

1993

## "Much blood and treasure": South Carolina's Indian Traders, 1670-1755

Eirlys Mair Barker  
*College of William & Mary - Arts & Sciences*

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**“Much blood and treasure”: South Carolina’s Indian Traders,  
1670–1755**

Barker, Eirlys Mair, Ph.D.

The College of William and Mary, 1993

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"MUCH BLOOD AND TREASURE": SOUTH CAROLINA'S  
INDIAN TRADERS, 1670-1755

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A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of History  
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

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by

Eirlys Mair Barker

1993

APPROVAL SHEET

This dissertation is submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

Eidys M. Barker  
Author

Approved, November 1993

James Axtell  
James L. Axtell

James P. Whittenburg  
James P. Whittenburg

Michael McGiffert  
Michael McGiffert

John E. Selby  
John E. Selby

James H. Merrell (Jr)  
James H. Merrell, Vassar College

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE . . . . .	v
LIST OF MAPS . . . . .	xix
ABBREVIATIONS . . . . .	xx
ABSTRACT . . . . .	xxii
CHAPTER I: The Southern Frontier, Geography, Ethnography, and Diplomacy . . . . .	2
CHAPTER II: Tradeways of the Early Southeast . . . . .	38
CHAPTER III: "Obscure Indian Traders and Packhorsemen" . . . . .	89
CHAPTER IV: Trader Life in Indian Country . . . . .	148
CHAPTER V: "Ramblers in the Woods" to 1717 . . . . .	187
CHAPTER VI: Rebuilding a Trader Network, 1717-1734 . . . . .	228
CHAPTER VII: Expansion and Challenges, 1734-1755 . . . . .	281
CONCLUSION . . . . .	343
APPENDIX I . . . . .	347
APPENDIX II . . . . .	348
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	349
VITA . . . . .	380

## PREFACE

This dissertation is a study of the Europeans who traded directly with the Indians in the American Southeast. The study focuses on traders licensed by South Carolina between 1670 and 1755 and also by Georgia after 1733 to trade in the Indian nations in the area from present-day South Carolina south to St. Augustine and westward to the Mississippi River.<sup>1</sup>

Southeastern Indian traders were active agents between cultures. Some of them found the trade a source of great riches while others spilt their blood in its pursuit. Despite the growing surge of interest in ethnohistory and in the social origins of the southern backcountrymen, these early pioneers and petty capitalists have been neglected, perhaps partly because of the unsavory reputations they acquired from an early date. The first historian to appreciate and indicate the importance of these men was Verner W. Crane. Crane began his 1928 study, The Southern

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<sup>1</sup>French traders as well as those from Virginia or other English colonies are included only when they acted as agents of Carolina or Georgia or were active protagonists and trade rivals.

Frontier, with the permanent colonization of Carolina in 1670. He stressed not only the imperial struggles that were continuations of the "old festering dispute in the Caribbean" but also the significance of the Indian trade in the expansion of the new colony and in developing its Indian diplomacy.<sup>2</sup> As Peter Wood has indicated in the preface of the 1981 edition of Crane's book, anthropological and historical studies using new techniques, especially those of the new social history and ethnohistory, are refining Crane's path-breaking approach.<sup>3</sup> Crane detailed the "interaction between distant European empires and separate Indian nations," without the traditional depiction of the history of contact as the march of Anglo-Saxon progress at the expense of "lesser" civilizations.<sup>4</sup> He also expressed sympathy with "that useful scapegoat, the Indian trader."<sup>5</sup>

I became interested in the traders when researching Georgia's newspapers of the 1780s. I was intrigued by the threat the new state felt from the Creek Indians whose leader had a most Scottish-sounding name -- Alexander

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<sup>2</sup>Verner W. Crane, The Southern Frontier (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1928; reprint, 1981), 11, 22.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., vii, xvi.

<sup>4</sup>See below, 1-3.

<sup>5</sup>Crane, Southern Frontier, 267.

McGillivray. Searching for his ancestry led me to Crane's book and then to an article written in 1975 by Philip M. Brown about the earliest years of the Indian trade and its significance as a source of the capital that created the "characteristic structure of the ante-bellum plantocracy."<sup>6</sup> It struck me that while that was true, those that made their initial fortunes in the Indian trade soon left the business. The actual history of those who either stayed in the trade or entered it in the early eighteenth century still seemed a neglected chapter in the development of the region, one revolving around many small-time, mostly unknown individuals of many races who attempted to make a livelihood against an unstable and often violent background.

Some of the leading traders of the mid- to late-eighteenth century who managed to become wealthy and politically prominent, most notably the Augusta storekeepers have recently been examined in some detail.<sup>7</sup> Kathryn Holland Braund's work reflects similar interests to mine, although she has concentrated on the leading Augusta

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<sup>6</sup>Philip M. Brown, "Early Indian Trade in the Development of South Carolina: Politics, Economics, and Social Mobility During the Proprietary Period, 1670-1719" SCHM 76 (1975): 118-28; citation from 128.

<sup>7</sup>Edward J. Cashin, Lachlan McGillivray, Indian Trader: The Shaping of the Southern Colonial Frontier (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1992).

traders and the Creek nation after the formation of Georgia.<sup>8</sup> A work by John Phillip Reid concentrating on the Cherokee experience with early European contact also influenced me considerably.<sup>9</sup> In contrast, my work is a broader study spanning from the earliest years of the trade to the 1750s. It traces hundreds of Europeans who were involved in shaping the Indian trade, diplomacy, and the very nature of life of the inland areas of the colonial Southeast.

This dissertation focuses on a crucial period in the history of the Southeast. It examines a group of people who took new products and customs to the Indians and who experienced both the European and the native American ways of life. Traders were agents of the British empire, but they often embraced facets of Indian culture. Colonial documents contain seeming contradictions regarding the key

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<sup>8</sup>Kathryn Holland Braund, Deerskins & Duffels: Creek Indian Trade with Anglo-America, 1685-1815 (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1993). Despite its title, Braund's book actually describes the Georgia-Creek trade centered on Augusta from the mid-1730s, with the earlier period covered only sketchily; "The Creek Indians, Blacks, and Slavery," Journal of Southern History 57 (1991): 601-36; "Guardians of Tradition and Handmaidens to Change: Women's Roles in Creek Economic and Social Life during the Eighteenth Century," American Indian Quarterly 14 (1991): 239-58.

<sup>9</sup>John Phillip Reid, A Better Kind of Hatchet: Law, Trade, and Diplomacy in the Cherokee Nation during the Early Years of European Contact (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976).

role played by many traders. Some individuals brought Indian nations into the English sphere, acted as interpreters, and laid the groundwork for treaties of international significance, while others threatened a precarious peace through their rapaciousness.

Much has been written from the seventeenth century onward about the traders' predatory behavior, and a few clearly deserved the worst epithets that could be heaped upon them. Yet, whatever their personal characteristics, whatever their own attitudes toward the Indians, traders were early and crucial cultural intermediaries. Their customs, goods, germs, genes, and greed for skins changed irrevocably the southeastern Indians' habitat and culture, just as their own lives were altered by their encounters with the natives. Although this dissertation examines a mostly white and predominantly male group linked by their common profession, I regard it as an interdisciplinary work, combining techniques of the new social history and ethnohistory. The study attempts to capture the spirit of the environments in which traders operated and the ways in which they changed as a result of contact. I have tried to examine European traders, native traders, clients, and family members according to each society's own standards

and expectations.<sup>10</sup>

The first chapter of this work examines the geographic and diplomatic backgrounds in which the traders operated. I soon realized that the structure of the trade was confusingly multifaceted. A dissertation could be written about the merchants based on the cities of Charles Town, Savannah, and London who were involved in the trade, but whose concerns went beyond deerskins and increasingly regarded trade with the Indians as but one element in a complex of American interests. Chapter 2 examines the context of those who did not enter the "frontier" itself as active sellers and buyers, but who were essential in getting American products to the European market and European goods to native markets. It also surveys the American trade context that Europeans encountered when they, with their trade conventions, confronted nations with equally long traditions of commerce and diplomacy.

The main focus of the dissertation is the whites who entered the native American world to peddle their wares. Chapter 3 analyzes the hierarchy of the trade and its personnel along lines of both status and functions.

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<sup>10</sup>See James Axtell, The European and the Indian (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 5, for a consensual definition of ethnohistory as "the use of historical and ethnological methods and materials to gain knowledge of the nature and causes of change in a culture defined by ethnological concepts and categories."

Chapter 4 documents aspects of trader life in Indian country, and Chapters 5 to 7 describe the evolution of trader influence and activities. In order to streamline the narrative of these last three chapters, I have dwelt at some length on the Yamasee War of 1715 in the introductory chapter. While this pivotal event shook colonial society to the core, it has not received as much attention from colonial historians as it deserves. Not only did the war force South Carolina to review and revise its Indian trade and diplomacy, but as many as two-thirds of the whites involved in the trade were killed as a result of the conflict.

By the mid-eighteenth century, the trade had its own hierarchy that is not easy to quantify. Some traders in Indian country were "master traders," respected in both native and colonial societies for their fair dealings in trade and diplomacy. Others were "middling traders" without influential connections to help them make a fortune in their chosen career but who could usually create a satisfactory way of life for themselves. Below them came the bulk of the traders, the "lesser" men who at times were employees of middling or master traders but on other occasions might act independently as licensed traders. Next came the servants and packhorsemen who were blamed by outsiders and "respectable" traders for most of the evils



associated with the trade which often arose from greed or from misunderstanding native customs. The lowest level encompassed the slaves, both native and black, who were omnipresent although seldom mentioned by name. Some blacks and Indians functioned as independent traders or as factors for middling and master traders, but they were not usually licensed by the British colonies and thus escaped the record. While I have managed to trace 694 traders who were active between 1670 and 1755, there were certainly many others whose names have not survived. The records of participants in this early period are far from complete. Although I have recorded them on a database, I cannot claim that my figures are at all definitive. Attempting to trace individuals, however, has given me a sense of who the traders were in terms of social, national, and cultural background, and of their aspirations and fates.<sup>11</sup>

What made a successful trader? Avoiding the real possibility of early death from disease or at the hands of hostile Indians or Europeans was a crucial element. Few acquired a fortune in the trade, but every European who entered the business at any level hoped for one. Acceptance in an Indian town was as essential to survival and profit as following the laws and trading conventions of

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<sup>11</sup>I used Quattro, a spreadsheet, as a simple database to keep track of the named individuals whom I managed to uncover.

the British colonies. While traders were often censured by their contemporaries, they were essential in both trade and diplomacy, often able to avert inter-racial crises or to create them.

The traders used the phrase "Indian country" to describe the area in which they worked for a part of every year, because they realized they were outside their colony's sphere of direct and effective control. They were the aliens, and one way to survive was by acting as unofficial and, at times, official agents of their governments. Their significance has been largely neglected by historians of the southern backcountry who focus on the development of white "frontier" settlements and tend to ignore the parts played by both the European Indian traders and native Americans in that story, partly by concentrating on the period after the outbreak the Seven Years' War.<sup>12</sup> The traders' world was a fleeting pre- or proto-backcountry one, but it certainly should not be ignored. I am very aware that to Patricia Limerick and many other historians, the word "frontier" is **the** "f-word" in American History. Others feel similarly dissatisfied with the more current in-

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<sup>12</sup>For example, Rachel N. Klein, Unification of a Slave State: The Rise of the Planter Class in the South Carolina Backcountry, 1760-1808 (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1990).

word used by southern historians, namely, "backcountry."<sup>13</sup> These have been useful terms in the past, but I will attempt to use them with care, defining them when I do.<sup>14</sup>

"Indian trader" is yet another phrase that is unsatisfactory to those sensitive to racial terms and implications. It should refer to the natives involved in the fur and skin trade; however, it has been used to signify the Europeans involved in trade with the Indians almost from the trade's inception. In 1707, a trader defined himself in that fashion in his will.<sup>15</sup> If they considered themselves "Indian traders," then I feel justified in referring to them that way.

The terms "English" and "British" also need definition. "British" should only be used to refer to the polity after the 1707 Act of Union with Scotland; yet, many

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<sup>13</sup>Comments at a conference, "Re-examining the American Frontier: the Eighteenth Century Backcountry," at Shenandoah University, Winchester, Virginia, October 10-13 1991. Klein uses "backcountry" as did eighteenth-century Carolinians for the inland areas beyond the coastal parishes. Klein, Unification of a Slave State, 7. For an ethnohistorian's definition of frontier as a zone of interaction, see below, 1-3.

<sup>14</sup>For "frontier," see below, 2.

<sup>15</sup>Caroline T. Moore and Agatha Aimar Simmons, eds. Abstracts of the Wills of the State of South Carolina 1670-1740 vol. 1 (Charlotte, NC: The Observer Printing House, Inc., 1960), 26. Richard Prize used this term in his will, dated 19 May 1707, proven 22 September 1710.

traders were descended from racial and national stock other than Anglo-Saxon. Being Welsh myself, I am hesitant to use the word "English" when it is clear that possibly as many as half of the European participants were not of Anglo-Saxon descent. Lord Cardross in the 1680s would have been correct in rejecting the term "English trader" if used for himself and his servants, although his colony operated within the limits of Carolina.<sup>16</sup> Some of the leading traders had come to the colony as involuntary servants, preferring to hazard the American wilderness to spending time in a prison -- and many of these had been participants in the Jacobite Uprising of 1715. These men would not have cared to go down in history as "English." Others were Welsh, Irish, or Scots-Irish. I therefore use "British" rather loosely for the polity itself after 1707 and as a description of traders from the British Isles who were probably not English in racial origin or cultural affinity.

Another difficulty is what to call the native American peoples encountered. If at all possible, I use their tribal/national affiliation, but I use "Indian" and "native American" interchangeably because the other designations are clumsy. I have used "Indian" and "white" as historian Colin Calloway has done "as convenient alternatives to

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<sup>16</sup>See chap. 5 for this Scottish aristocrat and his attempt to take over the trade with the southernmost Indians.

Native American and Euro-American."<sup>17</sup> Contemporary written records usually referred to the Cherokees or Natchez, for example, as "nations," and I will use this term in preference to "tribe," for I agree with Daniel Usner that the word "tribe" is an anthropological term referring to a "particular stage in political evolution . . . somewhere between loosely connected bands of people and a centrally organized state." Such a definition ignores key kinship and language ties.<sup>18</sup>

I refer to Charleston, South Carolina, as Charles Town because it was the contemporary form until 1784. Throughout the text, original spellings have been retained in quotations. The dates are Old Style, -- that is, according to the Julian calendar -- except for dates between January 1 and March 25. I have regarded the new year as beginning on January 1; thus January 6, 1706/1707 is shown as January 6, 1707.

This dissertation would not have been possible without the support of many individuals and institutions. The College of William and Mary was generous in its funding and

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<sup>17</sup>Colin G. Calloway, Crown and Calumet: British-Indian Relations, 1783-1815 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), xii.

<sup>18</sup>Daniel H. Usner, Jr. Indians, Settlers, and Slaves: The Lower Mississippi Valley Before 1783 Institute of Early American History and Culture Publication. (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 89.

I was also awarded a grant from the Society of the Cincinnati. My committee members have worked diligently with me, especially the director, Dr. James Axtell whose meticulous comments have enriched both the work and my writing style. Dr. James Merrell of Vassar College went far beyond what was necessary to fulfil his obligation as my outside reader and I am grateful for his detailed critique.

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My greatest debt goes to two people. My mother, Marian Henry Jones of Aberystwyth, Wales, infected me with her love of history. My husband, Roy, was a constant source of encouragement and support -- this would not have been possible without him.

I dedicate the dissertation to the memory of two important persons in my life -- my father, John Henry Jones, and my mother-in-law, Marjorie Smith Barker.

