

⁴⁶ Schuyler to Congress, Sept. 27, 1777, Letterbook 3:371, PSP.

⁴⁷ “Letter of Ezra Badlam,” *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 2 (1848): 48.

side of a great fire & turn'd his head & feet a while to the fire, hooting & hollowing round him then he was had Cuff'd & sent to Albany Goal.

Tuesday 23rd A Scout of our Indians took two Regulars Centries Yesterday after taking their hats from them they Painted their Faces & Brought them In...our Indians Brought eight other Prisners in—that were a going an Express to Montreal.

Wednesday 24th Our Indians went out & Brought in three Prisners with a Rope round the Neck of each of them.

Friday 26th This Morning Our Indians & Rifle-Men Brought in three Hessians & two Sailors. About noon they Brought in one Tory & one Sculp.⁴⁸

The diary of Enos Hitchcock confirms Boardman's description of the Oneidas' and Tuscaroras' penchant for showing off their handiwork. After having captured the two sentries on the 24th, "they drove them shouting & whooping thro the Street." The next day they brought in two more, and a scalp, and "paraded thro the road with them"⁴⁹ This was in keeping with ancient practice—warriors would loudly announce their return and the community would assemble to run the prisoners through the gantlet—but it was also good public relations vis-à-vis the generally Native-skeptical Patriots.

Most of the Oneidas and Tuscaroras departed after a week's time for hunting and ceremonial purposes, although some diverted to Albany first in order to effect the prisoner exchange they had promised the Ondondagas and Mohawks.⁵⁰ The remainder of the Haudenosaunee contingent, including Tuscarora chief Nicholas Cusick, remained with the rebel army. On the 28th, they took 13 prisoners and two scalps. The Stockbridges, who were attached to Morgan, continued active as well. English soldiers digging potatoes near their own headquarters on October 1 were carried off, as were others who ventured beyond the lines for forage. These disappearances were attributed to Stockbridge warriors in the Americans' employ.⁵¹ To the good fortune of the British,

⁴⁸ Oliver Boardman, "Journal of Oliver Boardman of Middletown" *Collections of the Connecticut Historical Society* 7 (1879): 226-27; *Revolutionary War Journals of Henry Dearborn 1775-1783* ed. Lloyd A Brown and Howard H. Peckham (Chicago, Ill.: Caxton Club, 1939), 107.

⁴⁹ Enos Hitchcock, *Diary of Enos Hitchcock* (Providence: Rhode Island Historical Society [1899]), 150.

⁵⁰ Jeduthan Baldwin, *The Revolutionary Journal of Colonel Jeduthan Baldwin, 1775-1778* ed. Thomas Williams Baldwin (Bangor, Me.: The De Burians, 1906), 122; Butler recounted that Onondagas, Oneidas and Tuscaroras had "taken the hatchet from Colonel Philip Schuyler, & Volkert Douw which they made use of against General Burgoyne, by taking prisoners which they exchanged for three of the Six Nations taken prisoners with my Son at the Genesee Flatts" Butler to Carleton, Dec. 14, 1777, B105:4-7.

⁵¹ Stevens, "His Majesty's," 1413, 1418; Boardman, "Journal," 227; Eelking, *Riedesel*, 159.

a number of these warriors were given leave to return home to assist with the harvest later that month.⁵²

Two dozen fresh warriors were dispatched from Kahnawake at the end of September to aid Burgoyne. They were led by chiefs Taiaiike and Teheoserarenon and had been recruited by de Lorimier, who was convalescing from the wounds he sustained at Bennington; these men were accompanied by his brother Chamilly.⁵³ With the increased likelihood of encountering Oneidas, Tuscaroras, or Stockbridges in the woods, they appeared increasingly reluctant to scout—and when they did so, they preferred doing so without British companions. They reconnoitered as far as Saratoga Lake (whence they also reportedly supplied Burgoyne with trout).⁵⁴ On October 6, they were quick to pursue Americans who had attacked British outposts. They pursued them far enough to set fire to some of their sheds and fired at American officers meeting in a house, putting them to flight and wounding one.⁵⁵ There was nothing, however, that they could do to prevent Burgoyne's reversals at the Battle of Bemus Heights the next day. They went out with Canadians under Colonel Alexander Fraser with the goal of creating a diversion, but the only effect was to take them far from the action.

News of Burgoyne's defeat at Bemus Heights had precipitated the departure to Canada of most of those Mohawk warriors, women, and children, still at Tiononderoge.⁵⁶ On October 16, British Major James Grey, at Mount Independence, opposite Fort Ticonderoga, received news from "a trusty Indian" who had "with great difficulty made his escape" that the firing at Saratoga had stopped. He feared they "were making terms. . . and it is all over with them."⁵⁷ The Mohawks who had joined Burgoyne headed to Canada before the surrender. They may have feared for their safety at the hands of the Americans. As a local Patriot observer noted,

On the evening of the surrender, a number of Indians and squaws, the relics of Burgoyne's aboriginal force, were. . . quartered under a strong guard. . . Without this precaution their lives would not have been safe from the exasperated militia. . . They were afterwards sent on to the Northward. . .⁵⁸

⁵² Jehoiakim Mtohksin to Gates, Oct. 22, 1777, Gates Papers, NYHS. The bearer was Hendrick Aupaumut.

⁵³ DeLorimier to unidentified correspondent, Dec. 1, 1777, B-117:4, HP; Stevens, "His Majesty's," 1362.

⁵⁴ Stevens, "His Majesty's," 1413; Stone, *Reminiscences of Saratoga and Ballston*, 114.

⁵⁵ Eelking, *Riedesel*, 162.

⁵⁶ Stevens, "His Majesty's," 1419, 1439.

⁵⁷ James Grey to Maclean, Oct. 16, 1777, CO42, Q series, v. 14:306, LAC.

⁵⁸ S. DeWitt Bloodgood, ed., *The Sexagenary, or Reminiscences of the American Revolution* (Albany: W.C. Little and O. Steele, 1833), 119-20.

The Tiononderoge Mohawks reunited at Lachine. Meanwhile, back at their home village, the Anglican missionary was imprisoned and the chapel turned into a tavern.⁵⁹

On the victorious side, Louis Cook was present to witness the historic surrender at the place of his childhood residence. It was likewise quite appropriate that Stockbridges were present as well. They were asked to escort northward the Loyalists and Canadians—as well as the “immense quantity of Baggage belonging to General Burgoyne’s Army. . .which he has desired may be forwarded to Quebec.”⁶⁰

Claus reported that “upon the news of General Burgoyne’s disaster” Molly Brant “found the Five Nations very wavering and unstable.”⁶¹ Hoping to make the most of Gates’ victory, Schuyler sent them celebratory, assertive messages accompanied by wampum belts. These were well-received among the Oneidas and Onondagas, but the British erected a firewall at Cayuga. Claus asked ‘the Widow McGinnis’ to go to Cayuga to look after the King’s interests. Sarah McGinnis was a woman of Palatine German descent who had been adopted by the Haudenosaunee as a child and married to a trader with close ties to Sir William. Claus noted the following:

Soon after her arrival Belts and Messages from General Schuyler were brought to that Town, with a most exaggerated Account of Genl Burgoynes Disaster with Invitations to the Six Nations to join the rebels and accursed Threats in case of non compliance. All which the Indians communicated to & consulted with her, and she gave her opinion and advice thereupon, then after that with an authority and priviledge allowed to Women of Consequence only among Indians, seized upon and cancelled the Belts, telling them that such bad News came from an Evil Spirit, and must endanger their Peace & Union as long as it was in their Sight, and must therefore be hurried underground, which she would undertake to do.⁶²

Schuyler’s message got no further. However, Claus’ statement about women’s higher status among Natives than whites was ironically underscored by Sarah McGinnis’

⁵⁹ John Stuart to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, Oct. 13, 1781, in James J. Talman, ed., *Loyalist Narratives from Upper Canada* (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1946), 341-43; “Account,” Draper Manuscripts 14F49.

⁶¹ Claus to Haldimand, Aug. 30, 1779, B114:64, HP.

⁶² Claus to Haldimand, Nov. 5, 1778, B114:15-16, HP.

subsequent experience in exile in Canada. Despite her service, she was allowed to live in penury. Claus characterized her situation as “very harsh.”⁶³

⁶³ Janice Potter-MacKinnon, *While the Women Only Wept: Loyalist Refugee Women in Eastern Ontario* (Montreal, Qc. and Kingston, Ont., 1995), 108.

