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The British and Indian War: Cherokee Power and the Fate of Empire in North America

Paul Kelton

ON November 20, 1758, the commander of Fort Duquesne, Captain François-Marie Le Marchand de Lignery, sent a desperate message to his Native allies of the upper Ohio. Sixteen indigenous leaders were then assembled at the village of Kuskuskia on the Allegheny. The Ohioans—a mix of Delawares, Shawnees, and resident Iroquois referred to as Mingos—listened closely to the messenger who spoke the French officer's words: "The *English* are coming with an army to destroy both you and me. I therefore desire you immediately, my children, to hasten with all the young men; we will drive the *English* and destroy them." The messenger then presented a wampum belt, a necessary ritual that France had engaged in numerous times to unite for an attack on British soldiers and settlers. This time was different, however. The Ohioans would have nothing to do with the call for war. One chief in fact threw Lignery's wampum on the ground, and his comrades "kicked it from one to another, as if it was a snake." Another picked it up with a stick and then flung it to the end of the room and declared, "Give it to the *French* captain, and let him go with his young men; he boasted much of his fighting; now let us see his fighting. We have often ventured our lives for him; and now he thinks we should jump to serve him." A French soldier stationed at Kuskuskia witnessed the scene and became "mortified to the uttermost" and looked "as pale as death."¹ France's empire in North America was coming to an end. One of

Paul Kelton is an associate professor of history at the University of Kansas. Research funding for this project was provided by the Hall Center for the Humanities and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Kansas. A preliminary version of this paper was presented at the Peace, War, and Global Change Seminar at the Hall Center for the Humanities, University of Kansas, Sept. 2, 2011. The author thanks the participants at that event, especially Lon Strauss and Ted Wilson. He also thanks Fred Anderson, Sheyda Jahanbani, and two anonymous readers for the *William and Mary Quarterly* for their thorough reads, insightful comments, and encouragement to see the bigger picture. The author is ever grateful to Stephanie Kelton for her support and sacrifice, without which this project would not have become a reality.

¹ Christian Frederick Post's second journal, Nov. 20, 1758, in Post, "Two Journals of Western Tours," in Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., *Early Western Travels, 1748–1846*

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its most important supporting pillars—its alliance with the Ohioans—had collapsed. Four days later, Lignery destroyed his outpost, fled with his men, and allowed General John Forbes and his British army to complete its bloodless conquest of Fort Duquesne.

As a major turning point in the Seven Years' War in North America (1754–60), Great Britain's victory in the Ohio Valley has received considerable scholarly attention. Historians generally agree that the outcome of Forbes's expedition stemmed from France's inability to maintain its network of Native allies and have pointed to multiple causes for this failure. In his seminal work on the Seven Years' War in North America, for example, Fred Anderson puts France's defeat within a broader context of supply problems, smallpox, and diplomacy. The French command decided to invest its men and material resources in the European theater, leaving its officers in North America with dwindling stores of food, munitions, and gifts to supply their indigenous allies. Smallpox compounded this problem. Late in 1757 and into 1758, an epidemic devastated France's Native allies, leading to a substantial drop-off in indigenous support for the remainder of the war. Amid such dire circumstances, the Delawares of the Susquehanna and Six Nations or Iroquois Confederacy brokered what Anderson calls the "most important diplomatic breakthrough of the war," the Treaty of Easton (1758).² This accord brought peace between the Ohioans and the British and ended France's influence in the Ohio Valley.³ Taken together, however, the multiple explanations for France's failure to hold the Ohio Valley still come up short because historians have either ignored or undervalued the impact of an important set of actors. The Cherokees—an ally of Great Britain—exercised their military and diplo-

. . . (Cleveland, Ohio, 1904), 1: 255–56 ("English are coming"), 256 ("kicked"). Post observed this encounter on one of his two visits to the Ohioans in 1758. These two journals are available in multiple collections. I have used the editions available on <http://www.archive.org/details/twojournalsofwesooopstrich> (accessed Sept. 14, 2011).

² Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754–1766* (New York, 2000), 258.

³ *Ibid.*, 236–39, 258, 267–85. More recently Matthew C. Ward and Douglas R. Cubbison have expanded historians' views of the Ohio Valley in the Seven Years' War but not in contradiction to Anderson's multicausal explanation. They do, however, add greater insight into the decisions of European military commanders. See Ward, *Breaking the Backcountry: The Seven Years' War in Virginia and Pennsylvania, 1754–1765* (Pittsburgh, Pa., 2003), 178, 183; Cubbison, *The British Defeat of the French in Pennsylvania, 1758: A Military History of the Forbes Campaign against Fort Duquesne* (Jefferson, N.C., 2010), 38–39, 190. For reasons discussed later, their otherwise fine studies do not complete our understanding of how the British managed to conquer Fort Duquesne. For a summary of the vast literature on the Ohio Valley during the Seven Years' War, see Eric Hinderaker, "Declaring Independence: The Ohio Indians and the Seven Years' War," in *Cultures in Conflict: The Seven Years' War in North America*, ed. Warren R. Hofstra (Boulder, Colo., 2007), 105–25.

matic power in the Ohio Valley for more than a year before Fort Duquesne fell. They undermined France's alliances and paved the way for the ultimate British victory.

Some scholars, to be sure, have given attention to the southern indigenous nation during the imperial struggle of the 1750s, but such analyses overlook their consequential role in the north and focus on what came later in the south, the Cherokee War (1759–61). This conflict between the Cherokees and the British stemmed in large part from the problems that their alliance generated: British officers treated their Native partners with contempt and British settlers murdered several warriors on their way home from the northern theater. Anderson, for example, discusses Cherokees but only as temporary allies to the British who left the Ohio Valley campaign almost as quickly as they arrived and who reenter the narrative of the Seven Years' War as enemies rather than friends. Matthew C. Ward provides a corrective by showing how the Cherokees' military power thwarted Shawnee attacks on Virginia, but he emphasizes Lignery's strategic mistakes as the key to Forbes's victory and misses the crucial role the southern indigenous nation played in bringing about the diplomatic settlement that ended the conflict. Much like scholars who have focused more exclusively on the Cherokees, Ward discusses Cherokee involvement in the northern theater largely to show how it sowed the seeds for future conflict.⁴ The full geographic extent of the Cherokees' influence thus has been understudied, and the Cherokee War becomes the only significant result of their involvement in the Seven Years' War. In the end, existing scholarship makes an important indigenous group play a mere bit part in an overdetermined narrative of inescapable British-Native conflict.

Even scholars whose own works have advanced our appreciation of how Natives helped cause, critically shape, and conclude the Seven Years' War have missed the Cherokees' role in a crucial turning point in this global conflict. Military historians certainly include southern indigenous warriors in their studies of the northern theater, but, by intentionally leaving the diplomatic aspects of Britain's victory for others to study, they have offered only a limited view of how Natives exercised their power. Scholars

⁴ Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 267–85, 457–71; Ward, *Breaking the Backcountry*, 129–85. For scholarship that focuses more explicitly on the Cherokees, see also David H. Corkran, *The Cherokee Frontier: Conflict and Survival, 1740–62* (Norman, Okla., 1962), 65–162; Tom Hatley, *The Dividing Paths: Cherokees and South Carolinians through the Era of Revolution* (New York, 1995), 92–115; Gregory Evans Dowd, "Insidious Friends": Gift Giving and the Cherokee-British Alliance in the Seven Years' War," in *Contact Points: American Frontiers from the Mohawk Valley to the Mississippi, 1750–1830*, ed. Andrew R. L. Cayton and Fredrika J. Teute (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1998), 114–50; John Oliphant, *Peace and War on the Anglo-Cherokee Frontier, 1756–63* (Baton Rouge, La., 2001), 31–68; Tyler Boulware, *Deconstructing the Cherokee Nation: Town, Region, and Nation among Eighteenth-Century Cherokees* (Gainesville, Fla., 2011), 94–109.

who focus more on diplomacy, however, either reference Cherokees only in passing or fail to mention them at all. Such omission underestimates indigenous agency and overlooks the complexities of imperial conflict in North America. On that pivotal night of November 20, 1758, the Ohioans made a crucial decision within a context that another Native group's choices and actions created. Recovering this lost aspect of the conquest of Fort Duquesne reminds us that we should look not just at the policies generated in such grandiose places as Whitehall and Versailles but at those generated in smaller, seemingly out-of-the-way Native villages in the eastern woodlands of North America. In these locations important actors debated their options, exercised power, and decided the fates of empires.⁵

AFTER THREE YEARS of disastrous losses, the British of the mid-Atlantic colonies had reason to be hopeful as the spring of 1757 commenced. More than three hundred Cherokee warriors came to help and more were thought to be on their way. Previously, the French and their Native allies had thoroughly defeated Colonel George Washington's and General Edward Braddock's armies in 1754 and 1755 respectively. They then raided Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania settlers, killed more than two thousand British subjects, and took an additional thousand captive. Throughout this time, only a small fraction of the two or three thousand total warriors the Cherokees could field had offered assistance. Virginia's lieutenant governor Robert Dinwiddie repeatedly requested their aid but had little success. Concerns over trade and security pervaded the indigenous nation's decentralized polity of some 7,000 to 8,500 people and fifty largely autonomous towns. Town elders, often with the encouragement of South Carolinian traders, counseled against involvement in the north because the

⁵ For military histories that do include the Cherokees, see David L. Preston, "Make Indians of Our White Men': British Soldiers and Indian Warriors from Braddock's to Forbes's Campaigns, 1755–1758," *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 74, no. 3 (Summer 2007): 280–306; Douglas McClure Wood, "I Have Now Made a Path to Virginia': Outacite Ostenaco and the Cherokee-Virginia Alliance in the French and Indian War," *West Virginia History*, new ser., 2, no. 2 (Fall 2008): 31–60; Cubbison, *British Defeat of the French*, 29, 81–85, 115–20. Those who give passing reference to Cherokee involvement in the Ohio Valley are Francis Jennings, *Empire of Fortune: Crowns, Colonies, and Tribes in the Seven Years War in America* (New York, 1988), 376, 397–98; Michael N. McConnell, *A Country Between: The Upper Ohio Valley and Its Peoples, 1724–1774* (Lincoln, Neb., 1992), 130; Jane T. Merritt, *At the Crossroads: Indians and Empires on a Mid-Atlantic Frontier, 1700–1763* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 2003), 247–49. Those not even mentioning Cherokees in the context of the Ohio Valley in the 1750s are Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815* (New York, 1991), 248–56; James H. Merrell, *Into the American Woods: Negotiators on the Pennsylvania Frontier* (New York, 1999), 242–49. An important essay that suggests the broader importance of Native agency in the global imperial conflict of the 1750s is Ian Steele, "Shawnee Origins of Their Seven Years' War," *Ethnohistory* 53, no. 4 (Fall 2006): 657–87.