LIST OF MAPS

1. Main Rivers of the Southeast . . . . .	5
2. The Southeast in 1714 . . . . .	13
3. Carolina to 1710 . . . . .	198
4. The Southeast in 1755 . . . . .	317



## ABBREVIATIONS

<u>AHR</u>	<u>American Historical Review</u>
BL	British Library, London
BMP	Microfilm listed in Lester K. Born, ed., <u>British Manuscript Project: A Checklist of the Microfilms Prepared for the American Council of Learned Societies</u> Washington, DC., 1955.
BPRO	W. Noel Sainsbury, comp., Records in the British Public Record Office Relating to South Carolina, 1663-1782, 36 manuscript vols.
Caroliniana	Caroliniana Library of the University of South Carolina, Columbia.
CJ	South Carolina Council Journal
CO	Colonial Office
CT Wills	Charles Town Wills and Miscellaneous Records
<u>ETHSP</u>	<u>East Tennessee Historical Society Publications</u>
<u>FHO</u>	<u>Florida Historical Quarterly</u>
<u>GHO</u>	<u>Georgia Historical Quarterly</u>
GHS	Georgia Historical Society, Savannah
<u>JAH</u>	<u>Journal of American History</u>
<u>JCIT</u>	W. L. McDowell, ed. <u>Journals of the Commissioners of the Indian Trade. September 20, 1710 - August 29, 1718</u> , Colonial Records of South Carolina, Columbia, SC., 1955.
JCHA	South Carolina Journal of the Commons House of Assembly
<u>JCHA</u>	Salley, Easterby et al., <u>Colonial Records of South Carolina: Journals of the Commons House of Assembly</u> Columbia: Historical Commission of South Carolina, 1907-1986.
LC	Library of Congress, Washington, DC
MPA-FD	Dunbar Rowland, A. G. Sanders, and Patricia K. Galloway, eds. <u>Mississippi Provincial Archives -- French Dominion</u> , 5 vols. (Jackson MS: Mississippi Department of Archives; Louisiana State University, 1927- 1984).
MSS	Manuscript
<u>MVHR</u>	<u>Mississippi Valley Historical Review</u>
<u>NCHR</u>	<u>North Carolina Historical Review</u>
PRO	Public Record Office, London

RSUS	W. S. Jenkins, comp., Records of the States of the United States of America, South Carolina (microfilm, Washington, DC, 1949), cited by reel/unit/page number
SC	South Carolina.
SC-Ar	South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, SC.
<u>SCG</u>	<u>South Carolina Gazette</u> (Charles Town)
<u>SCHM</u>	<u>South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine</u>
SPG	Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, Manuscripts (microfilm)
UHJ	South Carolina Upper House of Assembly Journal
USC	University of South Carolina, Columbia
<u>VMHB</u>	<u>Virginia Magazine of History and Biography</u>
<u>WMO</u>	<u>William and Mary Quarterly</u>

## ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the personnel actively trading with native Americans in the greater South Carolina area from 1670-1755. It concentrates on the mostly white and mostly male traders licensed to trade directly in the Indian towns by the colonies of South Carolina and Georgia.

Traders were active agents in formulating South Carolina's Indian trade and diplomacy. Some made a fortune in the trade while countless others died in the pursuit of that dream. Traders also took with them goods, germs, genes, a greed for deerskins, and attitudes that changed the old ways of life in Indian country.

Traders have traditionally been condemned for their selfish pursuit of a personal fortune without caring for native attitudes or for their colonies' welfare. This is an oversimplification. This work uncovered many instances where traders acted as diplomats and official interpreters for their colonies.

A major result of the dissertation is a classification of the persons involved in the Indian trade, using evidence culled from the official records such as South Carolina's Commons House of Assembly journals, also wills, and inventories of estates. It also uncovers the organization of those who took goods into the native American villages as well as the social and economic networks in which they functioned. The dissertation concludes that success and influence belonged to those who were respected in both cultures, especially when they safeguarded their interests through marrying Indian women.

"MUCH BLOOD AND TREASURE": SOUTH CAROLINA'S  
INDIAN TRADERS, 1670-1755

## CHAPTER 1

### The Southern Frontier: Geography, Ethnography and Diplomacy

In the 1890s, Frederick Jackson Turner characterized the frontier as "the meeting point between savagery and civilization," stressing its fluid nature when white civilization inexorably, as it seemed to his generation steeped in social Darwinism, advanced at the expense of the "primitive" native Americans.<sup>1</sup> This was the major element that had shaped the American character, creating a nation of rugged, self-reliant, freedom-loving individuals. The term "frontier" had lost its European meaning of a political boundary. By 1968, an ethnohistorian defined the frontier as a "contact situation between two groups of people who are dissimilar" and suggested that its essential characteristic is "that [those groups] think of themselves as being different from each other."<sup>2</sup> The work of the new social historians in backcountry areas is drawing attention

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<sup>1</sup>Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," The Frontier in American History (New York: H. Holt and Co., 1920), 41.

<sup>2</sup>Jack D. Forbes, "Frontiers in American History and the Role of the Frontier Historian," Ethnohistory 15 (1968): 209.

to some common themes in American history that approach a new frontier thesis, but one stripped of the American exceptionalism and racially offensive language of Turner's -- and succeeding -- generations.<sup>3</sup> One southern historian believes that this "frontier experience . . . was the most important factor in the creation of the South." Frontier contests between British settlers, Indians, French, and Spanish all contributed to the creation of the British plantation system that emerged in the region, forming a distinctive Southern character.<sup>4</sup>

Turner's idea of the frontier as an outlet for those Europeans who were dissatisfied with the "respectable" society of the settled lowcountry may also be regaining credibility. South Carolina's Indian traders not only were a part of the frontier exchanges of culture but also fit into Turner's safety-valve mold. Those who were socially uncomfortable in Charles Town's settled society or who failed to make an easy living there aspired to a profitable career and a fortune in the less confining although more dangerous society evolving in the backwoods.

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<sup>3</sup>Gregory H. Nobles, "Breaking into the Backcountry: New Approaches to the Early American Frontier, 1750-1800," William and Mary Quarterly, [WMQ] 3d ser., 46 (1989): 641-70.

<sup>4</sup>Alan Gallay, The Formation of a Planter Elite: Jonathan Bryan and the Southern Colonial Frontier (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1989), xvi.

## I

The British Indian traders in the South, radiating outward from Charles Town, soon came into contact with many landscapes and cultures that were unlike those they had previously experienced. Within thirty years of settlement, these traders and officials had explored and documented an area that expanded west to the Mississippi, southward into Florida and northwest to the Tennessee and Ohio river valleys.<sup>5</sup> This vast area falls geographically into three major divisions. The coastal plain, the largest of the three zones, stretches from Virginia around to the Gulf of Mexico and beyond to the Mississippi delta. The many rivers of the region had created rich alluvial soils and provided the best means of transportation, but the many swamps made settlement and communication difficult.<sup>6</sup> The second zone is the southern piedmont with its hills covered with deciduous forests of hickory and oak. The third and smallest division was the more rugged mountains of the Appalachians, reaching in places to over 6,000 feet. The

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<sup>5</sup>See Map 1, p. 5.

<sup>6</sup>Alan R. Calmes, "Indian Cultural Traditions and European Conquest of the Georgia-South Carolina Coastal Plain, 3000 BC-1737 AD: A Combined Archaeological and Historical Investigation." Ph.D. Diss. University of South Carolina, 1967.



Map 1: Main Rivers of the Southeast

- |                   |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Pee Dee        | 2. Wateree           |
| 3. Santee         | 4. Broad             |
| 5. Saluda         | 6. Ashley and Cooper |
| 7. Savannah       | 8. Ogeechee          |
| 9. Oconee         | 10. Ocmulgee         |
| 11. Altamaha      | 12. St. Mary's       |
| 13. St. John's    | 14. Suwanee          |
| 15. Apalachicola  | 16. Flint            |
| 17. Chattahoochee | 18. Tallapoosa       |
| 19. Alabama       | 20. Tombigbee        |
| 21. Chickasawhay  | 22. Pearl            |
| 23. Mississippi   | 24. Tennessee        |
| 25. Ohio          | 26. Holston          |



climate -- mild and humid -- is one of many unifying features.<sup>7</sup>

Interest in this area and its potential riches became intense with the restoration of the English monarchy in 1660. Peace at home, coupled with an impoverished crown, resulted in a flurry of activity as the scramble for wealth in Britain's colonies gained momentum. The Duke of York's 1664 seizure of New Amsterdam in yet another bout of war with that world power of the seventeenth century, the Netherlands, no doubt highlighted colonies as a path to national wealth, glory, and trade. Virginia's long-lived governor and future Carolina proprietor, Sir William Berkeley, was a vigorous promoter of exploration and an active participant in the Indian trade.<sup>8</sup> An attempt at settlement in the Cape Fear area -- later part of North Carolina -- by a group of adventurers from New England and Barbados failed in 1660.<sup>9</sup> But at this time, eight titled Englishmen, all with previous experience in colonial affairs, applied to Charles II for a charter to the

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<sup>7</sup>Charles Hudson, The Southeastern Indians (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1976), 14-21.

<sup>8</sup>Clarence W. Alvord and Lee Bidgood, The First Explorations of the Trans-Allegheny Regions by the Virginians 1650-1674 (Cleveland: The Arthur Clark Company, 1912), 56-62.

<sup>9</sup>W. Stitt Robinson, The Southern Colonial Frontier, 1607-1763 (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1979), 78.

Carolina area. These "Lords Proprietors" were successful in 1663, when the king granted settlement rights to the area between latitudes 31° and 36° North. They did little to promote the colony vigorously, however, until Lord Ashley's efforts in 1669.<sup>10</sup> Even before the actual establishment of Charles Town two exploratory voyages took place. Robert Sandford's voyage in 1666 is notable for the decision to leave a young ship's surgeon, Henry Woodward, among the Indians encountered along the coast of Port Royal Sound. His task was to learn their languages and to explore the possibilities of future trade.<sup>11</sup> Thus interest in trading with the Indians predated successful English settlement of the area.

The establishment of Charles Town in 1670 permanently opened the American southern frontier of the English realm. Within thirty years, through trade and diplomacy, its area of interest and trade spread west to the Mississippi, north into the mountain retreat of the Cherokees, and encroached south into Spanish Florida. Contact with tribes already

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<sup>10</sup>Crane, The Southern Frontier, 4-9; Converse D. Clowse, Economic Beginnings in Colonial South Carolina, 1670-1730 (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1971), 6-9. He was later created Lord Shaftesbury.

<sup>11</sup>Robert Sandford, "A Relation of a Voyage on the Coast of the Province of Carolina, 1666," in A. S. Salley, ed., Narratives of Early Carolina, 1650-1708, Original Narratives of Early American History (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911), 75-108. See below Chapter 5.

trading with Europeans and each other, coupled with Carolina's early failure to produce either an agricultural staple or even enough food for itself, highlighted the importance of early Carolina's first profitable business enterprise: trade with native Americans.<sup>12</sup>

## II

The first white settlers of Carolina encountered at least twenty-eight different tribes, each with its own dialects and traditions.<sup>13</sup> Among the coastal tribes first encountered were the Cusabos, Winyaws, Coosas, and many others who were soon relegated to the status of "settlement Indians." Many of these tribes, including the Cusabos and Coosas had welcomed the European newcomers with their state-of-the-art weapons as a boon in their ancient conflicts with other Indian nations. Some, such as the Westos and Stonos, played important -- if brief -- roles in South Carolina's Indian trade during the seventeenth century. However, the white participants soon saw that

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<sup>12</sup>M. Eugene Sirmans, Colonial South Carolina: A Political History, 1663-1763 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1966), 21-22.

<sup>13</sup>Chapman J. Milling, Red Carolinians 2 ed. (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1969), 4; David H. Corkran, The Carolina Indian Frontier (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1970), 1-6.

they could make an even greater profit by eliminating any middlemen in the trade. Europeans greedy for slaves provoked intertribal wars which decimated the tribes and their remnants also disappeared, becoming lost as distinctive elements in the emergent eighteenth-century confederations called "Creek" and "Catawba" by the colonists.<sup>14</sup>

Peoples of very different linguistic origins united to form these new, often multi-lingual units. Some, such as the Shawnees (Savannahs), were of Algonquian stock. The Catawbas were Siouan-speakers, while the Tuscaroras and Cherokees had Iroquoian roots. The Muskogean group of languages was the most important in the area, encompassing Choctaw and Chickasaw, as well as Muskogee itself and Hitchiti. Many known as "Creeks" spoke these languages, while others spoke Algonquian or Iroquoian.<sup>15</sup> Despite these linguistic variations, the people of this land, termed by an anthropologist "the Southeastern Culture

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<sup>14</sup>J. Leitch Wright, Creeks and Seminoles: The Destruction and Regeneration of the Muscogulge People (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 1-15; James H. Merrell, The Indians' New World: Catawbas and their Neighbors from European Contact through the Era of Removal (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 92-98.

<sup>15</sup>Hudson, Southeastern Indians, 23; Wright, Creeks and Seminoles, xiv; R. S. Cotterill, The Southern Indians: The Story of the Civilized Tribes Before Removal (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1954), 5-9.

Area," were "socially diverse but culturally similar."<sup>16</sup>

"Tribal geography was a flexible thing."<sup>17</sup> Many of the late-seventeenth century nations, such as the Yamasees, were remnants of other tribes that had moved into the Guale area, named after an early tribe, in response to Spanish trade goods and demand for deerskins. By 1686 the Yamasees had moved closer to the English settlements in direct response to Carolina trade initiatives and they preyed on Spanish mission Indians.<sup>18</sup> The introduction of an active, mercantile British presence further complicated an already complex system of cultural relationships. Native responses to the latest invaders' presence was once more to rearrange tribal affiliations in the face of dwindling population figures. Some villages disappeared or moved as populations were decimated through war, enslavement, or diseases.

A 1682 account of the province stated that the English and the Indians "have a perfect Friendship, they being both useful to one another, and care is taken by the Lords Proprietors that no injustice shall be done them." The

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<sup>16</sup>Hudson, Southeastern Indians, 5.

<sup>17</sup>Leonard Bloom, "The Acculturation of the Eastern Cherokee: Historical Aspects," The North Carolina Historical Review [NCHR] 19 (1942): 323.

<sup>18</sup>Gregory A. Waselkov, "Seventeenth-century Trade in the Colonial Southeast," Southern Archaeology 8 (1989): 117-18; Robinson, Southern Colonial Frontier, 112.

author, Samuel Wilson, believed that this friendship was sought by the Indians as a response to their declining numbers, a consequence of a state of perpetual tribal war in the interior of the continent.<sup>19</sup> There was some truth in that. Many observers worried that such wars were provoked by European traders, for they generated one of the prime commodities of the early trade: Indian slaves.<sup>20</sup> The initial Indian barriers to South Carolina's expansion and trade, the Stonos and Westos, had initially acted as middlemen in the slave trade, but by the 1680s they were shattered through wars Carolina's traders had instigated. The slave trade in turn provoked further conflicts between the proprietors and their landholders.

As early as the 1680s, the proprietors had disapproved of the traffic in slaves on practical, diplomatic, and perhaps humanitarian grounds. They were opposed in their attempts to control the trade by influential planter-traders who promoted "unjust warrs upon the Indians" -- as

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<sup>19</sup>Samuel Wilson, "An Account of the Province of Carolina in America, 1682," in B. R. Carroll, ed., Historical Collections of South Carolina 2 vols. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1836) 2:31.