Part Nine: After the Battles

After the Battles

In 1778, Loyalist Richard Cartwright observed the effect of the previous year's fighting on the landscape between Stillwater and Lake George. It was "mark'd with Devastation," with many houses "burnt. . . torn to Pieces and rendered unfit for Use, and but a few of the meanest occupied." Schuyler's house and mills were now "but an Heap of Rubbish." The description was reminiscent of Kalm's following King George's War, minus the resettlement. "The Inhabitants in general having been forced to leave. . . to escape the Rage of War. . . this once agreeable and delightful Part of the Country now displayed a most shocking Picture of Havock and wild Desolation" according to Cartwright. The Indigenous peoples of the region must have had a more ambivalent reaction to the scene. After the Battles of Saratoga, Natives on both sides still visited the area as hunters, raiders, and refugees. They were not "the Inhabitants" of whom Cartwright spoke, and the colonial settlements that delighted his eye did not necessarily appeal to theirs. (If there was overlap, it was at places like Glen's Falls where Cartwright beheld "a fine Fall of Water, which viewed with a Pleasure peculiar to these Irregularities of Nature, which strike the mind at once with ~~Wonder~~ Delight and Astonishment."¹)

Despite Britain's poor performance in 1777 and general Indigenous discontent "on accot of indifferent usage received during their campaign with General Burgoyne,"² as Claus put it, the Mohawks in exile at Kahnawake, Lachine, and elsewhere still had reasons to comply with British requests for help. The new governor, Sir Frederick Haldimand—whose first command of colonial troops had likely been at Saratoga in 1758—promised the Mohawks that he would liberate the homelands from which they had fled. This was especially important to the Tiononderoge Mohawks now in exile at Lachine and the Canajoharie Mohawks who had fled to Fort Niagara. Haldimand's strategic plan—to protect Quebec by holding Lake Champlain and raiding the regions to the south—fit comfortably with both the Haudenosaunee and Seven Nations' own

¹ Talman, *Loyalist Narratives*, 48-49; The version at His Majesty's 62nd Regiment of Foot, <http://62ndregiment.org>, contains the strikethrough that presumably appears in the original manuscript. See http://62ndregiment.org/A_Journey_to_Canada_by_Cartwright.pdf. Accessed Nov. 14, 2022. Indigenous peoples had their own explanation for this feature, which would later be known as Glen's Falls. On the name change, see Sylvester, *History of Saratoga*, 424.

² NYCD 8:725.

geopolitical interests and ways of war.³ Even as it became clear that the outcome of the broader conflict would be decided elsewhere, Native warriors continued to stir the pot in the Hudson-Champlain corridor in order to acquire goods and prestige, deter settlement, and exact revenge for losses of life and land. Burgoyne's defeat meant a return to military strategies with which the Natives were most familiar.⁴

Another factor that helped draw some Indigenous warriors back to the Hudson-Champlain corridor in 1778 was that they did not have to worry as much about encountering hostile Native counterparts. The Patriot victory at the Battles of Saratoga drew the pro-U.S. Mohicans and Oneidas into a closer Patriot orbit. Their military service moved south with the locus of the war. The Oneidas agreed to join the Continental Army in Pennsylvania, where they fought at the Battle of Barren Hill on May 20 and were rewarded with officers' commissions. The ever-peripatetic Cook was there with the Oneidas, but a month later was back in Kahnawake, having stopped at Akwesasne along the way. According to the Jesuit missionary there, Cook "left a note addressed to an Iroquois chief who openly declares himself a Rebel requesting a meeting with him if he was at St Regis."⁵ The Stockbridges also deployed to the south in 1778; they served at the Battle of Monmouth but lost approximately fourteen warriors in an August skirmish in the North Bronx.⁶

Tiononderoge Mohawks at Lachine passed down the Sacandaga River to raid the Johnstown area in the spring of 1778, but conflict in the Hudson-Champlain corridor did not resume until the summer. In August, 100 soldiers, led by Native scouts, attacked settlements on the Onion River under Connecticut-born Lieutenant-Colonel John Peters of the Queen's Loyal Rangers.⁷ According to Haldimand, they "returned without fully answering the purposes intended, having only destroyed some Barns and a couple of mills." The mission had apparently been aborted after a falling out between Peters and his Indigenous allies.⁸ For the next foray toward Saratoga, Haldimand wisely placed Major Christopher Carleton in command.⁹ Carleton had spent several years at Kanehsatake and, according to a German officer, "his whole body has endured their savage tests of bravery and is adorned with wild figures which he permitted to be cut or

³ Corbett, *No Turning Point*, 261; Haldimand to Germain, July 25, 1778 MG21 B42:11-12: Indians "must be kept in good humor, cost what it will, for if they do no good, they may do us much harm..." [12] At this very time, seven hundred savages, with their families, are at Montreal: if the King's forces are coming up the Hudson's River, these might be let loose to destroy the country; my best endeavours at present are used to restrain them."

⁴ Corbett, *No Turning Point*, 261.

⁵ Fraser to Haldimand June 15, 1778 B111:1, HP.

⁶ Frazier, *Mohicans*, 219-25.

⁷ Peters to Haldimand, Aug. 11, 1778.

⁸ Haldimand to Germain, Oct. 15, 1778, quoted in *Carleton's Raid*, ed. Ida H. Washington and Paul A. Washington (Canaan, NH: Phoenix Publishing, 1977), 10.

⁹ Corbett, *No Turning Point*, 290-1; Gavin K. Watt, *Burning of the Valleys*, 93-4.

burned in. He even had a savage as a wife.”¹⁰ In preparation, Haldimand issued orders on September 1 that small Native parties begin weekly scouts as far south as Skenesborough, about 25 miles from where Colonel Seth Warner occupied Fort Edward with 200 men. There was enough normalcy around Lake George in October that Kahnawake hunting parties were active there, although they had to display a flag signaling peaceful intent.¹¹ Carleton moved south from Isle-aux-Noix with 150 Seven Nations warriors in late October, many of whom had been recruited by de Lorimier. Ultimately, Native warriors accounted for about 100 of the 324 men with Carleton—a number that is significant, although not impressive.¹²

Carleton’s campaign journal is evidence of why the Natives held him in high regard. It records a constant round of consultation with Indigenous war captains. On October 27, for example, Carleton noted, “I assembled the Indian Chiefs and told them my wish to send a person I could confide in to bring me a true State of the strength and situation of the Enemy. They saw the propriety of my proposal and consented to send the person I should pitch on for that service.” Such an approach—essentially asking the Natives’ permission—reflected the principle of consensus upon which Indigenous societies, war parties included, functioned. Carleton also remained mindful of his Native allies’ imperatives as well as his own, negotiating generous rewards for seized cattle “in hopes it would prevent them from amusing themselves about other plunder.”¹³ Burgoyne would have been scandalized, but it worked. In Indian Department agent Alexander Fraser’s November 20 report to Haldimand, he noted how cooperative the Natives had been with Carleton—even using a term rarely used in relation to them: “obedient.”¹⁴ The campaigners burned houses and took men prisoner—including Winthrop Hoyt, a Vermonter who had lived at Kahnawake for four years after being taken captive during the Seven Years’ War. Hoyt had worked to win some of them to the Patriot side. Carleton’s raiders also killed livestock, though not without a dose of cruelty: “they Cut Large pesses [pieces] out of and Let them run alive.” The raiders did

¹⁰ Ray W. Pettengill, ed. and trans., *Letters from America 1776-1779 Being Letters of Brunswick, Hessian, and Waldeck Officers with the British Armies During the Revolution* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1924), 55.

¹¹ Haldimand to Campbell, Sept. 1, 1778, B62:135, HP; *Carleton’s Raid*, 85, 88; Campbell to Haldimand, Oct. 16, 1778, B111:17, HP. Kahnawakes are out hunting on Lake Champlain-Lake George area and cannot be collected at Isle aux Noix by the 21st.

¹² Alexander Fraser to Haldimand, Oct. 19, 1778, HP B111:18; John Campbell to Haldimand, Oct. 22, 1778, B111:20, HP; *Carleton’s Raid*, 33, 35.

¹³ *Carleton’s Raid*, 86-90.