absence of young men would undermine the deerskin trade, cut off the flow of manufactured goods into southern Appalachia, and leave their villages vulnerable to enemy attack. The French and their allies particularly threatened the westernmost division of their nation—the Overhills. Being the farthest from South Carolina, their villages stood more exposed than the Lower, Middle, and Valley divisions to French-allied groups including the Choctaws, Illinois, Miamis, Ottawas, and Shawnees. Cherokees demanded that the British build a fort at the western end of their nation for protection before they would commit large numbers of warriors to fight in the Ohio Valley. By the end of 1756, Cherokee obstinacy diminished. South Carolina completed Fort Loudoun within the Overhills, and several hundred warriors, believing that the British would make good on their promises of supplies and presents, trekked north to fight against King George II's enemies (Figure 1).⁶

Problems, to be sure, occurred with this mobilization. Ill-prepared to provide for their allies, the British offered sparse gifts that did not meet Native expectations. One hundred forty-eight warriors under the leadership

⁶ On the number of Cherokee warriors going north in 1757, see Arthur Dobbs to William Henry Lyttelton, Apr. 10, 1757, William Henry Lyttelton Papers, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; John Harris to Joseph Shippen, May 9, 1757, Shippen Family Correspondence (hereafter cited as Shippen Correspondence), vol. 2, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia (HSP); George Croghan to Sir William Johnson, May 24, 1757, in Almon W. Lauber, ed., *The Papers of Sir William Johnson* (Albany, N.Y., 1939), 9: 770–72, esp. 9: 772. On the number of British subjects killed and captured, see Matthew C. Ward, “The European Method of Warring Is Not Practiced Here’: The Failure of British Military Policy in the Ohio Valley, 1755–1759,” *War in History* 4, no. 3 (July 1997): 247–63, esp. 247–48. On the number of Native warriors in the south on the eve of the Seven Years’ War, see James Glen to Robert Darcy, 4th Earl of Holderness, June 25, 1753, Colonial Office Papers, ser. 5, vol. 13, microfilm, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. The British also had help from another southern group, the Catawbas, throughout the Seven Years’ War. With three hundred to four hundred warriors, the Catawbas played less of a role in influencing the outcome of events in the Ohio Valley. For an analysis of eighteenth-century estimates of Native population numbers, see Peter H. Wood, “The Changing Population of the Colonial South: An Overview by Race and Region, 1685–1790,” in *Powhatan’s Mantle: Indians in the Colonial Southeast*, ed. Wood, Gregory A. Wasekko, and M. Thomas Hatley (Lincoln, Neb., 1989), 35–103, esp. 61–66. Lieutenant Governor Robert Dinwiddie’s appeals to the Cherokees include “Governor Dinwiddie’s Message to the Catawba Indians,” in R. A. Brock, ed., *The Official Records of Robert Dinwiddie, Lieutenant-Governor of the Colony of Virginia, 1751–1758* (Richmond, Va., 1883), 1: 60–61, esp. 1: 60; Dinwiddie to Richard Pearis, Aug. 2, [1754], *ibid.*, 1: 266–68; “Governor Dinwiddie to the Lords of Trade,” Oct. 25, 1754, *ibid.*, 1: 362–65, esp. 1: 364; “Governor Dinwiddie to the Sachems and Warriors of the Great Nations of the Cherokees and Catawbas,” Nov. 4, 1754, *ibid.*, 1: 391; “Governor Dinwiddie’s Message to the Cherokee Indians,” Dec. 23, 1755, *ibid.*, 2: 300–301. The most thorough treatment of Cherokee obstinacy during the early years of the war and their decision to finally send significant numbers remains Corkran, *Cherokee Frontier*, 50–114. John Oliphant appropriately emphasizes trade and security as motivating factors. See Oliphant, *Peace and War*, 31.



FIGURE I

Cherokees and the Ohio Valley campaign, 1757–58. Drawn by Rebecca Wrenn.

of Wauhatchee, for example, arrived in Winchester, Virginia, and found no presents awaiting them.⁷ “I am sure King George does not know now how we are treated,” the leader complained. “I am very sorry the Governor will not give us such presents as will encourage us to come and fight for him.”⁸ Another warrior told Major Andrew Lewis that if the promised presents were not forthcoming “he would turn back and take everything from the Inhabitants as they went along, and maybe, said he, scalp some of them too.”⁹ Virginia’s officers held several councils with their indigenous allies and finally persuaded some to head out toward Fort Duquesne with

⁷ George Mercer to George Washington, Apr. 24, 1757, in W. W. Abbot et al., eds., *The Papers of George Washington, Colonial Series* (Charlottesville, Va., 1984), 4: 139–42.

⁸ “The Swallow Warrior’s Speech to Col. Mercer,” in Edith Mays, ed., *Amherst Papers, 1756–1763, The Southern Sector: Dispatches from South Carolina, Virginia and His Majesty’s Superintendent of Indian Affairs* (Westminster, Md., 2006), 12–13 (quotations, 13).

⁹ George Mercer to George Washington, Apr. 26, 1757, in Abbot et al., *Papers of George Washington*, 4: 142–44, esp. 4: 142–43 (quotation, 4: 142).

promises that presents would be supplied to them on their return.¹⁰ The disappointment for some continued, however. A Cherokee party told a Mohawk sachem and his British companion that their continued participation depended on receiving "Cloaths from their Brethren the English and Presents to carry home to their women and children." They added that "they could not subsist without for while they were employed in War they shou[ld] lose their hunting."¹¹ Some Cherokees resorted to simply taking what they thought was their due. On their return home, some warriors allegedly plundered plantations and treated Virginians brutally.¹²

Friction between the British and their Native partners certainly helped sow the seeds for future conflict, but such incidents should not overshadow how Cherokees transformed the larger conflict into a British and Indian war. Once their warriors arrived in the mid-Atlantic, they ranged the back-country and began intercepting enemy raiders. One party, for example, encountered a group of French allies, took two prisoners, and killed four, including "one . . . great Warrior" of the Delawares and another of the Shawnees.¹³ Another interception resulted in important intelligence being supplied to the British. After they waylaid some Shawnees, Delawares, and French soldiers, Cherokees delivered to Colonel Washington a cadet's orders that they retrieved from the slain man's body.¹⁴ This event and others immediately demonstrated the importance of having indigenous help. Washington commented to his superior that the "sincere disposition the Cherokees have betrayed to espouse our cause heartily, has been demonstrated beyond the most distant doubt."¹⁵ Lieutenant Governor Dinwiddie also rejoiced in this turn of events. In Williamsburg he gave a hero's welcome to Keewavauftekee and the Yellow Bird and presented them with a ceremonial hatchet for the prisoners and scalps that they took.¹⁶ Enemy raids against British settlements did not completely stop, but by fall they had diminished substantially, and the English took notice. "[Cherokee] Scouting in these parts hath been of infinite Service this summer to [Virginia] as it hath kept the

¹⁰ Ibid., 4: 142–43.

¹¹ Journal of George Croghan, June 18, 1757, Penn Family Papers, Penn Manuscripts, Indian Affairs, vol. 3, item 11, HSP.

¹² Clement Reade to Robert Dinwiddie, Apr. 9, 1757, in Mays, *Amherst Papers*, 7–9.

¹³ "The Examination of Two Indian Prisoners Taken and Brought to Fort Lyttleton by the Cherokees," May 12, 1757, in *Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1851), 7: 531–32 (quotation, 7: 532); Croghan to Johnson, May 24, 1757, in Lauber, *Papers of Sir William Johnson*, 9: 771–72.

¹⁴ Robert Dinwiddie to George Washington, Nov. 16, 1756, in Abbot et al., *Papers of George Washington*, 4: 24–27, esp. 4: 25–27.

¹⁵ George Washington to Robert Dinwiddie, Nov. 5, 1757, *ibid.*, 5: 44–46 (quotation, 5: 44).

¹⁶ Thomas A. Strohfeldt, "Warriors in Williamsburg: The Cherokee Presence in Virginia's Eighteenth Century Capital," *Journal of Cherokee Studies* 11 (Spring 1986): 4–18, esp. 10.

Enemy's Parties out of its Settlements," remarked Edmond Atkin, Southern Superintendent of Indian Affairs.¹⁷

Intercepting enemy raiders was only part of their importance. Cherokees took the war directly to Fort Duquesne and Native villages of the Ohio Valley, inflicting heavy casualties on Shawnees and Delawares. As early as May, the Six Nations reported to the British that the Ohioans "are much afraid of the Southern Indians, having been struck 3 times by them this Spring—twice near Fort Du Quesne and once at the Logs Town, and that the Indians are moving fast up the Ohio towards the Senecas."¹⁸ A Chickasaw man who had been a captive among the French Indians but who had been retaken by Cherokees echoed the Six Nations' report, claiming that the French-allied Natives were "afraid" and that the Shawnees had broken up one of their towns and moved farther to the west.¹⁹ Other reports of these attacks began to trickle back to British forts. Perhaps hearing of the same episode that the Chickasaw captive reported, Pennsylvanians learned that some Virginians with a large force of Native allies destroyed an entire enemy town and captured or killed between thirty and forty Shawnees.²⁰ Fort Duquesne seemed to offer little protection. One Cherokee party attacked and defeated a group of Native hunters who were killing game to supply the French with fresh meat. The pro-British warriors reportedly took fifteen to sixteen prisoners, "besides scalps."²¹ In another instance Cherokees came "so near the fort" that the French "fired the cannon at them."²² Another party of about eighty men ambushed their enemies around Fort Duquesne, killing several and taking six captives. Four of these were officers. In the skirmish the important Lower Cherokee leader Swallow Warrior was killed, and in revenge his kinsmen put to death all of their prisoners but an officer who was brought to Virginia's western outpost at Winchester. News of their exploits traveled back to their own nation, where a Carolinian trader heard from his Cherokee partners that they had killed forty-nine Delawares.²³

¹⁷ Edmond Atkin to William Henry Lyttelton, Aug. 13, 1757, Lyttelton Papers.

¹⁸ "At a Meeting with the Indians at John Harris'," Apr. 2, 1757, in *Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania*, 7: 509–17 (quotation, 7: 515).

¹⁹ Raymond Demere to William Henry Lyttelton, July 20, 1757, Lyttelton Papers.