<sup>20</sup>For example, Francis Le Jau, The Carolina Chronicle of Dr. Francis Le Jau, 1706-1717, Frank J. Klingberg, ed. University of California Publications in History, vol. 53 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1956), Le Jau to Secretary, September 15, 1708, 41. Unless otherwise stated, he was writing from Goose Creek to the Secretary.

it seemed from London -- to acquire slaves, for Indians could be legally enslaved only as a result of war.<sup>21</sup> Still, the proprietors benefitted from the situation, for they allowed the sale of Indian captives to the West Indies.<sup>22</sup> Conflict over the ethics of the Indian slave trade contributed to the fall of Carolina's proprietary system in 1719.<sup>23</sup> Slaves did, however, remain a lucrative branch of the Indian trade throughout the colonial period.<sup>24</sup>

### III

The first major European rival to the new colony's expansion was Spain. By the seventeenth century, Spain claimed much of the area extending from the Charles Town

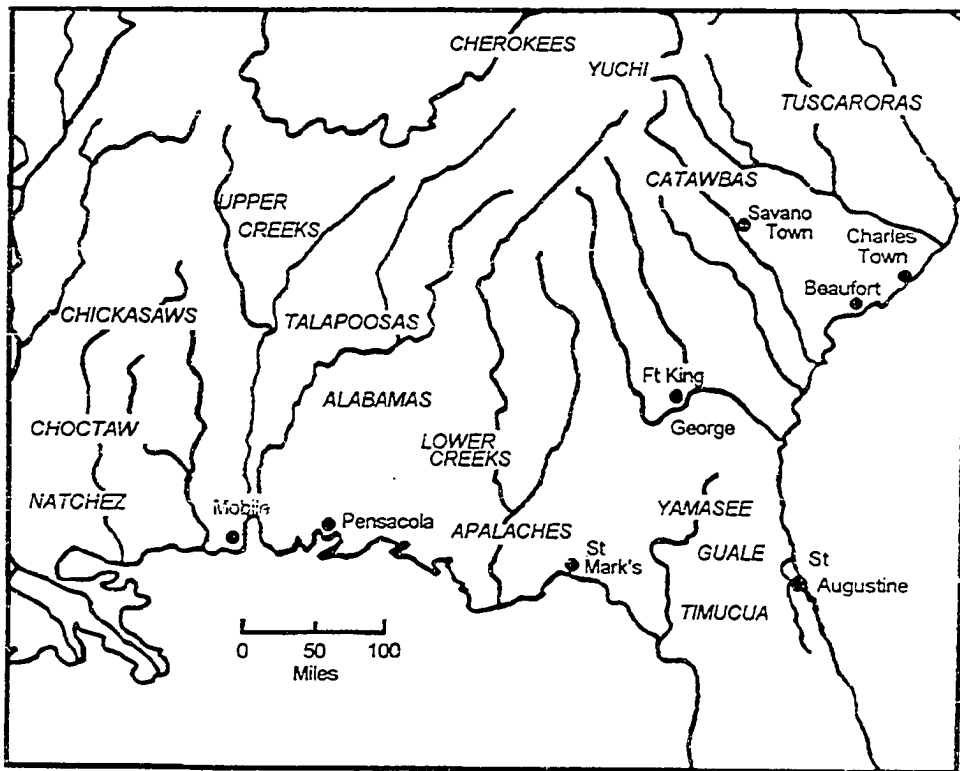
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<sup>21</sup>Lords Proprietors [LPs] to Governor, Sept 30, 1683 and to Seth Sothell, November 6, 1683, in Noel W. Sainsbury, comp., Records in the British Public Record Office Relating to South Carolina [Salley, BPRO] A. S. Salley, ed., 5 pub. vols. (Columbia: The Historical Commission of South Carolina, 1947) 1:255-63, 266-67.

<sup>22</sup>Slaves were "a medium of exchange" and "Objects of barter." Almon W. Lauber, Indian Slavery in Colonial Times Within the Present Boundaries of the United States (New York: Columbia University Press, 1913), 37, 173-74.

<sup>23</sup>Sirmans, Colonial South Carolina, 125-37.

<sup>24</sup>Letter to Lps, 17 Sept. 1708, Salley, BPRO 5:205, reported that there were 500 Indian males, 600 women, and 300 children in South Carolina.



Map 2: The Southeast in 1714



area to the St. Johns River on the basis of occupation.<sup>25</sup> This European power had ruthlessly ousted a French Protestant presence from the area in 1565 and had maintained a permanent force as far north as San Felipe (Parris Island) as late as 1655.<sup>26</sup> St. Augustine was a strategic outpost of Spain's empire, established to guard its treasure fleets on their voyages to Europe. Always understaffed and underfinanced, Spanish Florida remained "an impoverished, unproductive colony on the northern fringe of New Spain."<sup>27</sup> Carolina's very existence threatened Spain and its control of the friendly Indians in the "debatable land" of Guale.<sup>28</sup> A short-lived revision of Carolina's charter in 1665 directly challenged Spain, placing Carolina's southern border at latitude 29°, that is, south of St. Augustine itself.<sup>29</sup> Even after Spain began to retreat from Guale in 1680, the threat of Spanish

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<sup>25</sup>The best detailed account is still David B. Quinn's North America From Earliest Discovery to First Settlements: The Norse Voyages to 1612 (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1977).

<sup>26</sup>Crane, Southern Frontier, 24; Robinson. Southern Colonial Frontier, 78-79. See Map 2, p. 13.

<sup>27</sup>John Jay Tepaske, The Governorship of Spanish Florida, 1700-1763 (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1964), 5, 227.

<sup>28</sup>Herbert Bolton & Mary Ross, The Debatable Land: A Sketch of the Anglo-Spanish Contest for the Georgia Country (1925; reprint, New York: Russell & Russell, 1966).

<sup>29</sup>Crane, Southern Frontier, 28. See Map 3, p. 198.

invasion and diplomatic interference remained real as long as a presence remained at St. Augustine. While there were never enough Spanish soldiers to resist invasions of Florida by Carolinians and their Indian allies, they always failed to breach the coquina walls of the Castillo San Marcos even when they managed to seize the town of St. Augustine.<sup>30</sup>

Spanish hold over the local Indians was not absolute. While their mission impulse under the Franciscans gained many converts among the Apalachee and Timucua Indians, other tribes, such as the Yamasees, resented the changes to their culture that Catholicism demanded. The 1701 order of then-governor Zuniga requiring converted Indians to lead a sedentary village life within the sound of church bells created resistance to conversion among some tribes.<sup>31</sup>

Commerce combined with diplomatic good sense led Carolinians to seek alliances with coastal tribes as a bulwark against the Spanish. Cheap and plentiful English goods were a practical and profitable way to combat Spain's influence with the tribes of the area. In 1708, an Indian

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<sup>30</sup>As, for example, in 1702. See Charles W. Arnade, The Siege of St. Augustine in 1702 (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 1959).

<sup>31</sup>Tepaske, Governorship of Spanish Florida, 194-95; Quinn, North America From Earliest Discovery, 297, 306. As early as 1475, the Guale Indians explained that their resistance to the Spanish was not from fear of domination but because of their religion.

agent for South Carolina, Thomas Nairne, wrote that "the English trade for Cloath always attracts and maintains the obedience and friendship of the Indians. They Effect them most who sell best cheap."<sup>32</sup> Many Spanish mission Indians around St. Augustine and in the Apalachee area who did not willingly convert to this English trading gospel were eradicated by the end of 1704 through the military campaigns of South Carolina's governor, former Indian trader James Moore.<sup>33</sup>

### III

From its beginnings, trade with the Indians was promoted actively by Carolina's ambitious proprietors who had established the trade as their monopoly.<sup>34</sup> They were, however, far from the scene and they found it impossible to obtain compliance from colonists who saw the trade as their

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<sup>32</sup>Nairne to Lordships, 10 July, 1708, Salley, BPRO 5:198

<sup>33</sup>John H. Hann, Apalachee: The Land between the Rivers (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 1988), 227-36, 264-83; Col. James Moore, "An Account of what the Army did under the Command of Col. Moore in His Expedition Last Winter against the Spaniards and Spanish Indians. In a Letter Printed in the Boston News, May 1, 1704," in Carroll, Historical Collections 2:570-75.

<sup>34</sup>Clowse, Economic Beginnings, 64. It was the proprietors' sole monopoly to 1691; Crane, Southern Frontier, 19.

chief avenue to wealth and power. The proprietary governors also attempted to control as much of the trade as they could and came to regard presents from the Indians as their perquisite. By 1691, the Lords Proprietors' monopoly was finally broken and the trade was then opened to all.

The aristocratic planter-traders of the early period, especially those living at Goose Creek, conveniently located on the main path from Charles Town to Indian Country, were able to trade with the settlement Indians from their plantations for skins and meat.<sup>35</sup> With time, they came to employ "Indian hunters" to live and trade for them within the remote Indian towns. One such planter-trader, future governor James Moore, expressed scant respect for these "hirelings." In 1708, Moore called the lesser traders "heathenish, immoral with an unjust way of living and dealing."<sup>36</sup> Nevertheless, these "heathenish" characters were also using the trade as a means of attaining wealth and social mobility.

Like the Goose Creek planters, merchants in Charles Town, among them Andrew Allen, William Godin, Samuel Wragg and Samuel Eveleigh, established much of their families'

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<sup>35</sup>See Map 3, p. 198.

<sup>36</sup>Cited in W. J. Rivers, Sketch of the History of South Carolina to the Close of the Proprietary Government by the Revolution of 1719 (Charleston: McCarter, 1856), 243.

fortunes through involvement in the Indian trade. Many leading seventeenth-century merchants evolved into "the largest black slave dealers and owners in the next generation," having made their initial capital from this trade.<sup>37</sup> These merchants with kin and business connections in the British Isles, held a transatlantic view of occurrences in the backwoods. They also relied on the "meaner sort" to exchange their imported manufactured goods for deerskins and other pelts in the interior of the continent.<sup>38</sup> They, too, were aware that the minor traders living among the Indians were the means by which colonial authorities in South Carolina and in London created and maintained tribal alliances in the face of Spanish and French colonial aspirations.

Because of the diplomatic implications of what might otherwise be considered unfair trading practices, complaints of trader misconduct in 1707 led to the first relatively effective attempt to regulate the trade by a Commons House of Assembly dominated by the merchants. The Journal of the Commons House for 1706 recorded the

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<sup>37</sup>Philip M. Brown, "Early Indian Trade in the Development of South Carolina: Politics, Economics and Social Mobility During the Proprietary Period, 1670-1719," South Carolina Magazine of History and Genealogy [SCHM] 76 (1975): 127.

<sup>38</sup>See chap. 3 for a detailed account of the trade's hierarchy.

Assembly's frustration at attempts to reform the trade "by reason of ye Interest that the Upper House have had in the Indian Trade," as that branch of government was the stronghold of the aristocratic planter-traders.<sup>39</sup> The act of 1707 seized control from the governor and Council and established a board of nine appointed commissioners charged with superintending the trade and traders. Traders were henceforward licensed by these commissioners and had to post substantial bonds against their good behavior. The post of Indian agent was established to arbitrate disputes between traders and tribes in Indian country. The agent was directed to live among the Indians for ten months of the year and was empowered to settle most disputes arising from the trade. He acted as a justice of the peace; offending traders were arrested and sent to Charles Town for trial.

Complaints of trader misconduct in the nations continued, however. The missionary sent by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) to St. James Parish, Goose Creek, lamented in September 1708 that the colony allowed "some very idle and dissolute Men to go and Trade

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<sup>39</sup>December 20, 1706, A. S. Salley, Jr., Journals of the Commons House of Assembly, Nov. 20, 1706 - Feb. 8, 1707 [JCHA] (Columbia: Historical Society of South Carolina, 1939), 35; June 26, 1707, idem., JCHA, June 5, 1707 - July 19, 1707 (Columbia: Historical Commission of South Carolina), 63.

in the Indian Settlements 600 or 800 Miles from us where they commit many Enormities & Injustices."<sup>40</sup> The Yamasee War of 1715, following so soon after the destructive Tuscarora War of 1711-1713 in North Carolina, dramatically highlighted the failure of this attempt at regulation and the encouragement given the Yamasees and their allies by the rival European powers.<sup>41</sup>

#### IV

The Yamasee War had an enormous impact on the development of British North America. Such a massive uprising showed the necessity of governmental support at all levels for frontier endeavors to succeed. South Carolina's proprietors had not shown themselves in tune with their subjects, and the war hastened their fall in 1719. Failure to exercise effective control over the Indian trade was just one of several grievances against them.

By 1686, the Yamasees had settled within a hundred

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<sup>40</sup>Le Jau, Chronicle, September 15, 1708, 41.

<sup>41</sup>Thomas Cooper, The Statutes at Large of South Carolina (Columbia: A. S. Johnston, 1837), 2:66. For the effect of the Tuscarora War on North Carolina, see Christine A. Styrna, "The Winds of War and Change: the Impact of the Tuscarora War on Proprietary North Carolina, 1690-1729," Ph.D. Diss., College of William and Mary, 1990, especially 114-28.

miles of Charles Town and were deeply involved in trade with the Carolinians. This tribe had close connections linguistically and culturally with the Lower Creeks but was independent of them, and had already revolted against both the Spanish and the English.<sup>42</sup> To Gideon Johnston, the SPG Commissioner in 1715, these particular Indians "seem to have nothing but the shape of Men to distinguish them from Wolves & Tygers." This reputation for fierceness was confirmed in the eyes of contemporary Europeans with the violence of the events of 1715.<sup>43</sup>

The journals of the Commissioners of the Indian trade for 1710-1718 have survived, and through 1715 are crammed with examples of the generally accepted reason for the Yamasee war: the unscrupulous behavior of South Carolina's Indian traders.<sup>44</sup> On July 27, 1711, a delegation of Yamasees attended the commissioners begging them to restrain the traders from carrying rum into their nation. They wanted compliance with a regulation that Indian rum

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<sup>42</sup>"Moore, Expedition of 1704," in Carroll, Collections 2:571-73.

<sup>43</sup> Gideon Johnson, Carolina Chronicle: The Papers of Commissary of Gideon Johnson, 17-7-1716, Frank J. Klingberg, ed., University of California Papers in History, vol. 35 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1956), 147.

<sup>44</sup>W. L. McDowell, Colonial Records of South Carolina. Series 2. Journals of the Commissioners of the Indian Trade, September 1710 - August 29, 1718 [JCIT] (Columbia: South Carolina Archives Department, 1955).



debts were illegal and void. Richard Beresford, president of the board, could only explain to the Indians that this regulation was almost impossible to enforce, which was hardly an encouraging response.<sup>45</sup>

Instructions dated July 1712 from the Board to its agent to the Yamasees, John Wright, showed that nation's and the government's concerns. Wright was to "use your utmost Endeavour to regulate the Lyves of the Traders, so that they give not the Indians Offence and Scandal, against the Christian Religion, and to bring them within the Bounds of Morality att least."<sup>46</sup> Wright, the colony's second Indian agent, made some attempts to curb the worst excesses. He reported to the board many instances of illegal trading and a whole host of genuine grievances held by the Yamasees and other Indian nations. Still, complaints of traders abuses kept surfacing. In August 1714, former agent Wright's goods were liable to seizure as even he had taken "Rum contrary to Law" into Indian country.<sup>47</sup>

The general background of lax administration in the backwoods, coupled with increasing contact with remoter Indian tribes, explains why many traders felt free to act

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<sup>45</sup>Ibid., July 27, 1711, 11.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., July 9, 1712, 30.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., August 31, 1714, 59.

in any way they wished away from the centers of western "civilization" and restraint. No wonder that William Tredwell Bull, an SPG missionary, described Carolina's traders as "the most profligate & debauch'd generally undertaking that business, such as had hardly any Notions of Justice & common Honesty, & utter Strangers to the Vertues of Temperance & Chastity." Bull, writing in August 1715, had no doubts about the cause of the Yamasee war. It was nothing less than the "Hand of God" demanding vengeance for "our Manifold Sins & wickedness," compounded by the poor administration of the Indian trade, the "Poverty of the Indians & the wealth of the English."<sup>48</sup>

Ethnohistorian Richard Haan has argued that these grievances were not enough by themselves to account for the devastating conflagration of 1715. They were the same old complaints, and probably no worse than at any previous time, as Bull had also earlier implied. Haan has therefore presented an ecological explanation for the crisis: the real explanation lies in "the exhaustion of key resources vital to the material well-being of the South Carolina trade." It was not a war fought to protest many precise grievances or to avoid enslavement, but rather because the

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<sup>48</sup>William Tredwell Bull to the Secretary, Charles Town, SC, August 10, 1715, cited in Frank J. Klingberg, "The Mystery of the Lost Yamassee Prince," SCHM 63 (1962): 25.

center of the trade was shifting ever westward as both coastal deer and Indian population figures declined. The increasing number of Europeans coming to South Carolina no longer needed the Yamasees as "independent partners" in the trade, but were greedily eyeing their lands. These native Americans knew they were "regarded as obstacles" and would eventually be pushed aside.<sup>49</sup> This was the reason that so many tribes participated in a last-ditch effort to save their land and way of life.