¹⁴ Alexander Fraser to Haldimand, Nov. 20, 1778, HP B111:26. John Long said the Seven Nations “loved him with a Roman friendship; they flew to his standard with alacrity, obeyed him with cheerfulness, and never deserted him.” Quoted in Gavin K. Watt, *The Burning of the Valleys: Daring Raids from Canada Against the New York Frontier in the Fall of 1780* (Toronto, Ont.: Dundurn, 1997), 94.

not travel farther south than the Kingsbury district near Fort Edward, but the Patriots had to mobilize militia as far south as Cambridge.¹⁵

Carleton's bargaining did leave some lingering dissatisfaction among the Natives: cash was nice, but scalps did more to augment the spiritual power of the community and the prestige of their warriors. That winter they asked Carleton for another expedition to Otter Creek with scalps as the goal. Carleton dutifully relayed their request up the chain of command to have Haldimand refuse it, although the latter indicated he would support their return to the area "to procure intelligence."¹⁶ Native parties kept Saratoga settlers on edge; an April petition from the Saratoga district begged the New York governor to exempt them from requisitions of men to serve elsewhere so long as they were "exposed to the Daily and Hourly Incursions of a numerous and Savage Enemy."¹⁷

Seven Nations activity along the corridor in 1779 did not match the petitioners' fears, but the Saratogans had more luck than they knew. In the middle of May, Claus reported that Captain John Deserontyon departed Fort St. John "with a party of 10 Ind^{ns} & Rangers to go towards Fort Edward & Saraghtogo" and noted "he is full of Revenge against the Rebels."¹⁸ Having fallen in with some Americans on Lake Champlain, they took a scalp and three prisoners at Split Rock and returned to secure the prisoners. Deserontyon made another attempt in September, but this time, Claus reported, "they were prevented from proceeding any farther than Lake George by one of the head men falling sick. . . (which they look upon as ruinous on such occasions)."¹⁹

To avoid detection along the lakes, Fraser advocated dispatching warriors from Akwesasne to Saratoga "for intelligence or any other purpose," but he complained of "the Lukewarm Disposition of the Indians towards supporting our hostilities."²⁰ In February, Indian agent John Campbell reported that most remained on the British side but expressed concern about three or four Akwesasnes who were in contact with Albany. "Amongst this number," he noted, "is Cook the Negro Louison who has been backwards & forwards between that Village & Albany. . . he seems to have a good Deal of influence as he has many friends amongst them."²¹ Major John Butler reported in July that "the principal Indians of the Cachnawage Village are much in the Interest of the Rebels and that a constant Correspondence is carried on between them and Mr. Schuyler by Means of a Negroe who is continually going backwards and forwards from

¹⁵ *Carleton's Raid*, 53, 92; Alexander Webster to Clinton, Nov. 26, 1778, PPGC 4:309.

¹⁶ *Carleton's Raid*, 61.

¹⁷ Petition from Saratoga District, Apr. 7, 1779, PPGC 4:769.

¹⁸ Claus to Haldimand, May 17, 1779, DCF, v. 25:88.

¹⁹ Claus to Haldimand, Sept. 16, 1779, B114:74, HP.

²⁰ A Fraser to Haldmiand, Dec. 9, 1778, B111:29-30, HP; Fraser to Haldimand, June 14, 1779, B120:41-44, HP; 'The Particulars of a Conference held by a Deputation from Mr. Lorrimer's Scout, with a party of Oneidas,' July 1779, B120:71-74, HP.

²¹ Campbell to Haldimand, Feb. 22, 1779, B110:70, HP.

thence...with Letters & Intelligence not only from the Indians but from some French & other white People in the Rebel Interest.”²² Indeed, Schuyler wrote Washington on July 7 that Cook had visited him in Albany (via Oneida) and reported that the Kahnawakes assured him no invasion was being prepared from Canada. On the 23rd, Washington wrote back, “I was extremely happy to hear that our friend Colo Louis had returned. I really feared that some accident had befallen him and that he might have been sacrificed for his attachment to our cause.”²³

Cook’s faction of Kahnawakes and Akwesasnes, aligned with the Oneidas, argued against underestimating Patriot strength. They warned of a second American invasion of Quebec and tried to kindle nostalgia for France in light of Louis XVI’s newly-minted alliance with the United States.²⁴ If they were correct, and the rebels triumphed, Seven Nations support of the British would only further jeopardize their situation. Tension between the British and the Seven Nations spiked in July when soldiers surrounded a house in an attempt to arrest an Oneida and his companion who were visiting Kahnawake. One of the Oneidas was shot and killed. Kahnawake was in an uproar. A more serious rupture might have taken place had the United States Army not soon thereafter begun laying waste to much of Iroquoia under General John Sullivan. Campbell reported that 270 Seven Nations warriors had gone to the assistance of the Six Nations. He also noted that “There is still remaining about 100 warriors between the Lake and Caughnawaga, who seem to be more disposed for going to hunt Beaver & Deer than going to war.”²⁵ The Kahnawakes rationed their efforts in such a way as to help their brethren more than the British while minding the security and supply of their own villages. In November, Haldimand conveyed “to the Indians of Canada his displeasure at the release of the Oneidas taken by Mr. Crawford’s scout.”²⁶

The Ballston Raid

Indigenous warriors came back to the Saratoga area in force in the fall of 1780 as part of a two-pronged foray. More than a thousand men, led once again by Carleton,

²² Butler identified the Kahnawake informant as “Twa, re, sa, he” and noted that the two preeminent pro-American chiefs at Kahnawake were “Con, na, ha, re, goa and Quan, te, te.” Butler to Haldimand, July 21, 1779, B105:143-44.

²³ Schuyler to Washington, July 7, 1779, *IAP*, 223; Washington to Schuyler, July 23, 1779, George Washington Papers, series 4, General Correspondence, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

²⁴ Alexander Fraser to Haldimand, Nov. 26, 1778, B111:27, HP; John Campbell to Haldimand, Dec. 14, 1778, B111:32, HP; Butler to Haldimand, June 8, 1779, B105:139-42; Butler to Haldimand, July 21, 1779, B105:143-51; Claus to Haldimand, Nov. 11, 1778, *IAP*, 174-77.

²⁵ Patrick Langan to Claus, July 22, 1779, Claus Papers, MG F1, v. 26:4-5; Campbell to Haldimand, July 22, 1779, B111:108; Haldimand to Campbell, July 26, 1779, B112:69; Campbell to Haldiman, B111:110; Campbell to Haldimand, Sept. 27, 1779, B111:128.

²⁶ Haldimand to Guy Johnson, Nov. 11, 1779, B107:60; Guy Johnson to Haldimand, Oct. 22, 1779, B107:50, on Natives’ disinclination to attack Oneidas.

traveled south along Lake Champlain, with the force separating at Crown Point on the 6th of October. Carleton proceeded forward with the main contingent, which consisted of 776 men, mostly regulars, and 108 Kahnawakes and Kanehsatakes, under Lieutenant William Johnson of the Quebec Indian Department. They attacked both sides of the Hudson, burning houses and barns the Kingsbury district and sending settlers scrambling to Saratoga for protection.²⁷ On October 16 or 17, Schuyler observed smoke from the heights at his Saratoga estate. The source was the burning of the settlement at White Creek, twenty miles to the west on a tributary of the Hoosic.²⁸

As Schuyler noted to Governor Clinton, “The panic that has seized the people is incredible. With all my efforts, I cannot prevent numbers from deserting their habitations, and I very much apprehend that the whole will move, unless the militia remain alone, until permanent relief can be procured.”²⁹ Lieutenant Colonel Peter Gansevoort wrote Carleton from Saratoga asking him to respond to a report circulating that Carleton was present when one of the warriors in his party “in cool blood scalped one of Warners Men alive, tormented him a considerable time and afterwards cut his throat.” Carleton wrote back denying that any prisoner was “insulted in the smallest degree” in his presence. However, he did acknowledge hearing a report of a death “owing to a dispute between 2 Indians of different Villages which took him & he would not suffer himself to be conducted to the British Guard by a Loyalist officer.” He added, “I believe he was a negro, or a Stockbridge Indian.”³⁰

The detachment that had separated from Carleton on the 6th proceeded to “Ball’s Town.” Captain John Munro, a local, commanded 100 Loyalists and 34 Rangers and Tiononderoge Mohawks under the Mohawk-speaking Lieutenant Patrick Langan and Captain John Deserontyon, who was “perfectly acquainted with the Woods all the Way to Saraghtoga.”³¹ Captain William Fraser, a Scottish-born Loyalist and Kayaderosseras settler, was another Mohawk-speaking officer. The detachment proceeded with extreme caution, as they knew the Patriots were aware of their presence. Loyalist Rangers and Natives watched roads and captured people. Among those seized was one John Shew, a hunter who had been taken by Tiononderoge Mohawks in 1778 near Fish House and returned with them to Lachine. He had been adopted and given the right to hunt independently but used the privilege to escape. He imprudently returned to his old neighborhood. Recognizing Shew immediately, the Natives killed him for his transgression. The detachment then invaded the home of

²⁷ Watt, *Burning*, 95, 102.

²⁸ Clinton to Washington, Oct. 18, 1780, in Franklin B. Hough, *The Northern Invasion of 1780* (New York, n.p., 1866), 108-9.

²⁹ Schuyler to George Clinton October 20, 1780, in Hough, *Northern Invasion*, 123-24.