²⁰ Joseph Shippen to James Burd, Lancaster, May 31, 1757, Joseph Shippen Military Letterbook, Shippen Correspondence; John Harris to Burd, June 1, 1757, Shippen Correspondence, vol. 2; Demere to Lyttelton, July 20, 1757, Lyttelton Papers.

²¹ John Harris to James Burd, June 6, 1757, Shippen Correspondence, vol. 2.

²² Journal of Croghan, June 18, 1757, Penn Family Papers, Penn Manuscripts, Indian Affairs, vol. 3, item 11.

²³ William Trent to William Cox, June 16, 1757, in *Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania*, 7: 601; Robert Dinwiddie to Arthur Dobbs, June 20, 1757, in Brock, *Official Records of Robert Dinwiddie*, 2: 651–53, esp. 2: 653. John Boggs to William Henry Lyttelton, July 16, 1757, Lyttelton Papers.

Cherokees indeed changed the equation of the war. Previous to their involvement, the Ohioans had only experienced one retaliatory raid by an all-British force. Colonel John Armstrong and his Pennsylvania regiment burned the Delaware town of Kittanning on the Allegheny and killed several inhabitants in 1756, but they freed only seven prisoners and suffered terrible losses of their own that included seventeen killed, thirteen wounded, and nineteen captured. Cherokees were much more effective. With their warriors in the field, the Ohioans could no longer expect to conduct raids without suffering retaliation. Prisoners captured by the Cherokees gave information that the Delawares desired peace, wanted to expel the French from the forks, and believed Fort Duquesne could be taken provided that Natives did not offer assistance and protection to the French. The potential for such a turn of events soon began to dawn on the French themselves. Governor Pierre François de Rigaud, marquis de Vaudreuil-Cavagnal, of Canada complained to his home government that the British kept three hundred indigenous warriors ranging along the mountains between the Susquehanna and the Ohio Rivers whose activities disrupted the flow of supplies to Fort Duquesne and kept French-allied warriors away from the forks.²⁴

CHEROKEES DID MORE THAN FIGHT. They exercised their diplomatic power to forge a pro-British alliance with the Six Nations that fundamentally changed the balance of power in eastern North America. How the Iroquois would respond to their presence in the Ohio country must have weighed on Cherokee minds. The Six Nations claimed the region and had warred with the southern indigenous nation nearly continuously until 1742, when the British negotiated a peace. Yet back-and-forth raids still continued into the 1750s. Carolinians who wanted to keep Cherokees at home at the onset of the war, moreover, warned them that their presence in the north would provoke the Six Nations to retaliate. Mohawks, the most pro-British nation of the Iroquois Confederacy, tried to assuage their former enemy's worries and lure them to take the field against the French and Ohioans but made little headway during the first three years of the imperial struggle.²⁵

²⁴ John Armstrong's raid is covered in Ward, *Breaking the Backcountry*, 106–7. The information that the prisoners provided can be found in “The Examination of Two Indian Prisoners,” May 12, 1757, in *Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania*, 7: 531–32; Croghan to Johnson, May 24, 1757, in Lauber, *Papers of Sir William Johnson*, 9: 771–72; “Examination of a Delaware Prisoner, 1757,” in Samuel Hazard, ed., *Pennsylvania Archives* (Philadelphia, Pa., 1853), 3: 147–48. French awareness of Britain's mobilization of Native allies can be found in M. de Vaudreuil to M. de Moras, July 12, 1757, in E. B. O'Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New-York; Procured in Holland, England and France* (Albany, N.Y., 1858), 10: 580–84; see also the same letter in Donald H. Kent and Sylvester K. Stevens, eds., *Wilderness Chronicles of Northwestern Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1941), 98–104.

²⁵ For a more lengthy discussion of Cherokee dealings with the Six Nations, see Theda Perdue, “Cherokee Relations with the Iroquois in the Eighteenth Century,” in

When Cherokees finally arrived in significant numbers in the mid-Atlantic backcountry, they sought to gauge the Iroquois' response to their activities. The southern warriors, according to rumors that Pennsylvanians heard, "propose a meeting with some of the Six Nations in this Province and are willing to be on good terms with them, but are Determined to strike the other Nations on Ohio with the French where ever they find them."²⁶ The British helped bring the two indigenous powers together. George Croghan, deputy to Britain's Northern Superintendent of Indian Affairs Sir William Johnson, escorted a Mohawk sachem to Carlisle, where he met with a Cherokee war party in June 1757. The Iroquoian emissary told the warriors that they should "join their united Forces in order to defeat the dark Schemes of their common Enemy the French and their Indians." The sachem gave the Cherokees "a large War Belt" and said "perhaps next spring we may both join together and strike a stroke which may make the French repent their past conduct." The warriors "expressed great Satisfaction" with what they heard and promised to battle the French "as long as they had a man able to fight."²⁷ They agreed to send three of their men on to the Six Nations for further discussion.²⁸ At Fort Johnson—a British outpost located near the Mohawks—the Cherokee emissaries felt out the Iroquois for their reactions to an even larger force coming into the Ohio country. "You shall soon hear the sound of our arms, and more so next spring early," they exclaimed. "We the Indians shall be the first in the field. We thought it not sufficient to acquaint you of this by only sending our words, but we thought proper to come ourselves to the Fire Place of the Six Nations."²⁹

The Six Nations' response to the diplomatic overture went unrecorded, but by early fall a more complete picture of a developing pro-

Beyond the Covenant Chain: The Iroquois and Their Neighbors in Indian North America, 1600–1800, ed. Daniel K. Richter and James H. Merrell (Syracuse, N.Y., 1987), 135–49. Governor James Glen cited Iroquois animosity as a reason Cherokees should stay home; see "Governor Glen to the Cherokee Head Men," June 13, 1754, in William L. McDowell Jr., ed., *Documents Relating to Indian Affairs, May 21, 1750–August 7, 1754* (Columbia, S.C., 1958), 521–22, esp. 521. Mohawk entreaties can be found in "Certificate of Gieton Howley and George Gelriwell," Oct. 25, 1754, in McDowell, ed., *Documents Relating to Indian Affairs, 1754–1765* (Columbia, S.C., 1970), 31–32; "Thomas Nightingale to Governor Glen," Jan. 17, 1755, *ibid.*, 32; "Six Nations to the Catawbaw Nation," n.d., *ibid.*, 33–34; "Lud. Grant to Governor Glen," Mar. 27, 1755, *ibid.*, 45–46, esp. 45.

²⁶ Harris to Shippen, May 9, 1757, Shippen Correspondence, vol. 2.

²⁷ Journal of Croghan, June 18, 1757, Penn Family Papers, Penn Manuscripts, Indian Affairs, vol. 3, item 11.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ "Journal of Sir William Johnson's Proceedings with the Indians," July 31, 1757, in O'Callaghan, *Colonial History of the State of New York*, 7: 324 (quotations). On the Six Nations' role in the Seven Years' War, see Timothy J. Shannon, "War, Diplomacy, and Culture: The Iroquois Experience in the Seven Years' War," in Hofstra, *Cultures in Conflict*, 79–103.

British alliance emerged. In late September some Cherokees again met with Iroquois representatives and Johnson. "We are not charged with any particular affairs of consequence," the visitors stated, "but as we heard a noise of Fighting this way our chiefs sent us hither to look and see how things were." In addition to gauging the positions of the Six Nations, the Cherokees made it clear what they intended to do. "We are Warriors and our Nation have lifted their Ax against the French, and are determined not to lay it down, whilst there is a man amongst us left alive," they stated. They informed their hosts that they had killed or captured sixteen of the enemy on the way north but lost two warriors and a noted chief. "We the Cherokees are determined upon Revenge," they exclaimed. "We will make war upon the Ohio, and spare neither the French [n]or their Indians if they fall in our way. The hatchet we began with was but a small one, but we hope to get one of a larger size, which will enable us to do more execution than we have hitherto been able to do."³⁰ The Ohioans, in other words, could expect another round of attacks the following spring.

Superintendent Johnson counseled the Six Nations to pay heed to the visitors' message and come up with a response to strengthen their relationship with the southern indigenous nation. Iroquois leaders took several days "debating" how to respond. Finally, the Oneida sachem Conochquiesha spoke "the voice of the whole Six Nations." He formally extended an invitation for the Cherokees to meet with the Iroquois at their council fire during the upcoming spring and asked the visitors to take his talk directly to their nation without letting the French know its contents. The French, according to Conochquiesha, were a "perfidious People" who used "every Cunning & wicked Method" and should not be listened to. The Oneida speaker further asked his guests to communicate the message "to all their Friends & Allies" and to "use their best Endeavours to gather all their Hearts together as one Heart & to have but one Ear & one Mouth." Conochquiesha requested that Johnson add his name to the message, "which will give it the greater Weight & render it the more acceptable & prevailing with our Bretheren the Cherokees." The Oneida speaker also told Johnson to let the Iroquois know if anything needed to be altered or added. Johnson in fact gained the Six Nations' permission to add one key point: since the southern warriors lost some of their own to the enemy, then "it would be very proper to encourage them by a joint Belt of Wampum w[hi]ch I have ready, to persevere in their Resolutions, [to] go on & get Satisfaction."³¹

³⁰ "At a Meeting of three Mohawk Chiefs, two Seneca Sachems and two Cherokee Indians," Sept. 12, 1757, in O'Callaghan, *Colonial History of the State of New York*, 7: 325–26 (quotations, 7: 325).

³¹ "At a Meeting of Indians as before mentioned," Sept. 18, 1757, in Lauber, *Papers of Sir William Johnson*, 9: 840–43 ("debating," 9: 840, "voice," "greater Weight," 9: 841, "every Cunning," "proper to encourage," 9: 842).