While this explanation is convincing for the participation of the coastal and settlement Indians, it is not as satisfactory in understanding the appeal to other tribes that were not yet firmly enmeshed in the British trading system. Age-old tribal rivalries still persisted, and there may have been as many motives for Indian decisions to participate as there were Indian towns and nations. Some tribes may indeed have regarded a 1715 census of the Indians compiled by Colonel John Barnwell as a first administrative step towards their eventual enslavement.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid; Richard L. Haan, "The 'Trade Do's not Flourish as Formerly': The Ecological Origins of the Yamasee War of 1715" Ethnohistory 28 (Fall 1982): 341-58.

<sup>50</sup>Noel W. Sainsbury, comp., Manuscripts Relating to South Carolina in the British Public Record Office, [BPRO], 36 manuscript volumes, South Carolina Archives [SC-Ar], Columbia. The census figures are listed in 7:237-39.

Charles Town received a warning of possible Indian hostilities when two traders, William Bray and Samuel Warner rode into town on April 12, 1715. They had heard rumors that the Creek Indians were fomenting a general uprising aimed not only at killing offending traders but also at destroying the colony's outlying settlements. A Yamasee Indian had warned Bray's wife of the plot when her husband was absent because of the "great Love" he had for her and her sisters. The Indian wanted them to "goe immediately to their Town" when Bray returned.<sup>51</sup> After relaying this warning to Charles Town, Bray and Warner returned south to join Captain Thomas Nairne and James Wright at Pocotaligo, a major Yamasee town just north of the Savannah River and west of Port Royal Sound. They met John Cochran there. He was a former member of the Commons House of Assembly and captain of the militia, who lived at Port Royal.<sup>52</sup> Cochran, too, had been involved in the Indian trade and was frequently under investigation by the Commons House about questionable activities, including keeping a free Indian in slavery and withholding plunder

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<sup>51</sup>McDowell, JCIT, April 12, 1715, 65. Ominously, this is the last journal entry until the records resume on July 4, 1716.

<sup>52</sup>Cochran and Nairne were old comrades in arms; they had fought together against the Spanish and their allied Indians under James Moore in 1703. Moore, "Expedition of 1704," in Carroll, Collections 2:571.

from allied Indians, especially some Indian slaves taken captive during the 1703 expedition against the Spanish.<sup>53</sup> This adventurous band suffered a common fate when attacked just three days later on Good Friday, 1715. Those who were lucky died immediately. Thomas Nairne's death was excruciating for the Indians roasted him slowly to death over a period of about three days. With this gruesome gesture, the calamitous conflict began.

The name, "Yamasee War" is unsatisfactory because it does not successfully convey the scale of the conflict.<sup>54</sup> The outbreak of hostilities was instigated by the Lower Creeks and directly involved a majority of the southeastern tribes. Most Indian nations, with the exception of the Chickasaws, killed most of their traders or forced them to flee for their lives.<sup>55</sup> The war nearly wiped out the English colony of South Carolina, destroying many dreams for rapid British expansion into the Mississippi Valley and beyond as the Carolina Indian frontier shriveled to a

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<sup>53</sup>February 11, 1703, A. S. Salley, Jr., ed., JCHA For 1703 (Columbia: Historical Commission of South Carolina, 1934), 38; McDowell, JCIT, July 28, 1711, 11. Cochran's wife and four children were also slain.

<sup>54</sup>For an alternative view, see Robert M. Weir, Colonial South Carolina: A History (Millwood, NY: KTO Press, 1983), 28-29. Weir stresses the key role of a leading Yamasee leader, the "Huspah King," the confidence the Yamasees had of their chance of success, and the fact that their language was widely understood by other tribes.

<sup>55</sup>Milling, Red Carolinians, 142.

fifteen-mile pale around Charles Town.<sup>56</sup> Even settlers as close to Charles Town as Goose Creek had to flee to the city.<sup>57</sup> Some tribes spared traders from Virginia, but despite rivalry between traders and administrators of the different British provinces, the magnitude and horror of the conflict forced some unanimity of action. Thus, the Catawbas were unable to get trade goods -- especially guns and ammunition -- from other English colonies.<sup>58</sup> As early as August 1715, Dr. Le Jau commented on the lack of ammunition faced by the Indians, especially those who "invaded" the province from the north with "only bows and Arrows."<sup>59</sup>

South Carolina's governor, Charles Craven, mobilized quickly against the Indians. Charles Town's defenses were strengthened, then he and troops from North Carolina under Colonel Maurice Moore, ex-governor James Moore's son, confronted and repelled attacks from Creeks and Cheraws that occurred too close to Charles Town for comfort. The

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<sup>56</sup>See Crane, Southern Frontier, 167-172; Robinson, Southern Colonial Frontier, 113-115; David H. Corkran, The Creek Frontier, 1540-1783 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967), 56-60. Over 400 Carolinians died.

<sup>57</sup>Le Jau, Chronicle, Le Jau to Secretary, May 21, 1715, 159. This letter was written from Charles Town, while all the others cited were written at St James' Parish, Goose Creek.

<sup>58</sup>Merrell, Indians' New World, 74.

<sup>59</sup>August 22, 1715, Le Jau, Chronicle, 162.

major turning point occurred when two Indian traders, Eleazer Wigan and Robert Gilcrest managed to persuade the Cherokees to enter the war on the side of the colonists.<sup>60</sup> One immediate result was the Cherokee assassination in January 1716 of Creek envoys at the town of Tugaloo. These Creeks hoped the Cherokees would join them and the Yamasees in the conflict against the British. This incident led to a twelve-year-long war between the Creeks and the Cherokees. A most welcome sight in Charles Town in October 1715 was a large delegation of friendly Indians promising aid. Le Jau expressed his joy when "the Potent Nation of the Cherikee Indians came down . . . in a submissive manner, and made Peace with us with their wild Ceremonyes of a Grave dancings. . . . They promise to assist us with a good number of the best Souldiers, and to be faithfull." By April 1716, although the war was not quite ended "two very Potent nations called Chikesaws and Chacktaws have sent word that they will assist us against all our Ennemyes. it is said the Crick Indians & other petty nations . . . are Gone to the french Settlements upon the

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<sup>60</sup>Motion for the Commons House to allot £50.00 to both Wigan and Gilcrest to prepare for the journey. South Carolina Commons House Journal, August 6, 1715, in William Sumner Jenkins, comp., Records of the States of the United States of America (microfilms, Washington, DC, 1949), South Carolina A1b/1/4, 426. [RSUS, by category/reel/unit, page number]. Cotterill, Southern Indians, 22.

river Missisipi."<sup>61</sup>

From this time, more and more Indian delegations came suing for peace. The British colonies discovered the power of embargoing the trade with the Indians, for even at this early date, many nations were already dependent on certain English trade goods. The military force sent into Cherokee country under Colonels John Herbert and George Chicken called more for diplomatic than fighting skills by ensuring that the Cherokees kept their promise to stay on the side of the Carolinians, and the officials indicated the advantages of aligning one's nation to the one mighty European power that could supply essential trade goods in a timely and reliable fashion.<sup>62</sup> Trade may have been a leading cause of the hostilities, but lack of goods was also a decisive element in a tribe's decision to seek peace.<sup>63</sup> Stopping trade in times of conflict -- or threatening to do so -- became a major economic weapon possessed by the Europeans.

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<sup>61</sup>Crane, Southern Frontier 179-181; Le Jau, Chronicle, 169, November 28, 1715; April 25, 1716, 177-78.

<sup>62</sup>Crane, Southern Frontier, 180; Langdon Cheves, ed., "A Letter from Carolina in 1715 and Journal of the March of the Carolinians into the Cherokee Mountains in the Yemassee Indian War, 1715-16," in The Yearbook of Charleston, SC 1894.

<sup>63</sup>Merrell, Indians' New World, 79.



## v

The Yamasee War was the central event in colonial South Carolina's history. It changed the nature of the colony, its Indian trade, and its relationship with neighboring tribes. One reason for the war was the realization by many Indians that European colonists were primarily interested in acquiring their lands. The war hastened the end of proprietary government in the Carolinas because the Lords Proprietors had failed to provide timely military support. To Englishmen, after all, this sideshow in the Americas occurred at a time when they were faced with an internecine war: the 1715 Jacobite Rebellion. Compounding their inability to provide aid at that crucial moment, the Lords Proprietors had alienated resident Carolinians by "grabbing" Yamasee lands, forming them into semi-feudal baronies for their own profit.<sup>64</sup> They had closed their land office before the 1719 revolution against them, an upheaval clearly led by the richest and most important inhabitants of South Carolina and not by the poorer sort.<sup>65</sup> This crisis was the final act that convinced many that a colony ruled in a semi-feudal manner

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<sup>64</sup>Crane, Southern Frontier. 208-17.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., 217. This happened in September 1719.

for monetary reward by absentees could not serve the needs of its citizens.

Carolínians lamented in 1718 that "we are now the poorest Colony in all America, and have both before us at Sea and behind us at Land very distracting appearances of ruine."<sup>66</sup> South Carolina's economy did not recover until 1722. In financial terms, a March 1717 estimate placed the cost borne by merchants in England at over £50,000 sterling, stating that Carolínians were over £90,000 in debt.<sup>67</sup> The price of goods from Britain soared by 500 to 600 per cent, "and the products of the Country are sold in proportion."<sup>68</sup> Carolina's paper money depreciated rapidly. Before the war, £200 in currency equalled £100 sterling but by 1722, £400 currency equalled the same sum.<sup>69</sup> Political uncertainty and economic catastrophe left the Indian trade as an avenue of profit, advancement, and possible death only to the most brave, foolhardy, or desperate of South Carolina's inhabitants.

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<sup>66</sup>Cited in Crane, Southern Frontier, 184. Piracy was another problem that plagued the post-war colony for many years.

<sup>67</sup>Le Jau cited in Edgar L. Pennington, "The South Carolina Indian War of 1715, as Seen by the Clergy men," SCHM 32 (1931): 267.

<sup>68</sup>Le Jau, Chronicle, July 1, 1716, 180.

<sup>69</sup>See "Colonial Currency," SCHM 28 (1927): 138-39. By the late 1720s to 1750s, the exchange rate was around £1 sterling to £7 SC currency.

After 1715, it was no longer possible for wealthy landowners to trade with the Indians directly from their low country plantations. The removal of the Yamasee and other "close" Indians meant that traders had to venture farther afield for the riches of the Indian trade. The end of the war had coincided with many shifts in both Indian and European diplomacy. The Yamasees became "Spanish Indians," and removed themselves to St. Augustine and its vicinity, emerging periodically through 1729 for raids on the few Indian and European inhabitants of Guale, the area they had once inhabited. The Lower Creeks returned to the interior to their older home around the Chattahoochee River and often leaned towards a Spanish alliance. In general, the Creeks seemed to play a game of neutrality, while the Cherokees and Chickasaws became firmer friends of the English colonies.<sup>70</sup>

One major legacy of the Yamasee War that would affect the traders was the opportunity it had given a third European nation to become established as an active presence in the area. Despite the discoveries of Canadian fur-trader Louis Joliet and Father Jacques Marquette, and the subsequent explorations of René-Robert, the Cavalier de La Salle, French settlement in the Southeast remained

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<sup>70</sup>Hann, "St. Augustine," 182; Apalachee, 288, 301. See Map 3, p. 198.

sluggish.<sup>71</sup> The area where the Mississippi met the Gulf of Mexico might be named after the French king, but it was that same Louis XIV who threatened to abandon such a remote, unhealthy outpost in 1707.<sup>72</sup> The French had established a permanent if tentative foothold on the Gulf coast by 1699 with the establishment of Fort Maurepas on Biloxi Bay. Other forts eventually followed: Fort Louis de la Louisiane at Mobile in 1702; Fort Rosalie in the heart of Natchez county in 1714; Fort Toulouse in 1717; and Fort Tombecbé in 1736.<sup>73</sup>

Many resident officials had a vision of French expansion through a vigorous Indian trade; however, this was never funded or supported adequately by the home

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<sup>71</sup>See James J. Cooke, "France, the New World, and Colonial Expansion," in Patricia K. Galloway, ed., La Salle and His Legacy: Frenchmen and Indians in the Lower Mississippi Valley (Jackson, Miss: University of Mississippi Press, 1982); John W. Monette, History of the Discovery and Settlement of the Valley of the Mississippi, by the Three Great Powers, Spain, France, & Great Britain in 2 vols. (1846; reprint, New York: Arno Press Inc., 1971) 1:123-59.

<sup>72</sup>Mathé Allain, "Not Worth a Straw": French Colonial Policy and the Early Days of Louisiana (Lafayette, LA: The Center for Louisiana Studies, 1988), 59. This is perhaps the clearest overview of French Louisiana and its lowly place in the eyes of the French court.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., 52, 61-66; Jay Higgenbotham, Old Mobile: Fort Louis de la Louisiane 1702-1711 (Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 1991), an in-depth account of that fort and its founding. See also Jeffrey Brain, "Tunica Treasures," Peabody Museum Papers 71 (1979): 257-68 for more information on the Tunica, Natchez, and the general French background.

government. Among those devoted to an active French presence despite limited resources were the two Le Moyne brothers. Pierre, the sieur d'Iberville, died in 1706 but Jean-Baptiste de Bienville served Louisiana while it was a royal colony and later under several different but always inefficient proprietary administrations.<sup>74</sup> The French were never present in large numbers, boasting a population of only 215 in 1714, of whom 160 were soldiers.<sup>75</sup> Under John Law's Compagnie d'Occident from 1717-1720, the colony had to resort to forced immigration.<sup>76</sup> Small wonder that many French inhabitants of the early years deserted to the English; some soldiers in 1724 justified their actions on the grounds that Louisiana was "a Country of Misery, where there is neither Money, nor Provisions."<sup>77</sup> The colony itself as well as its allied Indians was neglected by France.

Nevertheless, France became a formidable rival after

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<sup>74</sup>N. M. Miller Surrey, The Commerce of Louisiana During the French Régime 1699-1763 (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1916), chap. 1.

<sup>75</sup>Allain, "Not Worth a Straw," 64.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., 46-69.

<sup>77</sup>Extract of a letter, Mr. Blakeway, Judge of the Vice Admiralty of South Carolina, to Mr. Burchett, dated May 9, 1724, Sainsbury, BPRO 11:138, describing deserters who had arrived by sea "tho it often happens by Land from their Forts." See chap. 3 for deserters who became active in South Carolina's Indian trade.

the Yamasee War, seizing the opportunity to establish itself in the heart of Creek country with the 1717 building of Fort Toulouse at the forks where the Coosa and Tallapoosa join to form the Alabama River.<sup>78</sup> The French had been invited by the Alabamas and other Upper Creeks to establish a fort to serve as a trading post to compensate for the lack of British goods resulting from the War.<sup>79</sup> This fort was located on one of the main Indian trading paths, one hundred leagues from Mobile and about five hundred miles from Charles Town. Although Governor Bienville was a firm believer in expanding trade with the neighboring Indians, he was constantly hampered by the lack of trading goods promised by the French administration. This failure allowed traders from the English colonies of Virginia, Carolina, and -- from the early 1730s -- the new colony of Georgia, to maintain their tenuous lead in the struggle for Indian trade and domination.

During the 1720s, Spain seemed the most formidable threat to Carolina's trade with the Indians. Europe's own diplomatic situation contributed to this impression, for

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<sup>78</sup>Daniel H. Thomas argues that while the fort was authorized in 1714, it was not built until the spring of 1717. "Fort Toulouse -- in Tradition and Fact," Alabama Review 13 (1960): 244-45. See Map 4, p. 317.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., 245; Patricia Dillon Woods French-Indian Relations on the Southern Frontier, 1699-1762 (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1980), 51-52.