³⁰ Peter Gansevoort to Carleton Nov. 2, 1780; Carleton to Gansevoort, Nov. 6, 1780, both Gansevoort Military Papers, NYPL.

³¹ Watt, *Burning*, 95, 106; Claus to Mathews, Mar. 19, 1781, B114:165, HP.

Patriot Colonel James Gordon, whose occupants they took captive. After burning structures in the center of Ballston, they withdrew with captives and cattle.³² The Indigenous warriors reportedly wished to kill the captives who were not capable of marching back to Canada, but were dissuaded. According to Gordon, “Isaac Stowe in attempting his escape was killed. After crossing the Kayaderosseras, the party halted, and Captain Munro desired Captain John of the Indians to choose what prisoners he thought proper out of those that were taken with me. He accordingly chose Captain Benedict and his three sons, Thomas Barnum, Palmatier, John Higby and his son Lewis, and Elijah Sprague, also my negro man Nero.”³³ Deserontyon seems to have chosen shrewdly, as Benedict had commanded at Fort Chambly after its capture by the rebels, and therefore had a high profile. Nero tried to escape, but was kept because he could be sold. Deserontyon seems to have been enterprising with regard to Black captives. In 1779, near Lake George he took “a Negroe, Servant to Colonel Warner . . . to sell and share the price Money with his party”—and when Claus hesitated, Deserontyon insisted upon his “liberty either to sell him or something in lieu of him.”³⁴ That episode seems to have been decided in his favor. In terms of assertions of “liberty,” however, Nero had his own ideas, and escaped in Montreal. He was ultimately recovered and was back in Gordon’s Ballston household by 1789.³⁵

Daniel Claus reported that, in the course of their Ballston foray, “The Mohawks passed the Traks of the Caughnawaga spies within three days march of Schenectady[?] to which they bent their Course.”³⁶ Other Kahnawakes, influenced and perhaps accompanied by Cook, were simultaneously assisting the Patriots in the area. The detachment under Munro and Deserontyon nevertheless returned to Canada. They avoided Saratoga because too many of the Loyalist raiders’ family members were there awaiting exchange and permission to go to Canada. Munro knew he would not be able

³² Watt, *Burning*, 123, 168, 174-214; Munro’s account of his proceedings is in E. A. Cruikshank, *The History and Muster Roll of the King’s Royal Regiment of New York* (Campbellville, Ont.: Global Heritage, 2006), 55-58.

³³ “Reminiscences of James Gordon” ed. Josephine Mayer, *New-York Historical Society Quarterly* 17 (1936): 436-7. The capture of Benedict was something of a coup. Claus wrote, “Yesterday the Mohawks arrived here from Crown Point with 9 prisoners and 2 scalps. Among the prisoners is one Captain Benedict & his 2 sons the Father commanded at Chamblee in 1775 when the Rebels were in Canada he had then the Montreal gentlemen such as Col Campbell, Mr St Luc, Maj Dunbar Major [DeBre] under his confinement.” Claus noted they took two scalps and burnt 11 houses but spared Lieutenant-Colonel Gordon’s. Claus to Haldimand, Nov. 2, 1780, DCF, v. 25:204-5, LAC.

³⁴ Claus to Haldimand, Sept. 16, 1779, B114:74; Claus to Haldimand, Apr. 17, 1780, B114:114, quoted in Cruikshank, “Coming of Loyalist Mohawks to the Bay of Quinté,” *Ontario History* 26 (1930): 393.

³⁵ Frank Mackey, *Done With Slavery: The Black Fact in Montreal, 1760-1840* (Montreal, Qc. & Kingston, Ont.: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2010), 381-407, esp. 395.

³⁶ Claus to Haldimand, Nov. 2, 1780.

to resist their pleas to return with him, but he lacked the supplies and the time to take them.³⁷

Haudenosaunee families returned to the Saratoga area during the winter of 1780-81, but they were not Mohawks. Haldimand observed that “the Onidas...are possessed of a Blockhouse at Palmerstown in the Neighbourhood of Saratoga.”³⁸ The Patriots had abandoned the structure the previous November because of difficulties in keeping it supplied. They had hoped that the enemy would steer clear of it anyway on the basis of “that Country being full of Hunters both White people & Indians.”³⁹ The Oneidas’ residence was, first and foremost, a refuge. Patriot settlements had become a target for retribution after the 1779 Sullivan Campaign, and the Oneidas knew theirs would not be exempt. Like much of the Patriot population in the Mohawk Valley, they initially fled to Schenectady. However, once there, they faced physical abuse and settlers trying to get them to trade their arms for alcohol. Thus, they moved again. Schuyler reported the following from Saratoga in early December of 1780:

[T]he Indians have removed...to the vicinity of this place in hopes to gain some subsistence by hunting, and that by means of my presence, and Immediate Intervention, they might be better supplied, and because by hunting in the woods, they may more easily and plentifully be accomadated with fuel, which in their naked condition is an object of Importance.

Other problems had traveled with them from Schenectady. Schuyler observed that “to add to their calamities, the small pox prevails with, and has already been fatal, to some of them.” His appeal was unalloyed by his usual grouching about Natives. Their distress “beggar[ed] all description” and he “was overwhelmed with their lamentations.” At the same time, Schuyler was moved and gratified by their steadfastness. He noted that they refused the overtures of the enemy and had “joined our troops with alacrity” in response to the Ballston raid. To underscore the urgency of the Oneidas’ situation, Schuyler wrote:

I fear their virtue will at last yield to a continuation of distress, which no human beings can endure, and that they will renounce an alliance which

³⁷ Potter-Mackinnon, *While the Women Only Wept*, 83.

³⁸ Haldimand to Ross, Mar. 1, 1781, B124:65, HP.

³⁹ Claus to Haldimand, B114:160-1 see also 163; Colonel O. Rosenkrans to Gansevoort, Nov. 20, 1780, Military Papers of Gansevoort.

has exposed them to such variety of calamity, to form one with those who can amply supply every of their wants.⁴⁰

The British assumed the Oneidas' move served a more strategic purpose than mere survival. Lieutenant-Colonel John Campbell reported the Oneidas had taken up residence in Palmerstown "for the purpose of scouting from thence towards the Saratago lake."⁴¹ Claus believed the Oneidas' presence "to the Westward of Saraghtogo" was "on purpose as I can reasonably conjecture to hunt & scour the Woods in that Environs to intercept and prevent any scouts going from hence towards the Mohawk River, it being the only rout our Scouts did, & could take going that way."⁴² Brant, upon learning of the Oneidas' presence there, was eager to strike them, and he secured Deserontyon's promise of cooperation.⁴³ However, the planned attack never came about—in part because of a lack of enthusiasm on the part of Indigenous warriors to attack the Oneidas. Brant went instead to Detroit and Deserontyon eventually led raids on the Mohawk Valley. Still, they were in danger. Cook arrived at Schuyler's house in Saratoga on the evening of May 15 to report that his eight-man hunting party "on the west side of the north Branch of Hudson's River" had come under fire the previous day. One Oneida hunter was unaccounted for. Concerned that a large party of the enemy was about to strike, Schuyler notified Governor Clinton that "Colo. Van Dyck has already sent a party out towards Palmer Town," but that he should send men to protect settlements along both the Hudson and Mohawk.⁴⁴

Over the course of the winter, Claus conveyed intelligence to Haldimand about rumors circulating among the Mohawks about Patriot war plans to invade Canada. Among other speculation, there was talk of a joint French-Spanish campaign up the Mississippi against Detroit. Claus' source was "little David alias Karughyundy" (David Karighyontye), who identified Mary Hill as the propagator. More specifically, Claus described her as "the Ind[ia]n confidante of Gl. Schuylers" and "a staunch friend and advocate of the rebel cause, notwithstanding her being deserted & censured by all her relations & friends."⁴⁵ Mary had been one of the last Mohawks to leave Tiononderoge. Captain Alexander Fraser described her as "a sister of Captain Aaron the Mohawk Chief, a very intelligent woman who was much in the Confidence of all the principal

⁴⁰ Schuyler to Congress, Dec. 2, 1780, i53, v3, p551-554, PCC. A party of Kahnawakes remained at Schenectady, where they met with, and were described by, the Marquis de Chastellux. *Travels in North America in the Years 1780, 1781, and 1782* ed. and trans. Howard C. Rice, Jr., (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1963), 207-9.

⁴¹ Campbell to Mathews, Feb 26, 1781, B112:18.

⁴² Claus to Mathews, Feb. 26, 1781, B114:161.

⁴³ Haldimand to Ross, Mar. 1, 1781.

⁴⁴ Schuyler to Clinton, May 15, 1781, PPGC 6:881.