The Iroquois Confederacy thus gave the Cherokees their support in their stated desire to come with a larger force to attack the French and their Native allies. After a ceremonious end to the conference, Mohawk emissaries accompanied their guests back home.³²

Before this delegation even returned, a pro-British alliance was taking shape in southern Appalachia that would lead more Cherokees to take part in the war. Although some Overhills did go north earlier in 1757, many remained skeptical of British promises and believed they should stay home to hunt.³³ In late August the situation visibly changed. Residents of Chota, the Overhills' mother town, flew a British flag from the council house during their Green Corn Ceremony and heard three invited Catawbas give a powerful war talk against the French. "The Creeks, Chickasaws, Cherokees, Catawbas, Tuskeroras, Notowagas, the Saponys & the Six Nations," the Catawba dignitaries recited, "we are all Brothers together & joined together against the French and the Indians." In this pro-British alliance that stretched from the Iroquois grand council at Onondaga deep into the south, the high priest of Chota, Connecorte, held an esteemed position as "Oldest Brother." At the same time, Ostenaco—one of the Overhills' most revered war chiefs—arrived home after spending several months in the northern theater with a great haul, including "some Horses loaded with presents, and [a] white man to wait on him."³⁴ He harbored some resentment about the treatment that the British had given him and complained that he and his men did not receive the amount of goods that they deserved, but he nonetheless informed the commander of Fort Loudoun that he and thirteen warriors would strike the French again in the fall. It is unknown whether Ostenaco followed through with his promise to leave so soon, but others did go against Britain's enemies. Many struck the residents of the Illinois country, a region that supplied food and military support to Fort Duquesne. Among those who went toward the lower Ohio was Attakullakulla, Connecorte's nephew and perhaps the most highly regarded diplomat among all Cherokees. He took forty-eight warriors with him and returned in January 1758 with two male French captives, a captive Miami woman, and twelve scalps.³⁵

³² William Denny to George Washington, Oct. 9, 1757, in McDowell, *Documents Relating to Indian Affairs, 1754–1765*, 436–37; "An Indian Council," July 21, 1758, in Lauber, *Papers of Sir William Johnson*, 9: 946–51, esp. 9: 947.

³³ Paul Demere to William Henry Lyttelton, Aug. 18, 1757, in McDowell, *Documents Relating to Indian Affairs, 1754–1765*, 401–4, esp. 402; Raymond Demere to William Henry Lyttelton, July 11, 1757, Lyttelton Papers; John Stuart to Lyttelton, July 1757, *ibid.*; Paul Demere to Lyttelton, Aug. 31, 1757, *ibid.*

³⁴ Paul Demere to William Henry Lyttelton, Oct. 11, 1757, Lyttelton Papers.

³⁵ *Ibid.* Though Ostenaco's whereabouts during late fall 1757 are unknown, he did return to the northern theater in 1758, although he avoided British forts. See Wood, *West Virginia History* 2: 47, 52. For more details on Attakullakulla's remarkable life, see

The arrival of the Cherokee emissaries from the Six Nations with wampum belts and talks led to further escalation as the winter of 1757–58 receded. While General John Forbes struggled to get his own expedition organized, Cherokees were well on their way to securing his ultimate victory over the French in the Ohio Valley. In February the Lower towns announced their willingness to do battle in the north and demanded ammunition from the governor of South Carolina. In the meantime, they accepted painted hatchets that the Mohawks sent and responded with a message detailing how the two groups would not confuse each other with the enemy. By March 4, 1758, warriors from all but one Lower town had either gone out to war or were set to go as soon as British officers could supply them.³⁶ The Middle and Overhill towns also responded favorably to the Iroquois' messages and sent out numerous warriors. They intended to go directly to Fort Johnson to confer with the Six Nations but along the way came to "understand an Army was ordered by our Father the king of England to the Ohio against the French." They added that "we listened to the Request & persuasions of the English General that way & joined him."³⁷ By late April, 595 warriors from sixteen different towns representing each of the four divisions of the Cherokee Nation had reported to the various British forts in the mid-Atlantic backcountry. An untold number of additional warriors were then out on raids against the Ohioans, and some others were on their way north. By early May, Forbes believed that the number of warriors from the southern indigenous nation reached eight hundred, the same number that a Cherokee delegation reported to the Six Nations. There may have been even more. A Lower town man recited a talk in Philadelphia in which he claimed that twelve hundred warriors left his nation during the spring.³⁸ Whatever the exact total, those warriors

James C. Kelly, "Notable Persons in Cherokee History: Attakullakulla," *Journal of Cherokee Studies* 3 (Winter 1978): 2–34. Attakullakulla's exploits are reported in Paul Demere to William Henry Lyttelton, Feb. 20, 1758, Lyttelton Papers.

³⁶ "Talk of the Lower Cherokees to Governor Lyttelton," Feb. 11, 1758, in McDowell, *Documents Relating to Indian Affairs, 1754–1765*, 438–39; Lower Cherokees to Mohawks, Mar. 2, 1758, Headquarters Papers of Brigadier-General John Forbes Relating to the Expedition Against Fort Duquesne in 1758, microfilm, reel no. 1, item 70, Tracey W. McGregor Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va. The British commander of Fort Prince George noted this early mass mobilization in Lach. Mackintosh to William Henry Lyttelton, Mar. 4, 1758, in McDowell, *Documents Relating to Indian Affairs, 1754–1765*, 443–44.

³⁷ "An Indian Council," July 21, 1758, in Lauber, *Papers of Sir William Johnson*, 9: 948 (quotations).

³⁸ The British's April count included 57 Catawbas as well, bringing the total number of "southern Indians" to 652; see "A Return of the Southern Indians," Apr. 21, 1758, Headquarters Papers of Forbes, reel no. 1, item 132. John Forbes gave his estimate in Forbes to John Campbell, 4th Earl of Loudoun, June 17, 1758, in Alfred Procter James, ed., *Writings of General John Forbes Relating to his Service in North America* (Menasha,

represented a remarkable yet underappreciated mobilization of indigenous power on the British side during the Seven Years' War.

Cherokee women played a particularly important role in this mobilization. Male warriors would not have ventured north had they not had the support of their female kin. Women exercised substantial authority in issues of war and peace, and they too had listened to the Six Nations' talks. They welcomed this pro-British alliance, predicated their decision in part on the support that Iroquois women would provide for their warriors while far away from home, and sent their northern counterparts the following message: "As it is our parts to furnish the Warriors with Provisions whenever they go upon any Exploit, it being our Duty to do so they being our Children & brought forth by us. We earnestly desire & request of you to take good care of them your way as we shall do here so as to fit them out with such Necessarys as Warriors stand in need of, so that they maynt want when they are on their March."³⁹ Of course, as it turned out, the mass of warriors did not make it to the Six Nations, and their care instead fell to the British in Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania.

Such care, as many historians have emphasized, failed to materialize, and Great Britain's largest mobilization of its Native allies fizzled. John Campbell, 4th Earl of Loudoun, vested authority for mobilizing and supplying Cherokees with Colonel William Byrd III. Before the Virginian arrived in the Lower towns on April 7, 1758, however, the vast majority of men throughout the nation willing to go to war had already left. General Forbes, of course, was delighted that hundreds of Native allies arrived in the north, but the British were woefully unprepared to feed and supply them. The warriors, moreover, grew tired of waiting for the general to assemble his army and chafed at the disrespectful treatment they received. Such animosity almost certainly played a role in the violence that broke out in the Virginia backcountry as Cherokees made their way home. The returning warriors again plundered farms, and, this time, both Cherokees and Virginians ended up dead.⁴⁰ News of the skirmishes led to further

Wis., 1938), 119–20, esp. 119; "An Indian Council," July 21, 1758, in Lauber, *Papers of Sir William Johnson*, 9: 948. Cherokees put their own numbers even higher; see message of Cowl or Moyemaw and Henely, two Cherokee captains, to the Six Nations, June 27, 1758, Friendly Association Papers, 2: 71, Special Collections, Haverford College Library, Haverford, Pa. On numbers, see Wood, *West Virginia History* 2: 53.

³⁹ "An Indian Council," July 21, 1758, in Lauber, *Papers of Sir William Johnson*, 9: 950 (quotation). For an excellent analysis of the role of women in warfare, see Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700–1835* (Lincoln, Neb., 1998), 53–55, 86–108.

⁴⁰ Representative examples of the problems that occurred with the Cherokees' mobilization for the Forbes expedition are: William Trent to George Croghan, Mar. 19, 1758, in Lauber, *Papers of Sir William Johnson*, 2: 784–85; Thomas Bullitt to William Denny, Mar. 31, 1758, Headquarters Papers of Forbes, reel 1, item 99; George Washington to John Stanwix, Apr. 10, 1758, in Abbot et al., *Papers of George Washington*, 5:

departures and caused Forbes to change his earlier gleeful sentiments to expressions of doubt. "The Cherokees are now no longer to be kept with us neither by promises nor presents," Forbes concluded. "They begin to grow extremely licentious, and have gone so farr as to seize the presents designed for them, and divide it among themselves according to their own Caprice."⁴¹ George Washington also fretted, claiming that their departure "might be of the most fatal consequence to this part of the Continent."⁴² By early June, the number of Cherokees had shrunk to 186, and these would trickle home during the summer. Only a few dozen warriors remained to scout for Forbes's advanced forces as fall began.⁴³

THIS SUPPOSED EVAPORATION of Native support, however, obscures how in reality Cherokees actually secured John Forbes's victory. Part of their contribution, again, was their exercise of military power. Warriors from the southern nation had inflicted serious punishment on the Ohioans the previous year, and the mobilization of hundreds more for the 1758 campaign

117–20, esp. 5; 117–18; Christopher Gist to Sir John St. Clair, Apr. 12, 1758, Dalhousie Muniments, 45/2/48/1, microfilm, reel 1, National Register of Archives, Edinburgh, Scotland; John Forbes to James Abercromby, Apr. 20, 1758, in James, *Writings of Forbes*, 65–66, esp. 65; "Speech of Captain Bosomworth to . . . the Cherokees and Catawbias . . . at Fort Loudon [Va.]," Apr. 21, 1758, Headquarters Papers of Forbes, reel 1, item 132; Forbes to Abercromby, [Apr. 22, 1758], in James, *Writings of Forbes*, 68–69; Forbes to William Johnson, [May 4, 1758], *ibid.*, 82–83, esp. 82; Forbes to Abercromby, [May 4, 1758], *ibid.*, 84–86, esp. 85. On the skirmishes in the Virginia backcountry, see St. Clair to Forbes, May 19, 1758, Headquarters Papers of Forbes, reel 2, item 234; St. Clair to George Washington, [May 24, 1758], in Abbot et al., *Papers of George Washington*, 5: 197–99, esp. 5: 197; "Depositions Concerning Indian Disturbances in Virginia," June 1, 1758, in McDowell, *Documents Relating to Indian Affairs, 1754–1765*, 463–70. For a particularly insightful analysis of how Cherokees interpreted their treatment, see Dowd, "Insidious Friends," 114–50.

⁴¹ John Forbes to John Stanwix, May 29, 1758, in James, *Writings of Forbes*, 102–4 (quotations, 102).

⁴² George Washington to Francis Halkett, May 11, 1758, in Abbot et al., *Papers of George Washington*, 5: 175–77 (quotation, 5: 177).