Britain and France had been allies since November 1716.<sup>80</sup> This dual alliance which expanded to include the Dutch, was the result of a common mistrust of Spain and especially of its dynastic ambitions in Italy. War broke out for a short while in 1718. Between 1726 and 1729, the armies and navies of Europe were poised for war, with "open conflict on the high seas" between England and Spain, and a Spanish siege of England's Mediterranean outpost, Gibraltar.<sup>81</sup> These hostilities were brought to an end with the 1729 Treaty of Seville. British secretary of state, Sir Robert Walpole vigorously attempted to avoid further open warfare but European events made that impossible. When France and Spain resumed friendly relations with the Family Compact of 1733, and with the outbreak of the War of Polish Succession that same year, keeping out of war was almost miraculous. England was finally propelled into war in 1739 through the force of public opinion. The country was horrified at the inhumane treatment of British sailors by the Spanish navy. Spain interpreted some English trading practices correctly as smuggling at Spain's expense.<sup>82</sup> This clash, followed

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<sup>80</sup>Paul Langford, The Eighteenth Century, 1688-1815. Modern British Foreign Policy. (London: Adams & Charles Black, 1976), 77-85.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., 32.

<sup>82</sup>Captain Jenkins' severed ear when presented in Parliament seemed proof of the perfidious actions of the Spanish -- even if Jenkins was viewed as a pirate by that

closely by the death of the Austrian emperor and the disputed succession of Maria Theresa to her father's throne, merged into the general European struggle known as the War of the Austrian Succession. By 1744, France and Britain had declared war on each other and hostilities continued until the 1748 Treaty of Aix la Chapelle. By this time, Spain was no longer the greatest threat to the British colonies in America. France had emerged as the major rival to English domination both in the Americas and in other parts of the globe.<sup>83</sup>

This was the background into which the British traders in Indian country ventured in their search for personal glory and a fortune. Traders faced a confusing number of aboriginal allies and enemies, had to keep up with old-world intrigues with the French and Spanish, and even inter-colonial rivalry with other English colonies in their quest for the rich rewards that might be garnered through the Indian trade.

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<sup>83</sup>See Penfield Roberts, The Quest for Security, 1715-1740. The Rise of Modern Europe (New York: Harper & Row, 1947), chap. 9.



## CHAPTER 2

### Tradeways of the Early Southeast

When Europeans arrived in southeastern North America, they encountered native peoples who were accustomed to trading their excess commodities with each other. Much of this trade occurred over long distances and between peoples of different racial and linguistic origins. As in Europe, traders had trade conventions and patois to ease these exchanges. Trade with the "Old World" merely gave a new dimension and direction to these ancient customs and initially, it was the early European participants who had to adapt the most if they wished to survive and prosper in this arena of commerce. Native Americans, too, encountered a sophisticated trading network with its own ways of "wheeling and dealing" that they increasingly had to understand. They soon embraced many elements of formality from the British, most clearly the custom of shaking hands as a symbol of welcome and as acknowledgement that a contract was accepted between two or more parties.<sup>1</sup> The trading conventions that evolved from a fusion of native

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<sup>1</sup>Warwick County Record Office, England, George Pawley's Journal, 1746, 11.

and European ways became the bases of the developing British Indian trade in the interior of North America at least until the middle of the eighteenth century.

The Indian trade was the sphere where native American traders met peddlers who brought them not only new goods -- some made of unfamiliar materials using unheard of technologies -- but also a new world perspective and different modes of thinking. The hawkers of manufactured goods encountered societies that were prepared to entertain them and their goods if both were perceived as enhancing the quality of Indian village life. Every culture changed drastically as a result of this exchange of goods and concepts. In the initial phase, natives and newcomers expected to benefit from the contact and believed that what each had to offer was so essential to the other that neither could profitably exist in isolation.<sup>2</sup>

The Indian trade was vast in geographic scope, for the exchange route extended from the American forest to native village, through European and Indian traders to

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<sup>2</sup>This approximates what historian Richard White has recently termed the "Middle Ground," a time and phase when both Indians and Europeans needed to court and please each other, where even existence was not possible without observing the conventions and needs of two (or more) cultures. This phase was ephemeral, existing in different regions at different times. White, The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lake Region, 1650-1815 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), esp. ix-xv.

storekeepers, then to merchants in Charles Town, and farther to their counterparts within the British Isles. Goods that were essential for the trade, such as cloth, knives, brass kettles, and other cutlery and metal items were imported from the Sheffield area. Guns, ammunition, bells, alcoholic beverages, dyes, and other commodities for which the Indians soon clamored also came from the far-reaches of the British Empire.<sup>3</sup>

## I

Before European contact, the native inhabitants of the southeastern woodlands were in a dynamic state of geographic and cultural change.<sup>4</sup> Nations were constantly in contact with each other through trade, hunting, and war, and in the process assimilated elements of each other's cultures and languages. When European traders arrived, they found an active and extensive trade network into which outsiders could be incorporated with relative ease. They also discovered that the Indians were careful and discerning consumers and traders of goods, having honed

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<sup>3</sup>Ian K. Brown, "Historic Trade Bells," 1975 Conference on Historical Sites Archaeology Papers, vol. 10 (Columbia: University of SC Press, 1977), 69-82.

<sup>4</sup>Wilbur R. Jacobs, Dispossessing the American Indian: Indians and Whites on the Colonial Frontier (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1972), 9.

these skills over centuries. Long before 1492, Indians were trading with each other over long distances. The tribal leaders of the Adena and the succeeding Hopewell cultures developing from the Ohio River Valley (the latter flourishing from about 700 to roughly 1100 AD) may have gained their power from their location on important trade routes.<sup>5</sup>

Trade was often the first contact between people of different races and cultures, a relationship that needed peace to flourish. Americans and Europeans exchanged goods in Newfoundland more than a decade before that area was given its European name.<sup>6</sup> Most English voyages of exploration met Indians wishing to barter wares, so that the venture in the 1660s whose mission was to prepare for Carolina's establishment was not rare in encountering Indians who came to the ships with deerskins, pottery, and foodstuffs such as corn, peas, and hens, to exchange for

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<sup>5</sup>Brian Fagan, The Great Journey: The Peopling of Ancient America (London: Thames and Hudson, 1987), 242.

<sup>6</sup>David B. Quinn, ed., North American Discovery Circa 1000-1612 (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1971), 33-34, 40, 43-45. The first recorded mercantile activity between English and Indians was probably in 1502; see Quinn, North America from Earliest Discovery to First Settlements, 126; James Axtell, "At the Water's Edge: Trading in the Sixteenth Century," in After Columbus: Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 145-50.

novel European goods.<sup>7</sup> The native inhabitants were clearly used to commercial relationships with aliens, no matter how exotic.

The most powerful early cultures of the Americas owed much of their power to their control over some commodity that was in demand everywhere, such as salt, tobacco, obsidian, copper, antimony ore and other dyes made from plants such as sumac and puccoon.<sup>8</sup> The Hopewellian burial complex outside modern Chillicothe, Ohio, includes a mound that was sheathed internally with thin sheets of mica. This metal had been mined in the mountains of North Carolina.<sup>9</sup> Other popular non-consumable items in demand were shell beads called "peake" or "wampum." These widely-used beads had evolved on the Atlantic coast as mediums of exchange and, when fashioned as strings or belts, conveyed messages of peace or war. Their use and significance

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<sup>7</sup>Hens and pork are particularly significant for they were an introduced European species, reflecting that the New World was not isolated from the influences of the old after Columbus' discoveries and before permanent colonization. Langdon Cheves, ed., "The Shaftesbury Papers and Other Records Relating to Carolina and the First Settlement on the Ashley River Prior to the Year 1676," South Carolina Collections, 1896 5:169.

<sup>8</sup>Quinn, North America From Earliest Discovery to First Settlements, 17; Cotterill, Southern Indians, 15.

<sup>9</sup>Olah H. Prufer, "Hopewell Complex of Ohio," in Hopewellian Studies, (1964; reprint, Springfield, IL: Illinois State Museum, 1977), 75.

spread gradually inland.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, the development and cultivation of maize -- Indian corn -- in Meso-America testifies to centuries of long-distance trade relations between North American tribes and those of Central America. Furthermore, pottery from areas associated with the Mississippian culture, dating from around 1000 AD, exhibit painted designs which reflected Mexican forms.<sup>11</sup>

By the seventeenth century, most tribes were engaged in specialized trade. The Cherokees were renowned for their tobacco pipes.<sup>12</sup> The Quapaw Indians of the central Mississippi Valley exchanged earthen pots, wooden vessels, and especially canoes with other tribes for bows, arrows, and salt.<sup>13</sup> Many southern Indians traded yaupon, Ilex vomitoria, to western tribes. This shrub of the holly family was used to make "black drink" or cassena, a purgative that played an important role in Indian

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<sup>10</sup>In 1709, John Lawson thought it the "general & current Species." John Lawson, A New Voyage to Carolina, 1709, ed. Hugh Talmage Lefler (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1967), 203.

<sup>11</sup>Dean Snow, The Archaeology of North America (New York: The Viking Press, 1976), 61.

<sup>12</sup>Leonard Bloom, "The Acculturation of the Eastern Cherokee: Historical Aspects," NCHR 29 (1942): 324, explained that Cherokee country yielded a steatite suitable to pipe manufacture.

<sup>13</sup>W. David Baird, The Quapaw Indians: A History of the Downstream People (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980), 15.

ceremonials and social exchanges by purifying the body and thus preparing the soul for these important spiritual occasions.<sup>14</sup> As late as 1772, black drink was still important in Creek society, and gourds full of the brew were presented to "any Stranger" while some men sang, then the cups were exchanged "that they may drink together."<sup>15</sup>

Among the trade items most in demand in the prehistoric Southeast was salt, usually acquired from natural salt licks. The German explorer John Lederer noted in 1672 that the Sara Indians, located in present-day North Carolina, had "hard cakes of white Salt." He could not account for their presence unless "they were made of Seawater, or taken out of pits." To him, this was evidence of the riches of the country and motivation for further exploration and settlement. Lederer also mentioned that Katearas was a town with "a great Indian Trade and Commerce" and, like many other early explorers, he

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<sup>14</sup>Charles M. Hudson, ed., Black Drink: A Native American Tea (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1979), 44, for a map showing the distribution of its use; John Brickell, The Natural History of North-Carolina, 1737, ed. Carol Urness (New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1969), 87, 319, 323.

<sup>15</sup>"Journal of David Taitt. 1772," in Mereness, Travels, 502-03. Taitt also gave a good description of the process of curing the leaves and then turning it into a brew with a foam that resembled porter's.

commented on the "Bright Copper" worn by Indian leaders.<sup>16</sup> The copper observed by the earliest colonists had arrived at the Atlantic coast from the Appalachian Mountains.<sup>17</sup> Archaeological excavations have uncovered many hammered copper items in high status burials, for most of the tribes of the Southeast had adopted the Central American custom of burying their dead with their most prized possessions and some household goods. This placed exotic goods in high and continuous demand, as one generation's precious commodities were not recycled to the next generation.<sup>18</sup>

By the time of contact, North American tribes were ready "to meet the demand of the European market."<sup>19</sup> They possessed not only exchange commodities but also the laws, customs, and protocols needed to control intertribal relationships. Wars were neither common nor large scale

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<sup>16</sup>John Lederer, The Discoveries of John Lederer in Three Several Marches from Virginia, to the West of Carolina (London: Samuel Heyrick, 1672), 16, 19, 20.

<sup>17</sup>Helen C. Rountree, ed. Powhatan Foreign Relations 1500-1722 (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1993), 44-49, describes the commodities traded by the Powhatans.

<sup>18</sup>Helen C. Rountree, The Powhatan Indians of Virginia: Their Traditional Culture (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989), 55, 111. She describes the trade in copper in Powhatan's realm and how he reserved English copper for himself. While Virginia Indians are outside the geographic scope of this study, many observations on the Algonquian Powhatans are applicable to the southeastern Indians.

<sup>19</sup>Merrell, Indians' New World, 35-6.



enough to disrupt these patterns. Hostilities were small-scale, "seasonably sporadic" and "largely symbolic," and not as destructive of human life as they became with the introduction of European guns and iron weapons.<sup>20</sup>

Motivation for engaging in war was traditionally for honor or revenge and rarely to defend hunting grounds or tribal lands. However, the emergence of large "confederations" of tribes just before European contact may have changed this situation. The Quapaws, for example, had moved into the Mississippi Valley since de Soto's expedition as they were pushed from their traditional Ohio hearthland by the growing military strength of the Iroquois League. The new Quapaw presence on the Mississippi upset the old balance of power there and led to friction and a state of continuous warfare with their new neighbors, especially the warlike Chickasaws. Similarly, many small tribes were forcibly moved to other parts of Powhatan's "empire" when defeated by his forces, while other groups moved voluntarily in an attempt to remain outside his domain.<sup>21</sup>

Given this state of movement and flux, it was necessary to evolve rules to safeguard native traders and

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<sup>20</sup>James Axtell, "The English Colonial Impact on Indian Culture," in The European and the Indian: Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 262.

<sup>21</sup>See Rountree, Powhatan Indians, especially pages 140-42.

legitimate emissaries.<sup>22</sup> From this need arose widely accepted symbols of peaceful intentions and a concept of friendship that had mutually beneficial aspects for newcomers and hosts. Thomas Nairne observed in 1708 that the Indians "contract their Freindships with deliberation, and formality." This was reflected in the exchange of gifts as tokens of good faith. Sometimes such expressions of friendship began "by riseing up and Dancing a Dance which they call a Freind dance at the end whereof they change Armes, cloathes and every thing about them." No Indian would visit another individual or village "without a present tho never so small."<sup>23</sup> In 1607, the aristocrat George Percy described the first encounter of the Chesapeake Bay Indians with Captain Christopher Newport's fleet which was carrying settlers to establish the Jamestown colony. The "chief" held a bow and arrow in one hand, and "a Pipe of Tobacco in the other," probably a gesture known to most Indians as demanding to know whether newcomers came with peaceful or warlike motives. Although this symbolism was not immediately grasped by the English,

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<sup>22</sup>Axtell, "Trading in the Sixteenth Century," 145, describes how these protocols existed in the North before the very beginnings of the fur trade with Europeans.

<sup>23</sup>Thomas Nairne, Nairne's Muskhogean Journals, the 1708 Expedition to the Mississippi River, ed. Alexander Moore (Jackson, Miss: University Press of Mississippi, 1988), 65-66.

their own signs of peace were finally and fortuitously understood by the Indians, who then allowed them to land in peace.<sup>24</sup>

The calumet's significance was widely recognized throughout North America and, possibly, just like trade languages, spread with the influx of newcomers.<sup>25</sup> In 1705, Virginia historian Robert Beverley explained the role of the calumet or pipe as "a Pass and Safe Conduct" between the nations.<sup>26</sup> In 1698, the Frenchman, André Pénicaut described the three-day feast of the calumet as practiced by the Biloxi nation. This event included dances and ceremonial gestures that were not always understood by European observers. He described the pipe as a "stick or hollow cane . . . decorated all over with feathers of parrots, birds of prey, and eagles," resembling "several lady's fans from France joined together."<sup>27</sup> In 1715,

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<sup>24</sup>Cited in Quinn, North American Discovery, 310; Rowntree, The Powhatan Indians, 5.

<sup>25</sup>See Ian K. Brown, "The Calumet Ceremony in the Southeast and Its Archaeological Manifestations," American Antiquity 64 (1989): 311-31.

<sup>26</sup>Robert Beverley, The History and Present State of Virginia [1705] ed. Louis B. Wright (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1947), 188.