⁴⁵ Claus to Haldimand, Nov. 30, 1780, B114:153-4; Peggy Dymond Leavey, *Molly Brant: Mohawk Loyalist and Diplomat* (Toronto, Ont.: Dundurn, 2015), 107.

Indians that adhered to the Rebels, as she was herself always attached to their cause & till now lived among them.” According to Fraser, Hill gave Molly Brant information about Col. Louis as well:

[T]he Negroe, had been at Rhode island, and was charged by the Commander in Chief of the French troops with a great many letters, to Canadians English & Indians, with which he set off for St. Regis from Schenectady five weeks ago, and that she had once been engaged herself to come along with him.⁴⁶

Hill’s intelligence was correct. About twenty Oneidas and Kahnawakes had visited the French fleet at Newport at the end of August. Quartermaster Claude Blanchard specifically recalled that “There was amongst them a mulatto who served with the Americans. He spoke French and they called him Captain Louis.”⁴⁷

In October 1781, Stark, commanding officer at Saratoga, wrote to Governor Clinton that “It is plain that the enemy in Canada are either meditating an attack on this place, or that they are anxious for intelligence from the westward. Their small parties are continually among us.”⁴⁸ Schuyler wrote to Stark sharing further suspicions that the British sought to burn Albany. To foil them, Schuyler sent a scout of Indigenous warriors to join the militia. Schuyler ordered “the remainder of the Indians...to join you” at Saratoga.⁴⁹

Reflecting on its extensive frontier “and the desultory War, carried on by a barbarous Enemy,” the New York Assembly recorded its “satisfaction” that “fewer depredation [sic] have been committed than we had reason to apprehend.”⁵⁰ This was in late October, 1781, about a week after the British surrender at Yorktown. The Mohawk Valley would see more action, but the upper Hudson was largely peaceful. In early 1782 “Mr Stuart”—probably the minister formerly with the Tiononderoge Mohawks—reported that Louis Cook (whom he identified as “Louison alias Adiyadaharunkwon of a Negroe Descent”) had scaled back his clandestine travels owing to “a narrow Escape on his last Expedition to Canada,” possibly referring to the episode Cook had reported to Schuyler. Cook now feared the League Mohawks. This left communication between Albany and Kahnawake in the hands of Paul Oghradouskon, “the favorite and confidant

⁴⁶ Alexander Fraser to Claus[?], Nov. 5, 1780, B127:198-99, HP.

⁴⁷ Claude Blanchard, *Guerre d’Amérique 1780-3: Journal de Campagne*, (Paris: Librairie Militaire J. Dumaine, 1881) 48.

⁴⁸ *Memoir Correspondence of Stark*, 265.

⁴⁹ *Memoir and Correspondence of Stark*, 271.

⁵⁰ “Journal of Assembly,” 1781, 9, quoted in B. F. DeCosta, *Notes on the History of Fort George During the Colonial and Revolutionary Periods* (J. Sabin & Sons, 1871), 60.

of Schuyler.” Oghradouskon had known Schuyler at least since early 1776, when he had been part of the delegation that visited Albany.⁵¹

The quiet along the upper Hudson was palpable, as the loyalists had left and fear preempted the reoccupation of the area by settlers. The British feared a Franco-American attack up the Hudson and from New England and the Americans feared the British might take advantage of the roiling tensions with Vermont to launch an attack upon Albany; Jacob Bayley warned Governor Clinton of precisely such an assault from Oswego in October 1782.⁵² Taking advantage of the desolation, Tehoragwanegen/Thomas Williams and John Baptist Toistakherontie of Kahnawake were hunting around Lake George in the winter of 1783, even reportedly going as far down as Albany to trade furs. According to Williams, while in town he paid a courtesy call to Philip Schuyler.⁵³

⁵¹ Campbell to Mathews, Jan. 17, 1782, HP B114:241; Schuyler, “Be it remembered that at a treaty held at Albany on the 3rd 4th & 5th Days of January 1775[sic],” box 22, f. 8, PSP.

⁵² Riedesel to Haldimand, Mar. 4, 1782, B137:25; DeCosta, *Notes on the History of Fort George*, 60-61.

⁵³ Franklin B. Hough, *Life of Te-ho-ra-gwa-ne-gen, alias Thomas Williams, a chief of the Caughnawaga tribe of Indians in Canada* (Albany, NY: J. Munsell, 1859), 37-38.

EPILOGUE

Departures and Returns

Relinquishments

The Natives who had fought on the side of Great Britain considered themselves independent allies and equals of the British. They were shocked to learn that British negotiators had relinquished to the United States its claims to the entire area from Albany all the way north to the old Quebec provincial boundary at the 45th parallel. This was surprising in light of the regularity with which British and Indigenous warriors had crossed it during the war's final years. The military situation would have supported a significantly more southerly line. As an additional absurd twist, an international boundary now cut straight through Akwesasne. Haldimand and the Quebec Indian Department staff sought to keep the details of the peace settlement under wraps in hopes that they were misinformed or that a revision would be forthcoming. Privately, they expressed consternation and even shame. As Deserontyon told Claus, his people "were in pain because we have been kept living under a shadow (secret)." As far as they were concerned, "We do not think they have beaten us, our minds are still strong and determined to carry on the war. The disgrace is almost killing us."¹ Indeed, Britain's Native allies had not been defeated; it was the British who had given up.

On the basis of the Treaty of Paris, the United States claimed to have conquered all of Britain's Indigenous allies by association. Brant tried to deflect this by asserting the ongoing validity of the 1768 Fort Stanwix treaty, which retained the 1768 Line of Property and Indigenous enclaves and hunting rights east of it. The Americans might be heirs to what the Natives had granted the British, but how could they be entitled to more? Unfortunately, the peace treaty left room for ambiguity by transferring imperial claims without acknowledging the existence of aboriginal title. A handful of Mohawk families—including that of Mary Hill—remained in their Mohawk Valley settlements at Canajoharie and Tiononderoge even after the Battle of Saratoga, and a few more returned as the war wound down. Although there was no similar hope that Saratoga might also be a protected enclave, Indigenous hunting rights on both sides of the Hudson River, which had been retained in 1768, remained at stake. Schuyler's response to Brant's assertion of the continued effectiveness of the 1768 Fort Stanwix treaty was noncommittal.² Despite the fact that the formal US-Six Nations peace treaty in October 1784 took place on the same ground as the 1768 negotiation, the US also remained silent

¹ Alan S. Taylor, *The Divided Ground: Indians, Settlers, and the Northern Borderland of the American Revolution* (New York: Knopf, 2006), 112; Deserontyon to Claus, Jan. 8, 1784, Claus Family Papers v24:15.

² Brant to Schuyler, Oct. 22, 1783, B119: 147, HP; Kelsay, *Joseph Brant*, 341-2; Schuyler to Brant, Jan. 11, 1784, PSP.

about the status of that earlier agreement. The US commissioners at the treaty reset the western boundary with the Six Nations to its advantage, oversaw a cession to Pennsylvania, and guaranteed the Oneidas and Tuscaroras security in their lands.

While Schuyler was loath to accept Brant's position, he balked at calls from some New Yorkers for a wholesale expulsion of Indigenous peoples from their homelands within that state's claimed boundaries. Part of his rationale mirrored that of Andros almost a century earlier. Future border hostilities remained a distinct possibility, and the strategic threat of having the Natives, with their skills and knowledge, residing exclusively among the enemy, offset any immediate advantage derived from their departure.³ This was reinforced by his personal interests. Schuyler's role as a negotiator with the Natives enhanced his stature among his fellow settlers and gave him an advantageous position in land dealings in the Mohawk valley and beyond. The Patriot victory portended more of those in the future—and he would participate in them actively to his own benefit.

Brant and Deserontyon did not seek a Mohawk return *en masse* to their ancestral territories in either the Hudson or Mohawk Valleys. With their people suffering daily in their temporary quarters at Niagara and Lachine, respectively, they sought alternative homelands within British-controlled territory, and Governor Haldimand actively encouraged them to do so. Contrary to Haldimand's desires, but consistent with Mohawk traditions of community autonomy, they chose separate locations. Brant and the Canajoharies went to Grand River, on the Niagara Peninsula, while Deserontyon and the Tiononderoge Mohawks stayed closer to the Mohawk and Hudson rivers, settling at the Bay of Quinté (Tyendinaga) near Cataraqui (Kingston).