⁴³ John Forbes estimated that only one hundred Cherokees remained in the north in mid-June 1758; however, at the same time Colonel Henry Bouquet had ninety-nine with him at Carlisle and William Byrd III had around eighty-seven at Winchester. There were likely more out between the Susquehanna and Ohio Rivers. Forbes to Loudoun, June 17, 1758, in James, *Writings of Forbes*, 119; Byrd to James Glen, June 23, 1758, Dalhousie Muniments, 45/2/44/3b, reel 1; Bouquet to Forbes, June 16, 1758, in *The Papers of Henry Bouquet*, vol. 2, *The Forbes Expedition*, ed. S. K. Stevens, Donald H. Kent, and Autumn L. Leonard (Harrisburg, Pa., 1951), 95–97, esp. 95. The British did not have a clear understanding of how many Cherokees were in the northern theater during the summer and fall of 1758. Joseph Shippen stated that twenty-five Cherokees continued with Bouquet's forces. See Shippen to Richard Peters, Aug. 16, 1758, Joseph Shippen Military Letterbook, Shippen Correspondence. An untold number, though, scouted and raided between Fort Cumberland and Fort Duquesne. See Byrd to [Forbes], Aug. 24, 1758, Dalhousie 45/2/62/1, reel 2.

certainly sent an ominous message to France's allies. Forbes himself admitted that Britain's enemies were "kept in awe by the presence of so many Cherokees."⁴⁴ French officials themselves learned about a great number of warriors that the British had assembled and had to worry about the impact this mobilization would have on their network of Native alliances. Cherokee warriors did not merely just show up in 1758, however. They launched at least seventeen raids on Fort Duquesne from Britain's mid-Atlantic forts between April and August. The actual number of raids may have even been higher since some parties such as Ostenaco's left directly from their nation and avoided British outposts altogether. Such forays resulted in another round of casualties for France and its Native allies. The handful of warriors who remained in the north after the mass departures occurred, moreover, served as a visible reminder of the southern nation's power and masked the growing rift between the British and their most important Native ally. On several occasions, Cherokee scouts reported that they had trouble finding the enemy, an indication that their actions over the previous year and their presence during the immediate campaign had forced the enemy into hiding.⁴⁵ Until September, the British faced few obstacles other than the rugged Pennsylvania terrain.

⁴⁴ John Forbes to William Pitt, June 17, 1758, in James, *Writings of Forbes*, 116–19 (quotation, 117).

⁴⁵ French concerns are expressed in "The Marquis de Vaudreuil to the Minister," July 28, 1758, in Kent and Stevens, *Wilderness Chronicles*, 113–15. Douglas McClure Wood counts at least seventeen separate raids that the British knew of and suggests that significant raiding activity occurred directly from the Cherokee Nation. See Wood, *West Virginia History* 2: 51. Cherokees continued to serve as messengers between British outposts, scout ahead of John Forbes's forces, and bring in an occasional scalp or prisoner. For these activities, see Forbes to James Abercromby, May 1, 1758, in James, *Writings of Forbes*, 74–75; Forbes to William Pitt, May 19, 1758, *ibid.*, 91–93, esp. 91; "Account of Capture of Richard Bard, May 20, 1758," Friendly Association Papers, 1: 491; William Trent to Sir John St. Clair, May 22, 1758, Headquarters Papers of Forbes, reel 2, item 242; John Armstrong to St. Clair, May 22, 1758, *ibid.*, reel 2, item 243; Forbes to Henry Bouquet, June 16, 1758, in James, *Writings of Forbes*, 115–16, esp. 116; Abraham Bosomworth to Forbes, June 25, 1758, Headquarters Papers of Forbes, reel 2, item 331; Journal of Edward Ward and Asher Clayton, June 29–July 3, 1758, *ibid.*, reel 2, item 339; George Washington to Bouquet, July 16, 1758, in Abbot et al., *Papers of George Washington*, 5: 291–93; William Henry Lyttelton to John Stuart, July 26, 1758, Lyttelton Papers; Bouquet to John Forbes, Aug. 3, 1758, in Stevens, Kent, and Leonard, *Papers of Henry Bouquet*, 2: 312–14, esp. 2: 313; Charles Smith to Washington, Aug. 5, 1758, in Abbot et al., *Papers of George Washington*, 5: 373–74, esp. 5: 373; Bosomworth to Washington, Aug. 9, 1758, *ibid.*, 5: 382–83; "Colby Chew: Report on Road," Aug. 7, 1758 [Aug. 21, 1758], in Stevens, Kent, and Leonard, *Papers of Henry Bouquet*, 2: 400–404, esp. 2: 402–3; Byrd to [Forbes], Aug. 24, 1758, Dalhousie Muniments, 45/2/62/1, reel 2; William A. Hunter, ed., "Thomas Barton and the Forbes Expedition," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 95, no. 4 (October 1971): 431–83, esp. 445–46, 465. Reports of Cherokee scouts not finding the enemy are Bosomworth to Forbes, July 20, 1758, Headquarters Papers of Forbes, reel 2, item 397; Paul Demere to Lyttelton, June 24, 1758, Lyttelton Papers; Washington to Bouquet, July 24, 1758, in Abbot et al., *Papers of George Washington*, 5: 318–19, esp. 5: 318; Hunter, *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 95: 458–59.

Cherokee military power, more importantly, set the stage for the diplomatic breakthrough that actually brought the war in the Ohio Valley to an end. Peace negotiations between the British and their Native adversaries had been ongoing since summer 1756. Teedyuscung, a speaker of an eastern faction of Delawares on the Susquehanna, served as the conduit of information between Pennsylvanians and the Ohioans, and the British had to walk a fine line with him after Cherokees showed up in such large numbers in 1758. On one hand, the southern nation's participation in Forbes's expedition threatened the whole process. In March Teedyuscung warned Governor William Denny that Britain's Native allies might end up harming those Ohioans who favored peace. "The Cherokees are come down to go to War," he declared. "Now, as several of our Friends who have joined with me Live near, and some among the French, it is necessary the Messenger should be sent before to tell them to separte from the French, that they may not be cut of with them."⁴⁶ Teedyuscung reportedly did more than alarm Denny. He allegedly spread talks among friendly Natives that Cherokees aimed to kill all Delawares, both those that lived on the Ohio and the ostensibly peaceful factions that lived on the Susquehanna. On the other hand, the southern nation's involvement in Forbes's expedition served a useful purpose in accelerating negotiations. The Ohioans had experienced devastating raids just one year earlier, and they certainly did not welcome the prospect of renewed violence.⁴⁷ If skillfully managed, the threat of more raids could possibly lead the western Delawares and others to the peace table. Governor Denny and General Forbes tried to capitalize on this diplomatic advantage. They informed the Susquehanna's Native residents that the "Southern Indians out of regard to the King of Great Britain . . . are come to help us, and revenge the Blood of the English spilt by the French and their Indians."⁴⁸ Denny and Forbes furthermore urged the peace factions to send the information on to the Ohioans along with a wampum belt to encourage those inclined for peace to move away from the French.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ *Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania*, 8: 32–57 (quotation, 8: 50). The peace process was further complicated by the divisions between the Quaker and proprietary factions in colonial Pennsylvania. The Quakers may have stoked the Delawares' fears of Cherokees. For more information on the Pennsylvania political context, see Jennings, *Empire of Fortune*, 253–81, 369–404.

⁴⁷ On Teedyuscung's talks, see George Croghan to Officers at Wyoming, June 10, 1758, Headquarters Papers of Forbes, reel 2; George Croghan to William Johnson, June 11, 1758, in Lauber, *Papers of Sir William Johnson*, 2: 842. Ohioans' desire for peace can be found in "The Examination of Two Indian Prisoners," May 12, 1757, in *Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania*, 7: 531–32; Croghan to Johnson, May 24, 1757, in Lauber, *Papers of Sir William Johnson*, 9: 771–72; "Examination of a Delaware Prisoner, 1757," in Hazard, *Pennsylvania Archives*, 3: 147–48.

⁴⁸ "A Message from the Governor of Pennsylvania and General Forbes to the Friendly Indians on the Sasquahonnah sent by Charles Thompson and Frederick Post," June 6, 1758, Friendly Association Papers, 2: 3.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

Cherokees provided more than the appearance of a threat. They took an active role in negotiations. On arriving at Carlisle in May, a group of fifty-four warriors expressed their desire to march up the Susquehanna to make peace “that Never will be Broken” with the Delawares, Shawnees, and others.⁵⁰ They added, though, that they would destroy the towns of those who did not agree to the peace.⁵¹ Representatives from this party or another made a more formal presentation of their views to officials in Philadelphia. There, they displayed wampum belts to be given to the Delawares and Six Nations. The belts were described as mostly white with three figures grasping hands—an Iroquois on one end, a Delaware on the other, and a Cherokee in the middle. In the talks that they gave, Cherokees clearly saw themselves as peacemakers but emphasized how their military power might be employed if the Delawares and others did not come to terms.⁵² In one speech to Governor Denny, two Cherokee warriors—Techtama and Homwhyowa (or the Wolf King) of the Lower towns—addressed the Delawares as “Nephews” and asserted that both their elder brothers the English and their eldest brothers the Six Nations had given them a tomahawk to use against their mutual enemies. The two warriors claimed to have killed twenty Frenchmen, twelve Ottawas, and two Shawnees. They had no intention of harming the Delawares, but they had an “exceeding sharp” tomahawk that they would use against the Shawnees and Ottawas, with whom they had been at war “Time out of Mind.”⁵³ The eastern Delawares should warn their western brethren to separate from the French or suffer alongside them.⁵⁴ Governor Denny sent the message on to Teedyuscung and requested that it be relayed to the Ohioans.⁵⁵

Moravian missionary Christian Frederick Post carried the Cherokees’ messages to the eastern Delawares.⁵⁶ When Post arrived on June 27 at Teedyuscung’s village in the Wyoming Valley of the Susquehanna River, he found that Natives were on “their Guard, and have Scouts out.” The

⁵⁰ John Harris to James Burd, May 8, 1758, Shippen Correspondence, vol. 3.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² “At a Council held at Philadelphia,” June 1, 1758, in *Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania*, 8: 124–25; Israel Pemberton interview of Cherokee captain, June 3, 1758, Friendly Association Papers, 1: 519; Pemberton to Isaac Zane, June 5, 1758, *ibid.*, 1: 527.

⁵³ “A Message from Techtama and Homwhyowa or the Wolf King the Two Chiefs of the Cherokees to the Delawares . . .,” June 20, 1758, in Lauber, *Papers of Sir William Johnson*, 2: 846–49 (“Nephews,” 2: 846, “exceeding sharp,” 2: 848).

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ “A Message from the Governor of Pennsylvania to Teedyuscung, and the Indians at Wioming,” June 22, 1758, in *Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania*, 8: 129–31, esp. 8: 129.