<sup>27</sup>Richebourg Gaillard McWilliams, ed. and trans. Fleur de Lys and Calumet: Being the Pénicaut Narrative of French Adventure in Louisiana (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1953), 5. Pénicaut, a former ship's carpenter, was with Le Sueur on the Mississippi in 1700, became an Indian interpreter, and lived in Louisiana

Antoine de La Mothe Cadillac, the French governor of Louisiana temporarily appointed to replace Bienville, failed to comprehend the significance of the calumet. His refusal to take part in what he regarded as a dirty custom resulted in a war with the Natchez, for they interpreted his action as a sign that he was planning to attack them.<sup>28</sup> An Indian would never smoke a pipe of peace with members of another tribe if war was in the offing. Over in the British colonies, SPG missionary Francis Le Jau described the manner in which the Cherokees made their 1715 treaty with the Carolinians: an exchange of gifts, mostly cloth, and "smoking out of the same Pipe [which] is a solemn token of reconciliation of friendship."<sup>29</sup>

Smoking the calumet was just one part of an elaborate system of ceremonials that defined intertribal relationships. The French Jesuit Mathurin Le Petit witnessed the way the Natchez entertained foreign envoys by appointing the day for the festivities to begin after a massive cleaning operation of the village followed by bountiful food and elaborate parades. After the highly formalized opening ceremony, "those who carry the calumets

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until 1721.

<sup>28</sup>Jeffrey P. Brain, "Tunica Treasure," Papers of the Peabody Museum 71 (1979): 262.

<sup>29</sup>Le Jau to William Taylor, Secretary, November 28, 1715, Le Jau, Chronicle, 169.

chant and dance with much skill" and then the pipes were filled. Even the way the chief smoked the pipe was important, "blowing the first puff toward Heaven, the second toward earth, and others around the horizon." Then, the pipe was offered to the ambassadors and as a sign that an alliance had been contracted they rubbed "their own bodies all over." Other ceremonies followed over the space of four days.<sup>30</sup> Feasts were held not only to celebrate victories and peace treaties but as occasions similar to European fairs, bringing people together and affording traders an opportunity to demonstrate and exchange their novel wares.<sup>31</sup>

Traders always needed a safe way of making themselves understood, ranging from quickly learning a few key words of the host village's language, to using a commonly-held trade jargon. Many trade languages had developed throughout the continent before the Europeans arrived. In the South, Mobilian was a pidgin easily understood by most of the southeastern tribes because it was based closely on Choctaw, a Muskogean language. It received its name from

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<sup>30</sup>Fr. Mathurin Le Petit, The Natchez Massacre, 1729, ed. and trans. Richard H. Hart (New Orleans: Poor Rich Press, 1950), 14-16.

<sup>31</sup>John Lawson, Lawson's History of North Carolina [1714] ed. Frances Latham Harriss, 2d ed. (Richmond, VA: Garrett & Massie, Inc., 1952), 184, 186; Brickell, Natural History, 323.

the French who named it "Mobilienne" because the fort at Mobile had developed into their primary center for trading with the Indians. This lingua franca was not only a mixture of languages from the same family group, such as Chickasaw and Choctaw, but included some words from Algonquian and Iroquoian as well.<sup>32</sup> While ethnolinguists continue to argue whether Mobilian existed before the Europeans came, there must have been some form of pidgin that predated it even if it evolved and diffused with the increasing French sphere of influence. Even Indians who were not directly involved in trade found it advantageous to learn Mobilian as well as their native tongue and most of the Natchez spoke it by the time of their disastrous revolt against the French in 1729.<sup>33</sup>

Lack of skill in a trading language was overcome by offering consumers tempting wares. A Spaniard, Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca, survived stranding on the Gulf Coast in the 1530s by becoming a cog in traditional native tradeways which owed little to the Spanish invasion and exploration

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<sup>32</sup>James M. Crawford, The Mobilian Trade Language (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1978); Kenneth H. York, "Mobilian: The Indian Lingua Franca of Colonial Louisiana," in Galloway, ed. La Salle and His Legacy, 139-145; Emanuel J. Drechsel, "Towards an Ethnohistory of Speaking: The Case of Mobilian Jargon, An American Indian Pidgin of the Lower Mississippi Valley," Ethnohistory 30 (1983): 165-76.

<sup>33</sup>Crawford, Mobilian, 3-4, 41, 44.

of the continent.<sup>34</sup> He resorted to trading Indian-fashion in order to survive. Observing the local demand, he collected a stock of "seashells and cockles, and shells with which [the Indians] cut a fruit which is like a bean, used by them for healing and in their dances and feasts." He took his popular wares inland "and in exchange brought back hides and red ochre with which they rub and dye their faces and hair; flint for arrow points, glue and hard canes wherewith to make them, and tassels made of the hair of deer, which they dye red." He reported the joy felt by tribes when traders such as himself visited them and the resultant festivities that greeted itinerant traders.<sup>35</sup>

Among the evidence that the southeastern Indian nations had customs geared towards making the life of itinerant alien traders more comfortable was the hospitable gesture of making an unmarried woman available for overnight stays. Many English officials traveling in the nations in the eighteenth century reported their horror -- at least to their superiors -- at being offered a chief's

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<sup>34</sup>"The Journey of Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca and His Companions from Florida to the Pacific, 1528-1536," in Jerald T. Milanich, ed., Earliest Hispanic/ Native Interactions in the American Southeast, Daniel H. Thomas, gen. ed. Spanish Borderland Sourcebooks vol. 12 (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc, 1991), 168-69.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 170.

"daughter" as a partner for the night.<sup>36</sup> In 1709, John Lawson described this custom among the Indians of North Carolina but it was probably an established practice throughout much of North America and not one triggered by the arrival of Europeans. It arose from the pre-Columbian exchange of goods and courtesy between different tribes. Traders who intended to live for a while in a nation were likely to be presented with a "wife," to "lie with him, make Bread, and to be necessary in what she was capable to assist him in, during his abode amongst them." These trading girls had a special hair cut that set them apart from the other unavailable women in the villages. It was not shameful for a woman to be a trading girl; in fact, it gave her both status and eventually a dowry for a normal marriage within traditional Indian social patterns. These "She-Bed-Fellows" acted as valuable and sometimes life-saving interpreters of both language and customs to the newcomers.<sup>37</sup>

Most local trade and gift-giving was in surplus

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<sup>36</sup>"Emperor" Brims unsuccessfully offered "Bedfellows" to James Sutherland, a royal official, and his clerical companion, on their official visit into Creek country in 1729-1731. Brims made it clear that most visitors, especially the Spanish, availed themselves of such offers. "Letter of James Sutherland to My Lord," SCHM 68 (1969): 82.

<sup>37</sup>Lawson, A New Voyage, 177-78; Lawson, History of North Carolina, 195, 198. See below, 150-58.



agricultural products. One explanation why the linguistic base of Mobilian was Choctaw is that the Choctaws tended to grow an abundance of corn and sold their excess to neighbors. Indians practiced agriculture in settled fields and villages but they periodically moved the location of their towns to avoid soil exhaustion. They mostly grew corn, beans, and squash, with the men helping to prepare the fields for the planting season and the women tending to the lighter but essential chores of weeding fields, harvesting crops, and gathering wild berries, nuts and seeds.<sup>38</sup> Crops were grown primarily for subsistence but any surplus was bartered with neighboring tribes; corn in particular was offered as tribute to tribal leaders. Within the most sophisticated societies, such as the Powhatan or the Natchez, the high chiefs demanded such tribute and amassed their subject people's surplus products for their own use and discretion.<sup>39</sup> Such chieftains kept lesser leaders dependent on them by controlling the redistribution of corn and of exotic items. Deerskins were among prominent among the items presented as tribute to a supreme chief and often redistributed by him to worthy

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<sup>38</sup>Cotterill, Southern Indians, 9; Brickell, Natural History, 289. Brickell noted that the "Industry of [Indian] Wives" produced crops without ploughs, with the "Men's minds being wholly taken up in Hunting."

<sup>39</sup>Rountree, Powhatan Indians, 109-12.

warriors or headmen of other tribes as a reflection of his magnanimity, influence, and power.<sup>40</sup>

While agriculture and gathering berries and other edible crops were the women's occupations, these activities occasionally involved the men whose primarily responsible was to supplement the diet through fishing and hunting.<sup>41</sup> William Byrd II of Virginia observed the women's constant labor but did not see or understand the seasonal male participation in agriculture. To him, writing in 1728, the "men are quite idle, or at most employ'd only in the Gentlemanly Diversions of Hunting and Fishing," and he clearly recorded his feelings that such pastimes were not appropriate for the lowly-bred Indians.<sup>42</sup> These sporting diversions, however, provided the Indians with essential protein in their diet as well as necessary raw materials for clothing and myriad other uses. Deer sinews became the

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<sup>40</sup>Brickell, Natural History, 383; this was no doubt the origin of the deerskin matchcoat called Powhatan's Mantle that had found its way to the Tradescant collection of artifacts in England as early as 1638. See Jamestown's Settlement's brochure, "Powhatan's Mantle" by Thomas E. Davidson [1990].

<sup>41</sup>Women and children trapped small animals and did some fishing, but the hunting of larger game animals were skills taught to the males.

<sup>42</sup>William Byrd, William Byrd's Histories of the Dividing Line Betwixt Virginia and North Carolina [1728], ed. William K. Boyd and Percy Adams (New York: Dover Publications, 1967), 116.

strings of their bows.<sup>43</sup> The flesh was dried into jerky for long journeys; Cabeza de Vaca recounted surviving on one of his interminable journeys by eating deer tallow.<sup>44</sup> Some southern tribes turned out fine quality skins which they decorated with paintings. The Frenchman, René Goulaine de Laudonnière who attempted to colonize Florida in the mid-sixteenth century, was struck by the quality of a deerskin mantle worn by a leading chief. It was "dressed out like a chamois and painted in strange designs of various colors. The paintings were so naturally charming and still so consistent with the rules of art that no professional artist could find fault with them."<sup>45</sup>

Even harder to evaluate than the precontact state of the Indians is the impact of European goods that seeped into some tribes before the arrival in the region of the Europeans themselves. Often, native traders carried these wares along established trading paths, or they were presented as novelty items from one tribal leader to

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<sup>43</sup>Milanich, "Cabeza De Vaca's Account," 214; Venison accounted for up to 90% of Indian meat source, see Merrell, Indians' New World, 35.

<sup>44</sup>Milanich, "Cabeza De Vaca's Account," 249.

<sup>45</sup>René Goulaine de Laudonnière, Three Voyages, ed. Charles E. Bennett (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1975), 62. For "professional," read "European."

another.<sup>46</sup> These goods did not dramatically change native culture for they were often buried with their owners.<sup>47</sup> Some items that a European regarded as trifles were highly prized in Indian society for their exotic, if not spiritual, nature.<sup>48</sup> Many of the manufactured items traded later in great quantities, such as blue glass beads, were treasured because they were an adaptation of a native shell product although fashioned from new material.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>Crops and livestock were also part of the exchange network. As early as 1682, La Salle saw peaches, watermelons, and chickens -- Old World elements -- on the Lower Mississippi. Smith, Archaeology of Aboriginal Culture Change, 21.

<sup>47</sup>James Adair, Adair's History of the American Indians, ed. Samuel Cole Williams (New York: Promontory Press, 1986), 186. Adair, writing in 1775, explained that the Cherokee "of late years, by the reiterated persuasion of the traders, have entirely left off the custom of burying effects with the dead body"; yet, burials as late as Chief Oconostota's in 1784 at Echota included European trade goods. See Gerald F. Schroedl, ed., Overhill Cherokee Archaeology at Chota-Tanasee, (np: University of Tennessee Dept. of Anthropology Publication 42, 1986), 134-36.

<sup>48</sup>Christopher L. Miller and George R. Hamell, "A New Perspective on Indian-White Contact: Cultural Symbols and Colonial Trade," JAH 73 (1986): 311-28. Some trade goods resembled items the Indians regarded as "other-worldly" and thus possessed spiritual significance.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., 314, 316-19, 325-26; in his 1612 "Description of Virginia," John Smith described the inhabitants of Virginia as "Generally covetous of copper, beads, and such like trash." Powhatan in 1608 "fixed his humour upon a few bleu beads" and exchanged corn for several pounds of them, "The Proceedings of the English Colonies in Virginia." In Lyon Gardiner Tyler, ed. Narratives of Early Virginia 1606-1625, Original Narratives of Early American History, (New York: Barnes and Nobles, Inc., 1907), 99, 135.

Manufactured beads sold well because they replaced wampumpeake, with the added benefit that the beads saved the hours of painstaking labor needed to drill holes in sea shells, the traditional material, with stone awls.<sup>50</sup> Some items were not used by the Indians as envisioned by their European fabricators but adapted and used instead of a familiar traditional object. Many brass and tin pots were cut into disks, pierced with a hole, and worn as gorgets in place of the traditional shell breastplates.<sup>51</sup>

In May 1540, the Spanish explorer, Hernando de Soto, reached the town of Cofitachequi, an inland town that showed signs of involvement in long distance trade. There he encountered a highly developed socio-political entity under the control of a "Caçica, or "Lady" of Cofitachequi. In their subsequent looting of the town, the Spanish found not only 350 pounds of pearls that had originally come from the sea coast, salt from across the mountains, and granaries full of corn which the Lady had received as tribute but also "a dirk and beads that had belonged to

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<sup>50</sup>Jacobs, Dispossessing the American Indian, 41-49, describes the manufacture of wampum and its significance in Iroquois protocol.

<sup>51</sup>For depictions of shell gorgets, see Thomas M. N. Lewis and Madeline Kneberg, Tribes That Slumber: Indians of the Tennessee Region (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1958), 111, 112.

Christians."<sup>52</sup> These rosaries and an iron knife were probably relicts of the defunct colonizing venture of a Spanish official, Lucas Vasques de Ayllon, in 1526. His settlement, somewhere between Winyah Bay and the Cape Fear River, had been short-lived. The location of this Mississippian town, according to the Indians, was about a two-day's march from Cofitachequi.<sup>53</sup> Cofitachequi, however, contained no gold; thus, de Soto and his men were eventually persuaded to depart to a purportedly richer province.

The disastrous French attempts to settle in Florida in the early 1560s under Huguenots Jean Ribault and René de Laudonnière were another source of the scarce and exotic trade goods which trickled into some interior villages. Laudonnière noticed in 1564 that some Timucua Indians wore decorations made of gold and silver. He was told that most of these metals had come from the interior of the continent but some had been culled from shipwrecked Spanish galleons off the coast of Florida. He believed that the metals came

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<sup>52</sup>Quinn, North American Discovery, 128. This is an extract from the account of the Gentleman of Elvas, one of de Soto's retinue.

<sup>53</sup>Quinn, North America From Earliest Discovery, 143-146, 211-12, placed its location at Augusta, SC; however, more recent research points at a location closer to Camden, SC. See Charles M. Hudson, The Juan Pardo Expeditions: Explorations of the Carolinas and Tennessee 1566-1568 (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1990), 9-10, 68-73.

mostly from shipwrecks, for there was more gold and silver along the cape "where ships are usually sunk," than farther north.<sup>54</sup> Still, the rumors of gold in the mountains remained a motivation for adventurers who searched for the mother lode in the interior.<sup>55</sup>

By the mid-sixteenth century, the southeastern coast was a profitable area for English and French pirates and many coastal Indians acquired goods, new diseases, and genes from contact with these seadogs.<sup>56</sup> Some Indian societies gladly welcomed these strangers with their novelties and were prepared to accept items they perceived as enriching their lives, for initially the benefits of such a trade seemed to outweigh any negative aspects. The intruders were not perceived as threats to traditional Indian ways as long as the newcomers did not arrive in large numbers. The few early Europeans in Indian country needed familiarity with native protocols and languages, for their lives depended on following the Indian rules for the dangerous games of trade, sex, and warfare.

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., 245; Laudonnière, Three Voyages, 9.

<sup>55</sup>BPRO 4: 194-196, see below, 211.

<sup>56</sup>Hudson, Juan Pardo Expeditions, summarizes much more than just Pardo's ventures.