The Mohawk communities at Grand River and the Bay of Quinté were regarded by the US as the heirs to the League Mohawk, and most of the families who had returned to the Mohawk Valley joined them in Canada after the war. At a federal treaty in Albany in March, 1797, Deserontyon and Brant, in the capacity of "deputies, to represent the said Nation" "cede[d] and release[d] to the people of the State of New York forever all the right or title of the said nation to lands within the said State." This included Saratoga, and represented the abandonment by Brant of the claim based on the 1768 Fort Stanwix Treaty. By way of compensation, the two men received \$1000 to be distributed among their two communities "according to their usages." An additional \$600 was granted them to defray expenses for collecting and disbursing the funds. Among the witnesses was Cornplanter, the Seneca chief.⁴

³ Schuyler to Hancock, July 29, 1783, PCC.

⁴ *Report of Special committee to investigate the Indian problem of the State of New York appointed by the Assembly of 1888*, (Albany: Troy Press Company, 1889) 1:381-2; Charles Kappler, *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1904) II:50-1: 21.

With respect to the Seven Nations, Eleazer Williams, son of the aforementioned Thomas, recalled the following:

These Indians claimed a considerable amount of land in the state of New York, which they felt had been taken from them by force, and contrary to the eternal principles of justice and equity, and this became a subject of much discussion among them at St. Regis and Caughnawaga. None of them knew how to set up their claim, and Colonel Louis, Thomas Williams and William Gray, were in 1789 called upon for their opinions on the subject, which was left in their hands to bring before the proper authorities, in New York.⁵

Seven Nations negotiators went to Albany in 1792, 1794, and 1795 to press the claim, which, according to John Jay, was for lands as far south as Fort Edward.⁶ Speaking on behalf of the Seven Nations, Gray invoked both the rhetoric of the American Revolution and that of the Covenant Chain: “we wish...that every brother might have their rights, throughout this continent, and all to be of one mind, and to live together in peace and love as becometh brothers; and to have a chain of friendship made between you and us, too strong ever to be broke, and polished and brightened so pure as never to rust.” He also suggested that “one great step towards strengthening the chain of friendship” was for the Natives “to enjoy our own laws, and you yours, so far that, if any of our people, Indians, should commit a crime...that he may be punished by his own nations...and if any white person should commit a crime...let him be punished, according to the laws of his nation.” The treaty commissioners resisted Seven Nations’ requests for more land adjacent to Akwesasne along the St. Lawrence. A treaty was finally signed in 1796 whereby the Seven Nations relinquished “all the claim, right, or title...to lands within the said state” of New York with the exception of a six-square-mile tract at Akwesasne and two one-mile squares nearby. In return, they were granted £1233-6-8 and annuity of £213-6-8.⁷

“Winners”

At first blush, the Oneidas and Stockbridge Mohicans who had fought on the side of the United States at Saratoga and beyond shared in the victory of their allies. As Oneida chief Good Peter recalled,

⁵ Hough, *Life of Te-Ho-Ra-Gwa-Ne-Gen, Alias Thomas Williams* (Albany, NY: J. Munsell 43-44.

⁶ John Jay to Timothy Pickering, July 18, 1795, John Jay Papers, Columbia University Library, New York City.

⁷ Kappler, *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties* II:45-46; *American State Papers—Indian Affairs* (Washington, DC: Gales and Seaton, 1832) 1:616-20.

I expected when I returned to my Country to have sat down in Peace and enjoyed pleasant Days. I was even encouraged to hope this, Brother, from you, from your own Declarations. You welcomed me home on my Return. The United States there planted the Tree of Peace with our Roots, spreading Branches and beautiful Leaves, whose Top reached the Heavens.⁸

Indeed, at the 1784 treaty with the Six Nations at Fort Stanwix, the commissioners said that “[i]t does not become the United States to forget those nations who preserved their faith to them, and adhered to their cause, those, therefore must be secured in the full and free enjoyment of their possessions.”⁹ However, this diplomatic gesture by ad hoc federal treaty commissioners was fleeting; it did little to blunt the determination of New York State and its burgeoning population to lay hold of the Native lands that had been parceled out too slowly under British rule. In March 1783, they had appointed three commissioners of Indian Affairs. Among the first three commissioners was Philip Schuyler’s nephew Peter Schuyler, who had moved into Molly Brant’s Canajoharie home and was still living there in 1789.¹⁰ Despite statements from state government to the contrary, the Oneidas and Tuscaroras were in for trouble.

The Stockbridges were in a particularly precarious position. Their Housatonic land base had already dwindled to a mere 1200 acres while the surrounding settler population continued to grow. Their initial hope had been to leverage their past services—all the way back to the arrival of the Dutch—to win their plea for a more secure land base somewhere on their ancestral land territory between the Hudson, Wood Creek, and Otter Creek. However, petitions to New York and Vermont to this effect yielded no results. Many Stockbridges instead accepted an invitation by the Oneidas to settle on their territory. The war had drawn the two peoples closer to one another. The Oneidas established ‘New Stockbridge’ on a six-mile square on the eastern side of their reserved lands. For the Oneidas, this was an opportunity to increase Native numbers in the vicinity and hopefully create a buffer vis-à-vis Euro-American society. These Stockbridges, more knowledgeable than the Oneidas in English and the other ways of the settlers streaming their way from New England, would now have another

⁸ Hough, *Proceedings of the Commissioners of Indian Affairs... in the State of New York* (Albany, NY: Joel Munsell, 1861), 1:228.

⁹ Neville B. Craig, ed. *The Olden Time* (Cincinnati, Ohio: Robert & Clark, 1876 [1848]), 2:425-26.

¹⁰ Nicholas Schuyler also built a house in Canajoharie after the war. Faux, “Iroquoian Occupation of the Mohawk Valley during and after the Revolution.” *Man in the Northeast* 34 (1987): 35; Guldenzopf, “Colonial Transformation,” 101.

opportunity to exercise their skills as mediators.¹¹ To facilitate their safe passage to their new home, Washington issued a proclamation recognizing that “during the whole of the War the aforesaid Muhhekunnuk Tribe of Indians have remained firmly attached to us and have fought and bled by our side” and that no one should “molest them in any manner whatever.”¹²

The Oneidas, Tuscaroras, and Stockbridges found that, as a strategy for forestalling land loss, reliance on the gratitude of the newly powerful was a failure. Despite the fact that the national government possessed exclusive authority to treat with Indigenous nations for land beyond the 1768 treaty line, New York State maneuvered the Oneidas into ceding most of their territory at treaties in 1785 and 1788. It employed a variety of means: calling treaties while famine conditions prevailed, bribing influential individuals, threatening not to remove trespassers, and misrepresenting sales as leases. The Oneidas had indeed proposed leasing their land to settlers—much as they had seen done on the estates of Sir William Johnson and Philip Schuyler—as an alternative to outright sales. In fact, in light of his experience and relationships with Euro-Americans, they enlisted Louis Cook to lead negotiations on their behalf. Governor Clinton spurned this idea until he found a way to turn it to his advantage by essentially cloaking sales as leases. By 1788, Oneida territory had been reduced from six million acres to a quarter million through treaties with New York State. The Oneidas were distraught, and lay part of the blame on Cook. Lest they lose still more land through his activities, the “Sachems and warriors...in council” gave public notice in the *New York Daily Advertiser* that he no longer represented them. They explained he had acted “very foolishly, in deceiving the said nation several times, in leasing and selling their lands without their knowledge, and what provisions we draw from the state he always takes one third to himself.”¹³ However, the statement left open the question of whether he had been a fool or a liar. They apparently settled on Cook being merely the former, for they eventually let him return to their good graces—and even allowed him to claim some of their territory for himself and his family. But much damage had been done, and continued being done. The invasion of Oneida and Stockbridge territory by Euro-

¹¹ Taylor, *The Divided Ground: Indians, Settlers, and the Northern Borderland of the American Revolution* (New York: Knopf, 2006), 146-47.

¹² George Washington, July 8, 1783, Certificate to the Muhhekunnuk Indians,” *Writings of George Washington* 27:53. Efforts are underway to find archaeological evidence of an ox roast sponsored by Washington prior to their departure. Heather Kowalski, “Serendipity, General George Washington, an 1100-pound Ox, Stockbridge Mohican Sachem Solomon Uhhaunnuhwaunnuhmut, and Seeking a Needle in a Haystack,” *Bidwell Lore* (blog), Feb. 15, 2021, [bidwellhousemuseum.org](https://www.bidwellhousemuseum.org). Accessed Nov. 6, 2022. <https://www.bidwellhousemuseum.org/blog/2021/02/15/bidwell-lore-serendipity-general-george-washington-an-1100-pound-ox-stockbridge-mohican-sachem-solomon-uhhaunnuhwaunnuhmut-and-seeking-a-needle-in-a-haystack/>.

¹³ [New York] *Daily Advertiser*, Sept. 3, 1789, 2 col. 4.