⁵⁶ “A Message from the Governor of Pennsylvania and the General and Commander-in-Chief of his Majesty’s Forces destined to the Westward, to the Susquehannah Indians,” *ibid.*, 8: 131–32.

Moravian read the Cherokees' speech to them and repeated it three times. "They were well pleased, and Satisfied, and very, very attentive to the Words which they had heard, and returned many Thanks for the same," Post reported.⁵⁷ Some Ohioans were present, including Pisquetomen, a prominent western Delaware chief who assumed his leadership role after Cherokees had killed his elder brother sometime before 1756.⁵⁸ Pisquetomen and his companions claimed that they had not heard of Teedyuscung's negotiations, but they wanted an end to "War and Strife." They informed the Moravian that French soldiers at Fort Duquesne were "almost starved with Hunger" and set to leave the Ohio if the English came "too strong."⁵⁹ Post recorded no reference to Cherokee raids, but he did learn that the situation for both French and Natives had become desperate. Pisquetomen proved open to Pennsylvania's peace overture and accompanied the Moravian back to Philadelphia, where during July 8–12 negotiations accelerated.⁶⁰

If Cherokee warnings to the Ohioans did not arrive by way of the eastern Delawares, then they certainly did through the auspices of the Six Nations and Sir William Johnson. After leaving Philadelphia, a delegation from the Overhills and Middle towns reached Fort Johnson by mid-July and conferred with Iroquois leaders.⁶¹ These talks revealed a pro-British alliance pressuring the Ohioans to abandon the French. "We hope & admonish You & the 6 Nations to be equally steady & detirmined & to prosecute the present War with united zeal," the visitors declared, "stand by one another & then your Enemies wont gain any Advantages over you." The Six Nations representatives took a few days to contemplate an appropriate response, and, in the meantime, Johnson sent a messenger to the western Delawares with wampum belts and a warning about what they faced if they stuck with the French. "Your Uncles the Cherokees, by a Belt of Wampum, desire you would come away from the Ohio," Johnson informed them, "as they have declared War against the French and their

⁵⁷ "Journal of Frederick Post's Journey from Philadelphia to Wioming," June 20, 1758, *ibid.*, 8: 142–45 ("their Guard," 8: 143, "well pleased," 8: 144).

⁵⁸ "An Account of the Captivity of Hugh Gibson among the Delaware Indians of the Big Beaver and the Muskingum, from the Latter Part of July 1756, to the Beginning of Apr., 1759," in *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 3d ser. (Boston, 1837), 6: 141–53, esp. 6: 142. For more background on Pisquetomen, see Merrell, *Into the American Woods*, 242–43.

⁵⁹ "Journal of Frederick Post's Journey," June 20, 1758, in *Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania*, 8: 142–45 (quotations, 8: 145).

⁶⁰ "Indian Conferences in Philadel[phi]a, July, 1758," in Hazard, *Pennsylvania Archives*, 3: 456–69.

⁶¹ "Certificate of Delivery of Indians, 1758," *ibid.*, 3: 477; "Journal of Indian Affairs," [July 19–20, 1758], in Lauber, *Papers of Sir William Johnson*, 9: 945–46; "An Indian Council," July 21, 1758, *ibid.*, 9: 946–51; "An Indian Congress," July 24, 1758, *ibid.*, 9: 955–61.

Indians, and have joined their Arms with their Brethren the English; they are therefore afraid they might meet some of you in that Country, and, by Mistake, hurt you, which they would be sorry for, as they have a great Kindness and Regard for your Nation." Johnson gave the Ohioans a clear warning. "The Times are troublesome" and "black Clouds" have gathered over the Ohio, he declared. "I therefore send this Belt for the last Time, and your Uncles the Six Nations join me in it, to advise you to get out of the Way." The English wanted peace and would welcome their representatives, but if they did not listen, they "may perhaps repent of it when it will be too late." When the Six Nations delivered their response to their visitors, they expressed approval of the Cherokees sending eight hundred warriors to join with "the English Army going to the Ohio, as it is assisting the Common Cause in which we are engaged."⁶² Undoubtedly the western Delawares became aware of this approval. The balance of indigenous power shifted away from France and toward Great Britain, leaving the Ohioans isolated.⁶³

As the Six Nations forwarded warnings to the Ohioans, Pisquetomen escorted Post to the Allegheny, where the Native inhabitants had clearly grown tired of war. Post arrived in late August and implored the Ohioans to send a delegation to Philadelphia to negotiate a peace. He found some powerful individuals such as the western Delaware war leader Shingas receptive. Shingas at first wavered and asked if he would be killed if he met with the English. The Moravian tried to reassure him that he would not, but Shamokin Daniel, a Delaware man of ambiguous allegiances who had been carrying messages between the communities of the Susquehanna and the Ohio, warned Shingas to be wary of the English.⁶⁴ "Do not believe him, he tells nothing but idle lying stories," Daniel exclaimed about Post. "Wherefore did the *English* hire one thousand two hundred *Indians* to kill us[?]" He pointed to a dead woman by the road killed by southern Natives

⁶² "An Indian Council," July 21, 1758, in Lauber, *Papers of Sir William Johnson*, 9: 949 ("hope & admonish"); "To Delaware Indians," July 21, 1758, *ibid.*, 2: 875–77 ("Your Uncles," 2: 875, "I therefore send," 2: 875–76, "may perhaps repent," 2: 876); "An Indian Congress," July 24, 1758, *ibid.*, 9: 957 ("English Army").

⁶³ The French had known about British attempts to lure the Ohioans away from them for some time. By September 1758 they understood that "the English have sent a great many Belts to the Delawares and Indians, to induce them to remain neutral, and that the Indians have carried them to M. de Lignery, commanding at Fort Duquesne." See Adjutant Malartie, "Journal of Occurrences in the Garrisons or Camps occupied by the Regiment of Béarn, from the 20th October, 1757, to the 20th of October, 1758," in O'Callaghan, *Colonial History of the State of New York*, 10: 835–55 (quotation, 10: 855).

⁶⁴ Shamokin Daniel's Delaware name was Epoweyowallund. He appears to have been allied with Teedyuscung and to have served as his messenger, but he was later accused by Post of conspiring with the French to have Post captured. On Daniel as a messenger, see "A Report of Charles Thompson and Christian Frederick Post to Denny and Forbes, June 18, 1758," Friendly Association Papers, 2: 15.

as evidence of English intentions. Post countered with an accusation that the French did the same. Daniel responded gruffly in language that made it clear that Natives had suffered enough: "D——n you, why do not you and the *French* fight on the sea? You come here only to cheat the poor *Indians*, and take their land from them." Such blatant accusations embarrassed indigenous leaders. Shingas told Daniel "to be still," and later Pisquetomen expressed his sorrow about his fellow Delaware's behavior.⁶⁵ Nevertheless, the brief exchange revealed how the British-Cherokee alliance had an impact. Daniel concluded that the mobilization of such large numbers of southern warriors was a reason not to trust the British, while Pisquetomen, Shingas, and other Delaware leaders came to a different conclusion.

On September 1, 1758, Ohioans held a long discussion with Post and made known their frustration that European powers used Native groups against each other. "We have great reason to think about [peace], since such a great body of you comes into our lands," they informed Post with a vague reference to Forbes's expedition. "It is told us, that you and the *French* contrived this war, to waste the *Indians* between you; and that you and the *French* intended to divide the land between you." For two days the Ohioans debated Post's plea to come to Philadelphia to discuss an end to the conflict, and then, on September 3, they gave him their answer. "Brethren, we long for that peace and friendship we had formerly," the Ohioan speaker announced. "Make known to all the *English* this peace and friendship, that it may embrace all and cover all." The speaker claimed that once an agreement was finalized he would "send it to all the nations of my colour," and he added that "when all the nations join to this friendship, then the day will begin to shine clear over us." What they had in mind was a general peace not just with the British but with all Indians. As Post prepared to leave the Ohio and take the good news to British officials, he learned of lingering fear and suspicions. He told them not to be afraid, but they retorted that "they had cause to be afraid." They drew a map and then explained "how they were surrounded with war." Post gave them the same reassurances that the Cherokees and the Six Nations had. "If they would be quiet, and keep at a distance, they need not fear." But who was it that they feared? Post concluded in his journal that it was not Europeans. The Ohioans, he reported, thought "they can over-power both the *French* and *English* when they please. The white people are, in their eyes, nothing at all."⁶⁶ What they

⁶⁵ Christian Frederick Post's first journal, Aug. 28, 1758, in Post, "Two Journals of Western Tours," in Thwaites, *Early Western Travels*, 1: 212 (quotations).

⁶⁶ Ibid., Sept. 1, 1758, 1: 215 ("We have great reason"), Sept. 3, 1758, 1: 218–19 ("Brethren," 1: 218, "Make known," 1: 219), Sept. 8, 1758, 1: 226–27 ("they had cause," 1: 226, "surrounded," 1: 227), Sept. 20, 1758, 1: 230 ("they can over-power"). On how the Seven Years' War spurred the growth of pan-Indian unity, see Gregory Evans Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance: The North American Indian Struggle for Unity, 1745–1815* (Baltimore,

must have feared most, then, were the “exceeding sharp” tomahawks that southern warriors would wield with the approval of the dominant power in the region, the Six Nations. Post’s success, in other words, reflects that the Cherokees and Iroquois had convinced the Ohioans to seek peace and withdraw from the French.

A FIRM PEACE did not happen immediately. John Forbes continued his slow advance with an ever-increasing foreboding that he would not succeed unless the Ohioans abandoned the French. On his way back from the Allegheny, Christian Frederick Post provided the vital intelligence that the French were strengthening Fort Duquesne with up to three thousand regular troops, Canadian militia, and indigenous warriors. This new information led Forbes and his officers to worry that their intended assault on Fort Duquesne would have to be postponed until the next season. Adding to Forbes’s pessimism was the disastrous defeat of Major James Grant on September 14. Grant had been sent at the head of a force of 750 men to reconnoiter Fort Duquesne, but the French and their allies, largely from the Great Lakes region, easily defeated him. Grant himself was captured, while 20 other officers and 271 men were either captured or killed. However, in contrast to the rather shameful and chaotic retreat that occurred with Edward Braddock’s expedition, Forbes had built a series of outposts, kept his supply lines intact, and continued his advance. On October 12 the French and a body of Natives took the fight directly to the British, attacking Forbes’s advance forces at Loyalhanna. The British held their ground and scored the victory but at a significant cost. Sixty-two men and five officers had been killed and all of their supplies and cattle had been destroyed or confiscated. French casualties are unknown. The Battle of Loyalhanna sent an ominous message to Forbes. His troops’ inept performance threatened to convince the Ohioans of British weakness and keep them from the peace table.⁶⁷

Forbes, however, did not fully realize how Cherokees had shifted circumstances to his advantage. To be sure, factors that historians have

1992), 25–35. On the Ohioans believing British settlers incapable of fighting, see also W[illia]m M. Darlington, ed., *An Account of the Remarkable Occurrences in the Life and Travels of Col. James Smith . . .* (Cincinnati, Ohio, 1870), 47, <http://www.archive.org/stream/accountremarkoosmitrich#page/n7/mode/2up> (accessed Sept. 15, 2011).