## II

Full-scale, permanent settlements by the English and French in the Southeast, coupled with the Spanish presence in Florida, increased the flow of European products farther into the continent and eventually changed native societies drastically. While outward social forms, such as the tribal system itself with clans and moieties, remained intact through the eighteenth century, population decline caused by virgin soil epidemics, the failure of the Yamasee uprising, and the changing nature of warfare and hunting, contributed to the disappearance of many coastal Indians and to the formation of confederacies such as the Creek and Catawba.<sup>57</sup>

In the initial stages of European settlement, the demand for furs -- especially for deerskins in the Southeast -- was a boon to the Indians and to the English. To Europeans furs and skins were the first staples that gave bonanza profits while the Indians felt they were the key to an inexhaustible supply of new wares.<sup>58</sup> There were deer enough for everyone's needs, it seemed. While white-tailed deer do not herd, vast numbers wandered in the

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<sup>57</sup>See above, 9-10.

<sup>58</sup>John J. McCusker & Russell R. Menard, The Economy of British America 1607-1789 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 22.



woods, congregating for a variety of reasons such as a rich food source or at a salt lick.<sup>59</sup> They prefer the edges of forests and are usually found foraging in the early morning, late afternoon, and at nightfall. The white-tailed deer is "a browser with well defined regional forage preferences," preferring to eat woody plants and shrubs over grasses. They gorge themselves on acorns in the autumn to reach their optimum weight.<sup>60</sup> The hunting season in the South, not surprisingly, coincided with the deer's autumnal maximum weight and peak condition.<sup>61</sup> Since multiple births are common, the deer population can recover fairly rapidly from a demographic catastrophe, although the slaughter of the eighteenth century brought

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<sup>59</sup>Discoveries of John Lederer, 7. He saw "vast herds of Red and Fallow Deer" daily on his first and third expeditions in 1670.

<sup>60</sup>Lewis H. Larson, Aboriginal Subsistence Technology on the Southeastern Coastal Plain during the Late Prehistoric Period (Gainesville, FL: University Presses of Florida, 1980), 166-72; they also "relish mushrooms," White-tailed Deer in the Southern Forest Habitat. Proceedings of a Symposium at Nagadoches, TX. ([New Orleans]: U.S. Southern Forest Experiment Station, 1969), 8.

<sup>61</sup>Walter P. Taylor, ed. The Deer of North America: The White-tailed, Mule and Black-tailed Deer, Genus "Odocoileus," Their History and Management (Harrisonburg, PA: The Stackpole Co., 1956), 2, 82-84, shows that the all-time low came at the end of the nineteenth century.

about a temporary decline in their numbers.<sup>62</sup>

Before the heightened demand for skins changed the age-old ways, deer stalking was a summer occupation for individual Indian males as and when they needed meat or skins, but they had always hunted communally during the fall and winter months. Like war parties, long-range hunting parties often included women and children. This was necessary as "The Savage Men never beat their Corn to make Bread; but that is Womens work, especially the Girls."<sup>63</sup>

The actual hunting techniques varied over time. Early European observers, such as John Lawson, Robert Beverley, and John Brickell, noted Indian skills with the bow and arrow. In 1701, Indians still preferred this traditional way when hunting smaller game like turkey or "small Vermine," rather than using the expensive new guns and wasting scarce ammunition. The preferred wood for bows was

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<sup>62</sup>Charles M. Hudson Jr., "Why the Southeastern Indians Slaughtered Deer," in Shepard Krech III, Indians, Animals, and the Fur Trade: A Critique of "Keepers of the Game" (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1981), 155-76; the dates that the colonies initiated game laws were: South Carolina in 1755; Georgia in 1790. Taylor, Deer of North America, 22.

<sup>63</sup>Lawson, New Voyage, 207. Another reason for women's presence in war parties was "to sing a fine Tune" to praise and encourage their warriors during the fighting -- at least among the Chickasaws, see Nairne, Muskhogean Journals, 43; Kathryn E. Holland Braund, Deerskins & Duffels: Creek Indian Trade with Anglo-America, 1685-1815 (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), 67-68.

locust or black mulberry, fashioned when the wood was still green. Arrows were assembled of cane and feathers with flints or shell for tips, and using glue made from deer hooves.<sup>64</sup>

Fire-hunting, using fire to confuse or surround the animals, was another early method of hunting.<sup>65</sup> Indians burned dry leaves in a five-mile circle, "which, burning inwards, drove all the Game to the Centre, where they were easily killed." William Byrd was horrified by this "unfair way," especially as the trapped deer seemed to him to "weep and Groan like a Human Creature."<sup>66</sup> Thomas Nairne also observed this method among the Chickasaws. He, on the other hand, enjoyed this way of hunting best "for in that we never missed 7 or 10 Dear."<sup>67</sup> Other Indian tribes conducted drives that forced deer or buffalo over ravines or into rivers.<sup>68</sup> Stalking, clothed in deer hides, was

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<sup>64</sup>Anne King Gregorie, "The Indian Trade of Carolina in the Seventeenth Century," M.A. Thesis, University of South Carolina, Columbia, 1926, 14, is a good summary; Beverley, History of Virginia, 197; Adair, History of the Indians, 456-57; Laudonnière, Three Voyages, 11; John R. Swanton, "Aboriginal Culture of the Southeast," Bur. Eth. Ann. 42 (1928): 692-93.

<sup>65</sup>Lawson, History of North Carolina, 219; Beverley, History of Virginia, 154-55.

<sup>66</sup>Byrd, Histories of the Dividing Line, 284-86.

<sup>67</sup>Nairne, Muskhoqean Journals, 52-53.

<sup>68</sup>Larson, Aboriginal Subsistence, 170-71.

another age-old procedure but more time-consuming.<sup>69</sup> The hunter wore "an artificial Head . . . made of the Head of a Buck, the back Part of the Horns being scrypt and hollow, for Lightness of Carriage." Most of the skin was retained, and "they have a Way to preserve the Eyes, as if living." This disguise was completed with a deerskin matchcoat, the Indian answer to a mantle or blanket. In this way, the Indians went among the deer, mimicking their motions so well that it was not unknown for a hunter to mistake another for a deer and kill him accidentally.<sup>70</sup> Pénicaut also described this method. The hunters induced the bucks to charge, waiting until the last possible minute before firing their muskets. He believed that the Indians were better buffalo, bear, and deer hunters than the French even with their new weapons.<sup>71</sup>

The importance of the hunt in village life changed when the focus was no longer on the white-tailed deer as a key resource providing food and clothing but as an exchange medium for European goods. The easiest adaptation brought

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<sup>69</sup>The earliest description in English is from John Smith's "Description of Virginia," cited in Tyler, Narratives of Early Virginia, 104-5; it was a real challenge given the deer's exceptional sense of smell and their edge over humans in dim-light vision. Gary Clancy and Larry R. Nelson, White-Tailed Deer (Minnetunka, MN: De Cosse Inc., 1991), 24.

<sup>70</sup>Lawson, New Voyage, 22.

<sup>71</sup>McWilliams, Fleur de Lys and Calumet, 112.

about by the European demand for skins was to lengthen the duration of the hunts. New weapons, too, made killing deer more efficient by shortening the stalking time and lengthening the killing radius of a hunter. As early as 1734, SPG Commissary Philip Georg Friedrich Von Reck commented on the accuracy of the Indians with these new weapons, stating that they "never fail their mark."<sup>72</sup> When dealing with the new armaments, the Indians showed themselves discerning consumers. They tested guns thoroughly before purchasing them and demanded light-weight weapons.

Europeans might think they had foisted a weapon that was less durable onto the Indian and thus initiated a perennial consumer demand, but the natives did not want a heavy gun that would hamper their progress through the woods, even at the cost of frequent replacements.<sup>73</sup> The constant but unmet Indian requirement was easier access to gunsmiths, hoping for smiths located at the frontier forts.<sup>74</sup> Indian visits to Charles Town were followed by

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<sup>72</sup>"Commissary Philip Georg Friedrich Von Reck's Report on Georgia," trans. George Fenwick Jones, Georgia Historical Quarterly [GHQ] 47 (1963): 105.

<sup>73</sup>Crockett memo, January 1750, BPRO 24: 237, recorded a complaint that guns sent to South Carolina as trade goods were too heavy for Indian use.

<sup>74</sup>The Overhill Cherokees in their 1746 talks with agent George Pawley listed this among their reasons for wanting an English fort. Pawley's Journal, 11.

bills for the Commons House of Assembly to pay local gunsmiths for their repair and cleaning of Indian weapons.<sup>75</sup>

As the increased pace of hunts began to decimate the game in a tribe's traditional hunting grounds, the hunters had to search for deer and other animals farther afield, often inaugurating conflicts with their neighbors. Warfare, too, became less of a sport played for honor's sake and more of a deadly enterprise because guns killed people more efficiently than did traditional weapons and the ancient American custom of scalping also became easier with the new metal knives. Robert Beverley believed that "it was the English alone that first taught [the Indians] to put a value on their skins and furs."<sup>76</sup> Powhatan's Indians, however, were dealing in skins before the founding of colonial Virginia, and Florida Indians had been trading skins with the French and the Spanish long before the founding of Charles Town or Jamestown.<sup>77</sup>

Indians -- especially the women -- embraced other

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<sup>75</sup>For example, J. H. Easterby, Journals of the Commons House of Assembly 1741-1742 (Columbia: Historical Commission of South Carolina, 1953), Jan 19, 1742, 318.

<sup>76</sup>Beverley, History of Virginia, 225.

<sup>77</sup>These were still the hunting methods employed when the demand for deerskins boomed. Waselkov, "Seventeenth-century Trade," 129, indicated the prevalence of trade in deerskins before the English colonized Virginia.

metal items that eased their lives, such as iron hoes and other agricultural implements, brass and iron pots. Metal kettles were lighter than the pottery vessels previously used, were not as breakable, and did not have to be made by the women. Manufactured knives and axes eased such tasks as cutting paths through the woods and gutting and skinning animals. Metal fish hooks, pins, needles, and nails simplified many laborious daily tasks. Traditional Indian crafts such as pottery making and basket weaving declined with the increasing dependence on European goods, but it is easy to understand the attraction of objects that made everyday life easier. They replaced less efficient, older prototypes and were immediately valued for what they could do.<sup>78</sup>

Other goods supplanted labor-intensive native manufactures, again tasks mostly done by the women. Imported vermilion replaced plant-derived red puccoon. European cloth meant that women no longer had to process deerskins for their own clothing. Breech clouts for men were traditionally made from deerskin, too.<sup>79</sup> Preparing

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<sup>78</sup>A list of goods priced in skins from July 24, 1716, includes strouds (a thick woolen cloth named for the town in the south of England), a Duffield blanket, a hoe, axe, gun, pistol, scissors, knife, flints for guns, and a sword. See McDowell, JCIT, 89.

<sup>79</sup>Swanton, "Culture of the Southeast," 681; these were also called flaps or aprons.

skins until it resembled chamois leather was a time-consuming activity, as was weaving cloth from long, fuzzy strands of buffalo hair.<sup>80</sup> Some of the Mississippi tribes, such as the Natchez, wove their own linen-like cloth from nettle and mulberry bark.<sup>81</sup> It was a laborious process so it is no wonder that woven European cloth headed the lists of goods traded with the natives.<sup>82</sup> Woolen clothing was lighter than items made of furs and skins, easier to drape and to dry when wet.<sup>83</sup> It was used, however, in Indian fashion. Blankets of cloth replaced deerskin or buffalo furs as matchcoats. Suits presented as gifts from British officials to Indian chiefs were usually worn in ways never seen on the streets of London. A broadcloth coat might be worn over buckskin leggings, or under a bearskin. Some chiefs reserved lace hats or red suits for formal occasions such as audiences with foreign

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<sup>80</sup>For the steps involved in preparing skin, see below, 180-81.

<sup>81</sup>Pénicaut, Fleur de Lys and Calumet, 85.

<sup>82</sup>See JCIT., for example, June 3, 1718, 281.

<sup>83</sup>John Mack Faragher, Daniel Boone: The Life and Legend of An American Pioneer (NY: Henry Holt and Co., 1992), 20. Faragher makes the point that skins were uncomfortable in wet weather and stresses (perhaps overly) that by the end of the century the lifestyle of hunters of both cultures were similar, especially in their dress -- a point that may also be true of their dwellings. Deerskin moccasins were used by hunters of both races, but they were repaired with European awls.



emissaries, but others wore them every day until they fell to pieces.<sup>84</sup>

Another item soon in great demand was rum, still a novel item for most Europeans, too, in the early eighteenth century. Von Reck had to explain to prospective European immigrants to Georgia in 1734 that rum was a "kind of brandy."<sup>85</sup> By that time, it was better known to many native Americans who demanded it as a gift before serious negotiations over prices, presents, and goods began. It joined tobacco as a symbol of good intentions and for setting a congenial atmosphere for trade and diplomatic conferences. Beyond the trading and commercial sphere, however, rum was eroding the old ways, until the Indians were "corrupted by an immoderate use of our spirituous liquors."<sup>86</sup> It remained a highly sought trade commodity throughout the period.<sup>87</sup>

Perhaps what destroyed native culture more than any trade good was the catastrophic population decline resulting from contact with Old World diseases. The

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<sup>84</sup>Axtell, After Columbus, 167.

<sup>85</sup>Von Reck, "Report on Georgia," 105.

<sup>86</sup>Adair, History of the Indians, 234.

<sup>87</sup>Timothy Silver, A New Face on the Countryside: Indians, colonists, and slaves in the South Atlantic forests, 1500-1800 Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 87, for a good summary of Indian use and significance of liquor.

decline in population illuminated the failure of traditional Indian ways of dealing with newly introduced diseases and other disasters.<sup>88</sup> No more than their European counterparts did Indian medicine men or conjurers have cures, religious rituals, or medical antidotes for smallpox, measles, influenza, or yellow fever. Unfortunately, they needed such panaceas even more desperately as non-immune native Americans, isolated on their continent for centuries, were disastrously susceptible to these "new" pathogens. Traditional purging and sweating remedies -- using a sweathouse and immediately plunging into cold water -- were the complete opposite of what might have alleviated pain, suffering, and death. The European traders who bore desirable goods into the Indian villages were also carriers of these killer diseases.

### III

The appearance of the European traders in the Indian nations, as opposed to the Indians coming into the English settlements to trade, inaugurated a new, if ephemeral stage in the history of the frontier. The natives initially

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<sup>88</sup>Henry F. Dobbins, Their Numbers Became Thinned: Population Dynamics in Eastern North America (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1983); Ann F. Ramenofsky, Vectors of Death: The Archaeology of European Contact (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1987).

regarded these traders as just more strangers who could profitably be fitted into the traditional way of life. While most of the alien traders through the 1750s regarded themselves as superior in culture to their customers, they soon realized that to get the most from the Indians -- and survive too -- they had to fit into native patterns of life and trade. European traders wanted "a tractable Indian, amenable to trade" and this was the goal of colonial South Carolina and Georgia's Indian trade policy and diplomacy.<sup>89</sup>

The chain of trade and friendship as it evolved through the middle of the eighteenth century included native American, Carolina, and Georgia traders exchanging their wares both in Indian country, the few frontier towns such as Augusta, and -- though increasingly less often -- at Charles Town or Savannah. It was in Indian country that native customs and consumer demands interacted with the developing European world system and the demands of mercantile capitalism. The trade embraced numerous personnel who did not engage in a face-to-face relationship with Indians ranging from local merchants to those in the metropolis of this imperial system and farther to the factory workers in Britain who fashioned the trade goods.

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<sup>89</sup>Gary B. Nash, "The Image of the Indian in the Southern Colonial Mind," WMO 3d Ser. 29 (1972): 206, 209.

While most colonial merchants dealt primarily through counterparts in London, many also had contacts with leading import-export merchants in other cities such as Bristol and Hull. Those, in turn, were responsible for finding goods from all over the British Empire that might appeal to the native Americans in their demand for a certain type or color of cloth, or a particular sort of knife.<sup>90</sup>

While British manufacturers profited from this network, they did not depend on the American Indian trade as a sole or even major destination of their wares. Manufacturers geared to the export trade were usually oriented toward Asia. The directives of the East Indian Company featured more prominently in manufacturers' decisions regarding the kinds of cloth to be produced. Still, the cloth industry of the English West Country and of Yorkshire remained important sources for American import merchants who found avid and demanding consumers in the native Americans.<sup>91</sup> Strouds, superfines, and duffels -- all West Country cloth varieties -- always comprised a

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<sup>90</sup>These merchants and manufacturers were not entered into the database. They were, however, vital links in the trans-Atlantic chain of trade.