American settlers and its progressive diminution eventually drove most of those erstwhile Revolutionary allies to Wisconsin by 1840.

The Return of the Natives

The arrival of settlers from New England and elsewhere had resumed even before the formal relinquishment of land rights in Mohawk and Seven Nations treaties with the US. However, this did not mark the end of Indigenous peoples' presence in the Saratoga area. The Mohawks at Grand River and Bay of Quinté did not encompass every member of their community, and they never possessed, nor had they ever pretended, coercive power over them. A small number of individual Native households remained present in the Saratoga area. Nineteenth-century historian William Leete Stone noted, "in 1792...there were a few Indians living there, some deer, and plenty of wolves and bears."¹⁴ Indigenous households could and did persist among and on the peripheries of Euro-American settler communities. Hunting and trapping skills remained relevant, and the Adirondacks and the Sacandaga River marshland offered resources and refuge.

New commercial opportunities soon brought back more Natives. The waters of Ballston Spa were attracting settlers in significant numbers for their healing properties. In August of 1800, a Ballston visitor from Boston named Abigail May took a walk to see "the wigwam on the Hill." She found Indigenous women selling baskets there and related what she saw in a journal for her sister:

The pains bestowed and the labour required to make baskets—I thought it cruel to ever dispute the price...--there were three squaws and a papoose in the wigwam all whose earthly goods might be put in a bushel. [S]traw served them for bed chairs tables and all—an iron pot containing [sic] some Indian dumplings and herrings was boiling over some coals at the door—and yet they appeared happy. [H]ow is it?¹⁵

The scene was reminiscent of the one painted by Kalm a half-century prior. The materials, manufacture, and styles represented a melding of European and Indigenous ways and tastes. The Natives likely harvested the raw materials to create and decorate the baskets from local forests and swamps with which they were already familiar. They had likely used metal hammers to separate the bark and metal knives to cut away the splints. They were still harvesting small fish from local waterways.

¹⁴ Stone, *Reminiscences*, 77.

¹⁵ Abigail May, "Journal at Ballstown Springs," [14]. Transcript. Saratoga County History Center, Brookside Museum, Ballston Spa, NY.



Figs. 7, 8. Native woman of Ballston Springs, by the Baroness Hyde de Neuville, 1807. Courtesy of the New-York Historical Society.

It was not long before Saratoga joined, then displaced, Ballston as a popular destination to visit on the merits of its springs as well as its proximity to the battlefield sites. The presence of Indigenous artists, performers, and traders expanded with the economic opportunities presented by the ever-growing numbers of visitors. The numbers grew even greater as railroads brought visitors to Saratoga. Beadwork joined basketry as products for Euro-American consumers. Native women were already skilled at using beads to decorate moccasins and clothing, but since Euro-American travelers had different sartorial tastes and a hankering for souvenirs, they increasingly sewed them on items like purses, cushions and, with the advent of photography, picture frames.¹⁶ Men also got involved with the manufacture and demonstration of bows and arrows which they promoted with displays of shooting prowess. By the 1820s these evolved into full pageants that were precursors to Wild West shows. James Fenimore Cooper had created a popular sensation in 1826 with his novel *The Last of the Mohicans*, and Natives proved more than willing to support themselves peddling tickets and keepsakes to Cooper's readers, all the while demonstrating that they were not, in fact, gone. When a newspaper announced that a party of ten or so Oneidas "will be all the go at the Springs" in 1827, it was likely referring to their performances. The posters

¹⁶ Gerry Biron, *A Cherished Curiosity: The Souvenir Beaded Bag in Historic Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Art* (Saxtons River, Vt.: Gerry Biron, 2012); Biron, "Mohawks, Abenakis, and the Indian Encampments at Saratoga Springs & Lake George," *Historic Iroquois and Wabanaki Beadwork* (blog) Accessed Nov. 2, 2022, <http://iroquoisbeadwork.blogspot.com/2014/06/mohawks-abenakis-and-indian-encampments.html>; Ruth B. Phillips, *Trading Identities: The Souvenir in Native North American Art from the Northeast, 1700-1900* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998).

advertising their performance mentioned 'WAR DANCE' no fewer than four times in large typeface, and they threw in a scalping at the end for good measure. Their wartime activity at the nearby battlegrounds was probably not forgotten. However, they also complicated the general public's understanding of those events. Margaret Hunter Hall was in the audience and described it as follows:

The exhibition was certainly sufficiently savage and strange to be quite natural, but for the scalping part of it I confess that my nerves were not strong enough to admit of looking even at the mere pretence of this barbarous practice. We were told by the handbill that part of the entertainment was to consist of playing on the violin by an Indian, and this proved certainly not the least curious part of the scene, for this Indian, dressed in a surtout coat between the acts of their barbarous dances and war whoops, filled up the intervals by playing Scotch reels, Strathspeys, Paddy O'Rafferty, and such like civilized tunes.¹⁷

As more tourists and Native people came to Saratoga Springs, the latter created a seasonal colony known as the 'Indian Encampment.' Here, they earned a living and spent time together, all the while asserting their Indigenous identities. When Englishwoman Marianne Finch visited the Encampment in 1853, it was located about two miles outside Saratoga Springs. Finch described the scene as follows:

They were all employed and silent; even the little children were running about and playing as gravely and silently as their seniors worked. The men were making bows and arrows, which was quite *comme il faut*; but to see the old squaws sewing in spectacles, and the young ones handling needles and scissors, as daintily as boarding-school misses, seemed quite an innovation on the proprieties of Indian life. . . .¹⁸

Peter Francis, an Abenaki from Akwesasne, had been trained as a cook in the kitchen of French chef Andrew Berger at the Sans Souci hotel in Ballston Springs. He achieved great renown for his ability to catch and cook the fish of Saratoga Lake, where he lived.

¹⁷ Margaret Hall, *The Aristocratic Journey, Being the Outspoken Letters of Mrs. Basil Hall Written during a Fourteen Months' Sojourn in America 1827-1828* ed. Una Pope-Hennessy (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1931), 59-61; *Rhode-Island American* (Newport, R.I.), July 13, 1827, 2.

¹⁸ Marianne Finch, *An Englishwoman's Experience in America* (London: Richard Bentley, 1853), 116.

He was patronized by members of the political and social elite for doing both in their company until his death in 1871, after which his wife took up the business.¹⁹

Abenaki Margaret Thamont's February 1867 letter to her father from Vermont gives a sense of how the seasonal work bonded Indigenous families and communities across the international boundary:

Dear father,

I now take this upurtinuty to right to you this few line to learn you that I am well for the present and hope this few line fine you injoying the same blessing I would be glad if you could spare my young brother. Edwin for next summer if you can let him go I would be gladd for he can help me to takare my little boy so if you think you can let him come to Saratoga Spring next somer you mite send him with som of the Indian of St. Francis When they come as for myself I am to work making lots of basskit to sell next sumer [?] and as for my little boy he as ben very sick but now his well again and smarte and I learn you that I am well contended here of [?] one thing We have daly prayer wich his a comfort tome no more for the present I send my best respect to my sisters and brothers and to you rigt as quick you receive this ____ [?]

I am you dother

Truly

Malgarit Thamont [Tahamont]²⁰

Saratoga was also a place where people of different Indigenous nations came together. Lydia Doxtator, an Oneida from New York born around 1865, sold "Indian wares" at Saratoga with her parents in her youth. Doxtator recalled befriending Abenakis there, learning their stories, and comparing them with those of cousins at Onondaga. According to folklorist Hope Allen, who interviewed Doxtator, "Lydia says the Indians were always telling stories. When they went calling they told them. If a new person comes into a neighborhood everyone was interested in his stories."²¹

¹⁹ Stone, *Reminiscences*, 121-8; Nancy Goyne Evans, "The Sans Souci, a Fashionable Resort Hotel in Ballston Spa" *Winterthur Portfolio* 6 (1970): 111-26.

²⁰ Quoted in Christopher A. Roy, "Abenaki Sociality and the Work of Family History" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 2012), 63; For Tahamont's eventful life, see Otis, *Rural Indigenousness: A History of Iroquoian and Algonquian Peoples of the Adirondacks* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2018), 200-2.

²¹ Hope Emily Allen, "An Oneida Tale" *Journal of American Folklore* 57 (1944): 280-81.



Fig. 9. Potato-stamped Basket, Mohican. Courtesy of the New York State Museum.