⁶⁷ For Christian Frederick Post’s meeting with John Forbes, see Post’s first journal, Sept. 20, 1758, 1: 230–33. Forbes’s worries are discussed in Charles Morse Stotz, “Forbes Conquers the Wilderness: A Modern Odyssey,” *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine* 67, no. 4 (October 1984): 309–22, esp. 311–12. On Major James Grant’s defeat, see Cubbison, *British Defeat of the French*, 122–40. For a more expansive study of Grant’s career as a British military officer, see Paul David Nelson, *General James Grant: Scottish Soldier and Royal Governor of East Florida* (Gainesville, Fla., 1993). Forbes’s conclusions about his troops’ performance are addressed in Ward, *Breaking the Backcountry*, 176; Cubbison, *British Defeat of the French*, 141–46.

already cited—supply problems, smallpox, and the decisions of European military officers—played some role in producing this shift. Smallpox and a lack of supplies did erode France's influence with its western allies during the 1758 campaign season. Forbes did skillfully manage a military operation that arrived at its destination during the hunting season, a time when he surmised that Natives would be less inclined to fight. And Captain François-Marie Le Marchand de Lignery did make a bad decision by sending the majority of his ill-provisioned regular troops to the Illinois country for the winter after falsely concluding that Forbes would halt his offensive after the Battle of Loyalhanna. But these factors should not be overemphasized or seen outside of the context of Cherokee power. They created a contingent situation in which the Ohioans had to make one of the most crucial decisions of the Seven Years' War. They had not suffered from the 1757–58 epidemic, their warriors remained near Fort Duquesne as the British approached, and they could still mobilize a formidable force to defend the forks if they chose to do so.⁶⁸ They provided Lignery's only hope after he sent his regular troops away, and they embodied Forbes's deepest fear as his vulnerable advance forces crept ever closer to their destination. Some Ohioans appeared to confirm British anxiety, opting to help the French at

⁶⁸ On smallpox's impact on French-allied Natives, see Bougainville, *Adventures in the Wilderness*, 193, 197; D. Peter MacLeod, "Microbes and Muskets: Smallpox and the Participation of the Amerindian Allies of New France in the Seven Years' War," *Ethnohistory* 39, no. 1 (Winter 1992): 42–64, esp. 48–52. It should be reemphasized here that Cherokee raids against the Ottawas and Miamis, as discussed earlier, also served as a deterrent that MacLeod did not consider. Douglas R. Cubbison gives Forbes's planning great credit in the ultimate outcome; see Cubbison, *British Defeat of the French*, 38–39, 190. It is important to note that the Natives who would be gone during hunting season were largely those who did not live in the Ohio Valley. See M. de Bougainville to M. de Cremille, Nov. 8, 1758, in O'Callaghan, *Colonial History of the State of New York*, 10: 887–89; M. de Montcalm to Marshal de Belle Isle, Nov. 15, 1758, *ibid.*, 10: 900–901. There is no indication that the Ohioans went far afield to hunt as the British approached the forks. Cubbison also overgeneralizes indigenous behaviors. One of the sources he cites to valorize Forbes gives a clear example of how hunting and warfare at times occurred simultaneously. See Darlington, *Account of the Remarkable Occurrences*, 32, 36. Cherokees' activities as discussed above also give proof of war parties going out during the hunting season. See also Wood, *West Virginia History* 2: 47–48. Matthew C. Ward emphasizes Lignery's decision as pivotal; see Ward, *Breaking the Backcountry*, 178, 183. One should not extrapolate from MacLeod's findings to suggest that the 1757–58 epidemic struck natives around Fort Duquesne (MacLeod, *Ethnohistory* 39: 49–52). Michael N. McConnell admits that there is no evidence of smallpox among the Ohioans at the time but suggests the possibility. See McConnell, *A Country Between*, 125. A 1752 epidemic spread through the Ohio Valley and farther to the west, leaving surviving Natives that the French could call upon in 1758 with acquired immunity. Smallpox, in other words, had little opportunity to erupt into a widespread epidemic among all of France's allies in 1757 and 1758. On the 1752 epidemic, see M. de Longueuil to M. de Rouillé, Apr. 21, 1752, in O'Callaghan, *Colonial History of the State of New York*, 10: 245–51. On the presence of Ohioan warriors near Fort Duquesne as the British advanced beyond Loyalhanna, see Post's second journal, Nov. 16–20, 1758, 1: 249–56.

Loyalhanna, while others considered abandoning Lignery. A majority had grown tired of what had become a British and Indian war against them and awaited news of an end to the conflict.

Peace talks resumed on October 7 and lasted nineteen days as more than five hundred indigenous representatives from thirteen different "nations" met British officials at Easton. Perhaps some Cherokee representatives were there, but if they were the documentary record has silenced their voices. They certainly played a role in driving the Ohioans to the negotiating table, but once peace talks commenced the main issue pertained to disputes among the Six Nations, eastern Delawares, and western Delawares over past land agreements that had essentially dispossessed indigenous peoples of all land east of the Susquehanna and established Iroquois suzerainty over Native residents of the Susquehanna and Ohio Valleys. Teedyuscung's eastern Delawares fought against the Six Nations' dominance and attempted to reclaim their lost land, but they were rebuked and essentially received nothing but a return to the status quo; they would remain dependents of the Six Nations and stay in their upper Susquehanna villages. The western Delawares were wary that Forbes's approaching army meant that the British intended to occupy their land and proved willing to accept Iroquois dominance in return for reassurances that the British would not remain at the forks. The Treaty of Easton retroceded all land west of the Susquehanna back to the Iroquois Confederacy, a stipulation that on one hand denied the rights of the Delawares and others who actually lived there but that on the other hand gave the residents of the Ohio some satisfaction that white settlers would not follow in Forbes's path. Despite the arguments over land, the Treaty of Easton remained at its core a peace agreement. "This Treaty," Denny proclaimed, "will convince all our Enemies that we are now united in the firmest Band of Amity, and whilst we join our Strength together, it will not be in their Power to hurt either you or us."⁶⁹ The war-weary Ohioans received what they wanted most, and after signing the agreement, they went back to their homes, taking Post and some Iroquois representatives along with them to convince their people to give up the fight.

Although they might not have attended the negotiations, Cherokees played a role in the Ohioans' acceptance of the treaty. Sixteen "friendly" Cherokees joined Post's party shortly after it left Easton. They requested that the Ohioans and Six Nations smoke with them from a pipe that the Shawnees had earlier given them as a token of peace. Pisquetomen agreed and gave his former enemies some wampum and a friendly speech. "We formerly had friendship one with another," the Delaware leader recited. "We are only messengers, and cannot say much, but by these strings we let

⁶⁹ For the entire proceedings, see *Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania*, 8: 174–223 (quotation, 8: 214).

you know we are friends, and we are about settling a peace with the *English*, and wish to be at peace also with you, and all other *Indians*." Pisquetomen informed the southern Natives of the Treaty of Easton and pointed to two of his Iroquois traveling companions as being involved in the effort "to make [peace] known to all the *Indians* to the westward." The Cherokees responded positively, telling him that they wished the peace would extend "from the sun-rise to the sun-set; for, as they were in friendship with the *English*, they would be at peace with all their friends, and at war with their enemies."⁷⁰ They traveled along with Post and his Native companions for the next few days. Although a seemingly unplanned meeting, the encounter with the small Cherokee group helped confirm in the Ohioans' minds what had been expressed in earlier messages. Warriors from the southern indigenous nation would not harm those who abandoned the French cause.

When Post and Pisquetomen reached Forbes's army on November 7, they had another opportunity to discuss peace with the Cherokees. Attakullakulla had joined the British army about three weeks earlier with a party of sixty men. The Overhill leader had originally promised to head north in the spring but delayed his departure for four months because, among other things, he had trouble recruiting followers after skirmishes occurred in Virginia.⁷¹ Forbes's enthusiasm for the Cherokees had waned, and the general suspected Attakullakulla of only seeking gifts. "They appear either to be bullying us in to a mean compliance with their most sordid and avaricious demands or they are absolutely determined to leave us and return home," Forbes believed. To his superior, the general referred to the Overhill leader as a "great . . . Rascal" who made "stupid speeches" and whose service would "cost dear."⁷² Despite such a poor reception, Attakullakulla and his sixty warriors continued with Forbes into November and performed as scouts on the final approach to Fort Duquesne.⁷³

Cherokees did far more to secure Forbes's success than scouting. They added a forceful voice in the complex negotiations that drove a fatal wedge between the Ohioans and the French. On November 8 Forbes assembled all of the Natives in his camp and gave a speech demanding that those who "had any love for the *English* nation, to withdraw from the *French*; for if

⁷⁰ Post's second journal, Oct. 31, 1758, 1: 238 ("friendly"), 1: 239 ("We formerly had").

⁷¹ Lach. Mackintosh to Governor William Henry Lyttelton, June 5, 1758, in McDowell, *Documents Relating to Indian Affairs, 1754–1765*, 462; Little Carpenter to Lyttelton, June 3, 1758, *ibid.*, 463; George Turner to Lyttelton, July 2, 1758, *ibid.*, 470–73, esp. 471; Turner to John Forbes, June 23, 1758, Headquarters Papers of Forbes, reel 2, item 325; statement to President Blair, June 22, 1758, Draper Manuscripts, series ZZ (Virginia Papers), p. 52, microfilm, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, Wis.

⁷² John Forbes to Henry Bouquet, Oct. 15, 1758, in James, *Writings of Forbes*, 229–31 ("They appear," 230); Forbes to James Abercromby, Oct. 16, 1758, *ibid.*, 231–34 ("Rascal," 233).

⁷³ John Forbes to James Abercromby, Oct. 24, 1758, *ibid.*, 244–47, esp. 244.

he should find them among the *French*, he must treat them as enemies.”⁷⁴ Privately, Forbes met with the Ohioans and gave them belts and written letters that were to be read to their people. “[B]y this belt [of wampum],” one of the letters read, “that it is agreed by me, & all the Governors, that there shall be an everlasting Peace with all the Indians, established as sure as the Mountains, between the English Nation and the Indians, all over, from the Sun rising to the Sun setting.”⁷⁵ Behind the scenes, Attakullakulla’s delegation disseminated a more powerful talk. They gave two Iroquois representatives accompanying Post a message to take to the Delawares. “Nephews,” the Cherokees stated, “we let you know, that we are exceedingly glad that there is such a firm friendship established, on so good a foundation, with so many nations, that it will last for ever; and, as the *Six Nations* have agreed with the *English*, so we wish that you may lay hold of the same friendship.” The Cherokees furthermore warned them what would happen if they did not quit the French. “We will remind you, that we were formerly good friends,” Attakullakulla’s delegation declared. “Likewise we let you know, that the *Six Nations* gave us a *tomahawk*, and if any body offended us, we should strike him with it; likewise they gave me a knife, to take off the scalp. So we let you know, that we are desirous to hear very soon from you, what you determine. It may be we shall use the hatchet very soon, therefore I long to hear from you.”⁷⁶ General Forbes took little notice of this hidden diplomacy, but the words of his indigenous allies nonetheless had great weight: they reflected the crucial shift in the balance of power that set the British on a course for ultimate victory in the Ohio Valley.

The Delawares, Shawnees, and Mingos certainly understood that a shift had occurred. Tensions, of course, remained high during the first few days after Post’s November 16 arrival at Kuskuskia. The Moravian learned that some Ohioan warriors had killed five soldiers and captured another five from the British detachment that had escorted him to the Allegheny on its way back. Post also came to believe that the resident French captain had offered a high price for his capture. Natives, however, had grown tired of war, and the French had very little power to influence the situation. While Pisquetomen kept Post safe and protected, the peace talks circulated among Delaware, Shawnee, and Mingo communities and ultimately convinced them to hear directly what the British emissary had to say. As they assembled in Kuskuskia on that fateful day of November 20, the two Iroquois

⁷⁴ Post’s second journal, Nov. 8, 1758, 1: 243.

⁷⁵ John Forbes to Kings Beaver and Shingas, [Nov. 9, 1758], in James, *Writings of Forbes*, 252–53 (quotation, 253).

⁷⁶ Post’s second journal, Nov. 25, 1758, 1: 268–69 (“Nephews”), 1: 269 (“We will remind you”).

representatives “spoke very sharp” to the French captain, “so that he grew pale, and was quite silent.” Meanwhile, Post formally read the messages of peace to his audience’s “great satisfaction.” Lignery’s desperate call for assistance that came hours later made no headway in their determination to accept the Treaty of Easton. Before desecrating the French wampum, they publicly announced their acceptance of the new imperial order. “I have just heard something of our brethren the *English*, which pleaseth me much better,” one Delaware captain responded. He made it clear that he would not fight for the French. “I will not go,” he exclaimed. “Give [the wampum] to the others, may be they will go.” The others also rejected the French. “Yes, yes, we have heard from the *English*,” they declared.⁷⁷ They also had heard other powerful voices during the peace process of the preceding few days. The Iroquois shared the message from Attakullakulla’s delegation—the last in a series of Cherokee talks sent to the Ohio, affirming that a pro-British alliance now dominated eastern North America. Accepting this new order offered security, while rejecting it and continuing friendship with the French would bring their destruction.

Attakullakulla did not linger to see the outcome he helped produce. He departed from the British army shortly before Lignery destroyed Fort Duquesne. Forbes fumed at such behavior. Denouncing the Cherokee leader for his “villainous desertion” and the “badness of his heart,” the general had him tracked down and disarmed.⁷⁸ Attakullakulla, highly insulted and in his own words made to feel “like a child & no man,” did not think of himself as a subordinate who could be guilty of desertion and explained that he left in part because he needed to deal with the growing crisis between his nation and the southern colonies.⁷⁹ He had learned at some point during his stay with Forbes that backcountry settlers had killed thirty of his countrymen on their way home from the northern theater and that Governor Francis Fauquier of Virginia had sent for him to help defuse the situation.⁸⁰ The Cherokee leader, however, also explained his departure within the context of what he and his countrymen had been trying to do

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, Nov. 20, 1758, 1: 254 (“spoke very sharp”), 1: 255 (“great satisfaction”), 1: 256 (“I have just heard”).

⁷⁸ John Forbes to James Burd, Nov. 19, 1758, Shippen Correspondence, vol. 3 (“villainous desertion”); Forbes to William Henry Lyttelton, Nov. 26, 1758, Lyttelton Papers (“badness”).

⁷⁹ On Attakullakulla’s feelings of belittlement, see Reverend William Richardson Journal, Jan. 5, 1759, Indian Miscellaneous Manuscripts Collection, Cherokee Folder, New York Public Library (quotation). Attakullakulla gave this explanation to the governors of Virginia and South Carolina on his way home to his nation in early 1759. See Kelly, *Journal of Cherokee Studies* 3: 17–18.

⁸⁰ John Forbes to Henry Bouquet, Oct. 25, [1758], in James, *Writings of Forbes*, 248–50, esp. 248; Francis Fauquier to William Henry Lyttelton, Oct. 13, 1758, Lyttelton Papers; Kelly, *Journal of Cherokee Studies* 3: 17.

for the larger British war effort in the Ohio Valley. Undoubtedly referring to the Native emissaries he met in Forbes's camp, Attakullakulla claimed, "I told them I was about to return to my own Nation on account of some Disturbances there, but at the same time I desired those of the Six Nations not to assist the French nor in the least molest the English, which they promised me, then I proceeded for my Nation."⁸¹ Another source supports Attakullakulla's second explanation for leaving Forbes. Connecorte told a Presbyterian minister that his nephew had gone north "to get peace made with the French & English & their Indians & to bring French Indians into Chota in the spring."⁸² Attakullakulla's diplomacy, hidden by the vitriolic reaction to his supposed desertion and the coming rupture of his people with their European ally, helped seal the deal that brought the Delawares, Shawnees, and Mingos to peace. His actions as well as those of the many other Cherokee warriors and diplomats, during a period of nearly two years, had led to a pivotal event in the ultimate demise of France's North American empire.

AS FORBES'S ARMY stood on the smoldering ground where Fort Duquesne once existed and triumphantly renamed it Pittsburgh, the British Empire appeared on the brink of an open war with the indigenous peoples that had secured its success. Back in their villages, Cherokees seethed with anger at the growing number of their kinsmen being murdered on their way home from the north and at the belittling treatment that Attakullakulla experienced. Such events did not automatically result in vengeance. Cherokees waited for the British to make amends by offering gifts and sorrowful talks, but Governor William Henry Lyttelton of South Carolina made only a paltry attempt and wrapped his efforts in threatening messages. Cherokee war parties ultimately descended on British settlers in 1759, and Lyttelton in turn declared war. What followed was a devastating three-year struggle in which Cherokees saw dozens of their villages razed by some of the same troops that they had assisted in Pennsylvania.⁸³ That assistance and its consequences for the larger imperial struggle should not be obscured by the violent rupture that occurred afterward, however. From 1757 to 1758, Cherokees had conducted a series of raids that greatly weakened the resolve of France's Native allies to continue the fight. The arrival of hundreds of their warriors in spring 1758 made the situation appear even more frighten-

⁸¹ "Talk of Little Carpenter," enclosed in Lach. Mackintosh to William Henry Lyttelton, Mar. 21, 1759, Lyttelton Papers.

⁸² Richardson Journal, Feb. 1, 1759, Indian Miscellaneous Manuscripts Collection, Cherokee Folder.

⁸³ The events of the Cherokee War are best covered in Oliphant, *Peace and War*, 62–175.

ing to the Ohioans and led them to make the very important break that they did on the night of November 20. More importantly, Cherokees engaged in complicated and largely hidden diplomacy that created a formidable pro-British alliance among the indigenous peoples of eastern North America. As a result, the Ohioans found themselves between a Six Nations anvil and a Cherokee hammer, forged into a willingness to abandon the French and welcome peace. Their acceptance of the Treaty of Easton, an event that historians properly cite as a crucial marker of France's imperial collapse, occurred within the context of a British and Indian war waged against them.

Those Cherokees, who fought against and negotiated with multiple Native and non-Native actors, exercised powerful agency that shaped the outcome of an important imperial struggle. Understanding this agency certainly moves us even further away from the antiquated yet still prevalent perception of the Seven Years' War in North America as "the French and Indian War," a conflict in which indigenous peoples are imagined as only antagonists to the British. Scholars, of course, have been moving away from such a simplistic notion for some time and have demonstrated in many instances how Natives shaped the Seven Years' War in complicated and indelible ways. Similarly, an array of outstanding new works on the American Revolution, War of 1812, and U.S.-Mexican War further teach how indigenous peoples and nonstate actors, even those from small communities, have shaped the origins, courses, and consequences of major historical events.⁸⁴ That the Cherokees' crucial role in the Seven Years' War

⁸⁴ Current scholarship depicts the war as more complex than the British on one side and the French and Indians on the other, but the important relationship that the English had with their indigenous allies needs further emphasis to move us away from the false meaning of the conflict as a "French and Indian War." Recent editions of college-level textbooks, for example, offer a more complex view of the war than earlier editions but still employ the name "French and Indian War" without analyzing why it is a misnomer. See James A. Henretta and David Brody, *America: A Concise History*, 4th ed. (Boston, 2010), 2: 115; George Brown Tindall and David Emory Shi, *America: A Narrative History*, 8th ed. (New York, 2010), 2: 177; James Oakes et al., *Of the People: A History of the United States* (New York, 2011), 1: 158. Some notable examples of current scholarship that demonstrate how Native agents shaped major historical events include Woody Holton, *Forced Founders: Indians, Debtors, Slaves and the Making of the American Revolution in Virginia* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1999), 3–38; Brian DeLay, "Independent Indians and the U.S.-Mexican War," *American Historical Review* 112, no. 1 (February 2007): 35–68; DeLay, *War of a Thousand Deserts: Indian Raids and the U.S.-Mexican War* (New Haven, Conn., 2008); Pekka Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire* (New Haven, Conn., 2008), 181–238; Alan Taylor, *The Civil War of 1812: American Citizens, British Subjects, Irish Rebels, and Indian Allies* (New York, 2010) 9–10, 27–28, 125–27, 134–37, 162–68, 240–46.

went unnoticed for so long, however, leads us to wonder how much more we have yet to know before we fully understand how Native agents have shaped the global processes that have produced the modern world.