The official who authored the résumé of the Canadian Indian Department's activities for 1881 expressed frustration that Natives seemed less interested in learning about Euro-Canadian farming methods from their white neighbors than in "basket-making, axe-handle manufacturing, bead work, moccasin-making and other Indian handicraft." He correctly intuited the attraction of this kind of enterprise, for "to dispose of these articles the Indians have to visit numerous places, and thus their old, and to them, congenial habit of wandering about the country is fostered." Thwarted in his desire to transform them, he deplored the "evil results to them, morally and materially."²² In July 1888, a state commission investigating the condition of Indians in New York questioned Oneida William Dockstader. When asked how the Oneidas supported themselves besides farming, he responded "we work Indian beads, canes and baskets." The exchange continued: "Q. Where do you sell that stuff? A. Saratoga

²² *Sessional Papers of the Dominion of Canada*, v.5, session 1882, Part 6:xlvi; Phillips, *Trading Identities*, 24n38.

Springs. Q. How far are you from Saratoga? A. One hundred and twenty-one miles. Q. You go down there and sell the goods you make? A. All of us go down.”²³ It was a communal enterprise. When Dr. Jonathan Neelant, a neighbor of the Onondagas, was asked about their manufacturing activity, he replied that “there are a good many squaws who make baskets and go down to Saratoga and sell them.”²⁴ Writing about Akwesasne in 1890, retired U.S. Army General Henry Carrington reported as follows:

Basket making is a success, and many of the old people are proficient in this work. The summer resorts of Niagara and Saratoga. . .afford a ready market for their wares. Besides the ash and hickory splint, corn husks are also used for baskets, salt bottles, and sieves. Among the old-fashioned people, partly from habit as well as from economy, the domestic industries of their ancestors are still practiced. Basket making has recently risen to the most important place among the activities of the Saint Regis [Akwesasne] Indians. It occupies the time of one or more of nearly every family, and the schedules show that nearly one-sixth of the entire population have suddenly concentrated their energies upon this occupation. It guarantees a good support, with prompt pay, and the beauty, variety, and artistic combinations of the new designs prove the enterprise a success. The sales made during the census year by the Saint Regis Indians netted a little more than \$55,000, or an average of \$250 to each family, and nearly ten times as much as was realized from the sale of crops by the farmers who made farming their regular business.²⁵

The Dispersal

The Saratoga Springs encampment declined in the 20th century for several reasons. One was the United States’ unilateral termination in 1897 of the right of Natives to move trade goods across the border free of taxation or regulation. This right had been acknowledged in the 1794 Jay Treaty between the United States and Great Britain. The United States’ quiet abrogation of the exemption represented a violation of the treaty. Forty-four Kahnawake women petitioned the US Congress in 1898 to complain about this threat to their livelihood, but the tariff was not repealed.²⁶ The industrial advancements of the Gilded Age also brought an increasing array of low-cost wares and

²³ *Report of the Special Committee Appointed by the Assembly of 1888 to Investigate the Indian Problem of the State* (Albany: Troy Press Company, 1889) 2:508.

²⁴ *Report of the Special Committee*, 2:419.

²⁵ Robert W. Venables, ed., *The Six Nations of New York: The 1892 United States Extra Census Bulletin* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995 [1892]), 50.

²⁶ Gerald F. Reid, “Beadwork and Border Lines: Kahnawà:ke Women Craftworkers and the Assertion of Rotinonshiónni Border Crossing Rights in the Late Nineteenth Century” *Iroquoia* 6 (2020): 35-59.

amusements with which Indigenous performers and craftsmen and women had to compete. Making matters worse was an increasingly strident belief on the part of Euro-Americans of their cultural and genetic superiority. Indeed, General Carrington's presence at Akwesasne was to collect data that would justify and facilitate the assimilation of Indigenous peoples and result in their elimination as distinct communities. Thus, Indigenous assertions of identity became increasingly fraught. In 1902, the Indian Encampment, which had been located in Congress Park, was evicted to make way for the Italian Garden. For all but a very few Natives, the process of economic and social survival moved on to other places and prudently took less conspicuous forms.²⁷ Nevertheless, the traditions of beadwork and basket-making that had flourished at Saratoga Springs for more than a century remained sources of pride, solidarity, and continuity among the Abenaki, Haudenosaunee, and Mohican peoples. They continue to this day.²⁸



Fig. 10. Pincushion, Haudenosaunee, 1898. Courtesy of Dolores Elliott, private collection.

²⁷ Otis, *Rural Indigenousness*, 103-45.

²⁸ See, for example, "Kahnawà:ke Beadwork Oral History Project," The Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitíohkwa Language and Cultural Center. Accessed Nov. 11, 2022. <https://www.korkahnawake.org/kboh>.

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Appendix A

Recommendations

I recommend the park consider the following topics for further research and interpretation:

1. Algonquian/Iroquoian borderland.

Historically, Saratoga sits on a linguistic fault line between speakers of Algonquian and Iroquoian languages. Its location offers an opportunity to discuss Native American cultural diversity in the present and the past—including the very, very distant past. Differences did not necessarily mean conflict, as peoples coexisted peacefully for long stretches of time. The park's location along the Hudson and Fish Creek also lends itself to a consideration of the importance of water to subsistence, communication, and culture.

2. Colonel Louis Cook/Atiatoharongwen.

“Colonel Louis” is the second most important Saratogan in the Revolutionary War after Philip Schuyler. He was a stalwart ally of the Patriots from the earliest days of the Revolution. He bolstered the Oneidas' commitment to the Patriot cause and brought some Kahnawakes and Akwesasnes into the fold. For his diplomatic efforts and combat experience, he was rewarded with a lieutenant colonel's commission. Fittingly, he died fighting the British—in the War of 1812. Cook appears by name in the writings of Washington, Adams, and others, and was drawn and painted by John Trumbull. (This is rare for a Native American, let alone an African-American.) However, his legacy is not without controversy: after the Revolutionary War, he played an important role in several devastating Haudenosaunee land cessions while securing land for himself. Today, his descendants are prominent at Akwesasne.

3. Trade along the Hudson-Champlain corridor

Saratoga was an important way station on the path between two important centers of imperial trade: Montreal and Albany. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Montreal had privileged access to furs and Albany could supply textiles and small wares of high quality and low price. Natives had been traveling the Hudson-Champlain route since time immemorial, and they were usually exempt from border-crossing regulations. Women played an especially prominent role in trade along this corridor. Many of the goods they carried were destined for Indigenous consumers and therefore reflected Indigenous

preferences. Border-crossing rights and trade continue to be matters of great symbolic and practical significance to Indigenous peoples today. This topic also allows the park to highlight the significance of geography to events that took place there.

4. The Schuyler Family and Native Peoples.

The Schuylers' history with Africans and African-Americans has recently been revisited; their history with Natives has yet to be. The relationship between the Schuyler family and Native Americans was long and significant. It began with the fur trade activity of Philip Pieter Schuyler (1628-1683). His son, Pieter Schuyler (1657-1724), also a fur trader, conducted diplomacy with the Natives as one of the Albany Commissioners of Indian Affairs. His Native diplomacy took him to Onondaga, the Haudenosaunee capital, as well as London, where he traveled with three Mohawks and one Mohican to visit Queen Anne in 1710. Pieter also accompanied Natives to war. In many of these endeavors he was joined by his younger brother, Johannes (1668-1747). Myndert Schuyler (1672-1755) had an exceptionally long tenure on the Albany Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Philip John Schuyler (1733-1804) served as Congressional Indian Commissioner for the duration of the Revolution. He then served as a New York State Indian Commissioner. In that capacity he became a key player in the state's rapid expropriation of Haudenosaunee territory.

Appendix B

Consultations

My research involved visits to several Native communities and institutions at the outset of the project in 2019. The persons identified below were kind enough to discuss the substance of my project with me during these visits. They should not be assumed to have been members of, or speaking on behalf of, particular Indigenous communities. Nor should they be held responsible for anything in this report.

Akwesasne Mohawk Territory (July 23, 2019)
Darren Bonaparte (Tribal Historic Preservation Officer)

Tyendinaga Mohawk Reserve, Kanhiote Library (July 24, 2019)
Amy Brant, Karen Lewis, Karihwawihson (Joe Brown), Trish Rae, Laura Murray

Oneida Reservation, Oneida, Wisconsin (Aug. 8, 2019)
Michelle M. Danforth-Anderson, Eric Doxtator, Evelyn Elm, Chris Johnson, L. Gordon McLester III, Betty McLester

Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohican Indians Historic Preservation Office, Troy, NY, (May 9, 2019); Reservation, Bowler, WI, Arvid E. Miller Library & Museum, Mohican Veterans' Powwow (Aug. 9-11, 2019)
Bonney Hartley (Tribal Historic Preservation Officer), Larry Madden, Molly Miller, JoAnn Schedler, Heather Bruegl, Yvette Malone, Misty Cook

Ndakinna Education Center, Greenfield Center, NY (July 12, 2021)
Joseph Bruchac