<sup>91</sup>See Herbert Heaton, The Yorkshire Woollen and Worsted Industries from Earliest Times Up to the Industrial Revolution 2d Edition. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), is especially good at explaining the different types of cloth, 145, 261; J. De L. Mann, The Cloth Industry of the West of England from 1640 to 1880. (1971; reprint, The Guernsey Press: Guernsey, 1987).

large part of a cargo of goods or of presents for distribution to allied American Indians.<sup>92</sup> The manufacturers of these cloths marketed their wares mostly through London; however, some of the trade also flowed to colonial merchants in a more direct way through Hull and Bristol merchants.<sup>93</sup> Exporters were involved in many ventures and very few British firms were engaged only in mainland American trade, let alone just with the southern colonies.<sup>94</sup>

Skins imported into Europe were manufactured into a great variety of goods. Some were turned into fine soft

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<sup>92</sup>For example, even in 1754, a list of presents to the Chickasaws included guns, bullets, gun flints, vermilion, 5 pieces of striped "duffels," 1 piece of strouds, 30 yards of "Oznabrigs," another type of cloth, and thread. February 8, 1754, JCHA 1754, 372. Osnaburgs were the chief low grade cloth, at first imported from Holland; see Charles Wilson, Anglo-Dutch Commerce and Finance in the Eighteenth Century Cambridge Studies in Economic History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1941), 47.

<sup>93</sup>Heaton, Cloth Industry of the West of England, 9-10, 48, 50. "Strouds," named after the four valleys comprising the Stroudwater area in Gloucestershire, came in bright colors, such as scarlet and a brilliant blue, that were much appreciated by the Indians. Hence these cloths were also sometimes called scarlets and brilliants, as opposed to "plains."

<sup>94</sup>W. E. Minchinton has pointed out that the primary area of consumption for British goods remained Europe, although the volume of trade with the American market overall rose from 15% of all imports in 1700 to 25% by 1760. In W. E. Minchinton, ed. The Growth of English Overseas Trade in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries Debates in Economic History. (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1969), 30, 32.

leather, comparable to chamois or kid, and used for book covers, gloves, and ladies' shoes. Others were used for chair coverings and saddles.<sup>95</sup> Deerskin was tough but malleable, could easily be made waterproof and thus be fashioned into buckets and wine containers.<sup>96</sup> Some early machines on both continents were driven by belts made of leather, often from deerskin. Buckskin was the denim of the period, turned into durable breeches for the British workingmen, some of whom manufactured goods that wound their way across the Atlantic to the native Americans.<sup>97</sup>

The few surviving records of South Carolina merchants involved in the import-export trade, such as Robert Pringle and Henry Laurens, reflect the role the deerskin trade played among their trans-Atlantic ventures. By the mid-eighteenth century, no Carolina merchant specialized exclusively in this trade, but it remained one of the most lucrative branches if losing its earlier prominence to rice and indigo. Charles Town and Savannah merchants were not

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<sup>95</sup>In North America, the colonists, too, found uses over and beyond venison: deer tallow was used for soap and candles, as well as in clothing. Tanner, Deer of North America, 16.

<sup>96</sup>Paul Chrisler Phillips, The Fur Trade (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), 1: 162, for skins in demand as manufactured leather; John W. Waterer, Leather and Craftsmanship (London: Faber & Faber, Ltd., 1950), plates 5A, 13, 14. I am indebted to Dr. James Whittenburg for the insight that skins were the plastic of the times.

<sup>97</sup>Braund, Deerskin and Duffels, 88-89.

specialists and imported a great variety of items, especially dry goods of all kinds. Exporting deerskins was a seasonal enterprise; however, ships never left American shores filled only with skins. Merchants up and down the Atlantic coast played the commodities game, trying to match European and West Indian demand for items -- also seasonal -- with the wares they had at their disposal and the destinations of the ships in harbor. Some merchants owned their own ships, often in partnership with others. They still, however, needed to use any vessels that put into their port whose destination promised sales. One of the most vital pieces of information that colonial merchants found in the local newspapers, such as the South-Carolina Gazette, was the listing of ships in port and their ultimate destination.<sup>98</sup> No wonder that merchants developed close ties with their peers in other parts of the world and acted as each other's agents. They constantly wrote to each other, even when not engaged in a venture, to keep the others abreast of prices of goods and what items were or were not likely to sell in their communities and hinterland.

Unfortunately, few account books and other personal records belonging to pre-1750 South Carolina and Georgia

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<sup>98</sup>See Ian K. Steele, The English Atlantic 1675-1740: An Exploration of Communication and Community (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 164-65, chaps. 11, 13.

merchants have survived. This was the result of a later troubled political history and wars coupled with the misfortunes associated with hurricanes, fires, and other disasters. Merchant Robert Pringle's letter books for the period 1737 to 1745 showed his contacts with relatives and business associates all over the world. He recorded his own personal losses in the devastating fire that burned much of Charles Town in November 1740.<sup>99</sup> It "Lay'd to Ashes Two Thirds of the Town & much the most valuable & Tradeing part thereof, about Three Hundred Dwelling Houses . . . besides a great number of Storehouses, some of the Wharfs, and an Immense Quantity of Goods & Merchandize only being Computed at Two Hundred Thousand Pounds Sterling besides the Buildings & household furniture." Pringle's own home which also functioned as his trading establishment was destroyed but he was luckier than many others, for "I have sav'd all my Book of Accounts, Papers, what Little Plate we had, & wearing apparell."<sup>100</sup> Such disasters were devastating not only personally but professionally to business firms whose records had gone up in smoke.

Pringle usually functioned as an independent trader,

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<sup>99</sup>Walter B. Edgar, ed. The Letterbook of Robert Pringle 1737-1745. 2 Vols. (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1972).

<sup>100</sup>Pringle to John Erving, CT, 29 November, 1740. Ibid 2:274-76.



although for a short while in the 1740s he engaged in some short-term partnerships.<sup>101</sup> As companies disbanded or were formed, notices were usually sent to the South-Carolina Gazette to announce that fact to creditors and debtors. On August 29, 1741, a notice declared the extension of a copartnership between Indian trade dealers Archibald McGillivray, William Sludders, George Coussins, and Jeremiah Knott to include Alexander Wood and Patrick Brown. It declared that "the said Wood and Brown is entirely dissolved and that the Co partnership continues (as formerly) in the Name of Archibald McGillivray, and Company."<sup>102</sup> It was also common to place announcements in the paper when an individual prepared to leave the colony, so that all debts owed to or by him/her could be cleared.<sup>103</sup>

Of necessity, an informal network of merchants trading from the southern colonies to the metropolis was created. The London home of those wishing to contact others in the same business was one of the coffee houses -- the Carolina

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<sup>101</sup>One was with James Reid and one with George Inglis. Ibid. 1: xviii.

<sup>102</sup>SCG, August 29, 1741.

<sup>103</sup>Pringle inserted such a notice in the SCG, November 7, 1743.

Coffee House at 25 Birchin Lane.<sup>104</sup> It was the place to find out when the next ship would sail to the southern colonies and it also functioned as a drop-off point for mail. When Robert Pringle spread the news among his counterparts in England that his brother, an ex-ship's captain had settled as a merchant in London, he stated that Andrew "will be heard of at the Carolina Coffee house."<sup>105</sup> Some colonial ventures also used it as a centralized office or clearing house. In 1717, Sir Robert Mountgomery publicized that the "Subscription Book" for his proposed colony of Azilia "will be open'd at the Carolina Coffee-House in Birchin-Lane."<sup>106</sup>

The two Pringle brothers frequently acted and traded very closely together, but theirs was by no means a formal partnership. Other members of the Pringle clan were active in trade elsewhere in the world. John Pringle belonged to

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<sup>104</sup>Bryant Lillywhite, London Coffee Houses: A Reference Book of Coffee Houses of the Seventeenth, Eighteenth, and Nineteenth Centuries (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1963), 147-49. While Lillywhite found no mention of it in the London Directories from its appearance on a 1702 list until 1748, Pringle refers to its existence in 1740.

<sup>105</sup>Pringle to Richard Thompson in London, 11 June 1740, Edgar, Pringle Letterbooks 1:214-16.

<sup>106</sup>Sir Robert Mo[u]ntgomery, Azilia: A Discourse by Sir Robert Montgomery, 1717, Projecting a Settlement in the Colony Later Known as Georgia, ed. J. Max Patrick (Athens, GA: Emory University Press, 1948), 24. Mountgomery's timing was not the best, just after the Yamasee War and before the overthrow of the proprietors when his "utopian project then faded away," Ibid., 12.

the firm of Scott, Pringle & Scott in Madeira while William Pringle was established at Antigua in the West Indies. These family ties facilitated trading relationships; however, its members all acted as independent agents.<sup>107</sup>

Andrew Pringle was among a number of South Carolina merchants, including members of the Wragg and Crockatt families, who attempted to establish themselves in trade in London. Others, such as Henry Laurens, considered that their education in trade was not complete without time spent in a London firm. Not only was this the way to learn the latest techniques and fads of trading but participants established connections that remained useful throughout their personal and professional lives. Laurens worked at the firm of James Crockatt for three years and kept up a steady stream of correspondence and business deals with that establishment after his return to Charles Town in 1747.<sup>108</sup>

On his return, Laurens traded with merchants in both London and Bristol. In 1747, he sent eight hogshead of skins to James Crockatt in London, taking care to arrange

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<sup>107</sup>For example, Robert's letter to John Pringle of 26 November 1743, exchanging prices and chatty information about the conduct of trade. Pringle Letterbooks. 2:611-12. RP to William Pringle, 10 November, 1740 1:266. Pringle received mostly wines from Madeira and rum from Antigua, in exchange for corn and rice.

<sup>108</sup>Laurens Papers, 1: xiv-xv; also 12 March, 1748, Laurens to Crockatt about a of cargo skins, 1:118-20.

for £400 sterling's worth of insurance for them. He was acting in that instance as a partner of his brother-in-law, James Braemar, and dealt with the company where he had honed his profession in London.<sup>109</sup> He sent skins to James Cowles in Bristol, shipping him a cargo in 1755 that he described as "so-so" for the skins had been overly trimmed.<sup>110</sup> In the same letter, he reported the death of Patrick Brown, the leading Augusta storekeeper and trader, expressing the hope that any subsequent disruptions of the Indian trade in that location could be turned to Laurens' and his associates' advantage.<sup>111</sup> Brown, it seemed, had been trading mostly through a Mr. Rock, also of Bristol. Charles Town merchant John Guerard's few surviving records also reflected dealings with Thomas Rock of Bristol, a merchant and owner of the Snow, Carolina, registered at that port.<sup>112</sup>

By the early 1750s, therefore, skins from the Creeks flowed from the forests of the South through various layers

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<sup>109</sup>Laurens to James Crockatt. 29 July, 1747, Ibid. 1: 35.

<sup>110</sup>Laurens to James Cowles, 4 July, 1755, "Correspondence of Henry Laurens," SCHM 28 (1927): 158-59.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid., 159; for Brown, see Chap 3 and 7 below.

<sup>112</sup>Guerard to Thomas Rock, 2 April 1752, John Guerard Letterbook, MS, SC Historical Society, Charleston, 9-10, 142. A "snow" was a type of ship commonly used in the cross-Atlantic and coastal trade at this time.

of British traders to the entrepôt of Augusta, from there down the Savannah River or across the Savannah and along overland trails along the coast to Charles Town. At the port, agents for the traders, unless they were indebted to a leading mercantile firm, such as the Eveleigh family, John Guerard, or others, inspected the skins, tallied the amounts they owed for them after subtracting the costs of any goods given on consignment to traders. The merchants then stored the skins until a ship could take them to the mother country, where another whole series of accounting and promissory notes took place.

Robert Pringle was perhaps unusual in trading actively through Hull in the north of England as well as the more usual ports of London and Bristol. He, no doubt, did so initially to tap into both Yorkshire woolens and the products of the iron industry of Sheffield.<sup>113</sup> Pringle dealt with several merchants there, including one of the most prominent, William Welfitt.<sup>114</sup> Welfitt, a leading tobacco dealer, had visited Charles Town in 1739 to

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<sup>113</sup>Gordon Jackson, Hull in the Eighteenth Century: A Study in Economic and Social History (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), 11-18. It was the leading shipping point for Sheffield until Liverpool seized control of the American trade later in the century.

<sup>114</sup>Ibid., 38-39, 105. Welfitt was also a leading tobacco merchant. Deerskins did not rate a mention in Jackson's Appendix 2, 353-54, listing the major American imports into Hull. Pringle's other contacts there were Thomas Burrill and Richard Thompson.

investigate the feasibility of trading tobacco through that port. Later, Pringle had to reaffirm in a letter to Wellfitt that the tobacco trade "Cannot be Done here."<sup>115</sup> The Hull trade consisted mostly of Carolina rice in exchange for "blue plains & Strouds & Strip'd Duffell Blanketting if to be had Good & Reasonable . . . for the Indian Trade."<sup>116</sup>

These letter books also reflected the uncertainties of trans-Atlantic trading. In a 1752 letter to a supplier in London, Guerard complained that the latter had sent him "what I did not write for, instead of white Chintz sent collour'd" and other materials he had not requested. He believed that "People often do these things & pretend mistakes to get off their hands what is not current & vendable" in Britain.<sup>117</sup> Other problems were the result of the American weather. Accounts of "Sundrys" for the Indian trade put on a boat in Savannah for delivery to Patrick Brown's Company at Augusta in 1750 contained the captain's promise of safe delivery "the Danger of the River only Excepted."<sup>118</sup> In July 1752, Guerard was attempting

<sup>115</sup>Pringle to Wellfitt, 12 June, 1739, Pringle Letterbook, 1:287.

<sup>116</sup>Pringle to Richard Thompson, 11 June, 1740, Ibid. 1: 218.

<sup>117</sup>Guerard to William Jolliff, 6 June, 1752, Guerard Letterbook, 27.

<sup>118</sup>Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Bevan Papers, MSS, Item 23, "Account of Sundrys, 1750."

to assemble a cargo at a time when rice was scarce and expensive. He had already shipped one parcel of skins but was having difficulty because the Savannah River was "extreemly low & renderd impassable by an excessive drought."<sup>119</sup> In July of the following year, one of Guerard's problems was again putting together a vendable cargo because it was too early to acquire skins from what he called the Indian Trading Company, meaning the Augusta Company, for "they seldom have any ready to ship Sooner than august & to wait for them the Vessel would in the meantime get more damage by the Worm than the value of the freight would amount to."<sup>120</sup> When the ship eventually left, it contained a mixed cargo of rice, pitch, skins, cotton, pine boards, and staves. Guerard had deliberately omitted one item requested by Bristol merchant Rock, namely turpentine, to make room for the deerskins, "which I apprehend will be more for your Advantage." Merchants acted with considerable leeway in assembling cargoes for their English counterparts, stressing the need for dealing with an honest and trustworthy yet enterprizing individual who seizing opportunities to maximize profits for both

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<sup>119</sup>Guerard to Rock, 18 July, 1752, Guerard Letterbook, 43. He did not managed to get the skins before the ship left.

<sup>120</sup>Ibid., Guerard to Rock, 25 July, 1753, 142. The toredo worm ate the wooden hulls of ships in southern salt-water harbors in summer; Steele, The English Atlantic, 34.

dealers. Guerard even delayed the shipment to wait for a second load of skins from Augusta.<sup>121</sup>

Pringle had his share of similar problems. He complained regularly to his correspondents about the quality, type, and price of goods received. He wrote to a dealer in London in 1739 that he thought "everything is very high Charg'd especially the Indian Trading Guns are the highest price of any I ever Knew Imported here."<sup>122</sup> His Hull contacts sent him goods that were not seasonable for South Carolina, including a cargo mostly of "Woolens & Shott" which had come too late in the year to sell, "Winter being now Past & our hot Weather approaching."<sup>123</sup> Because he would have to put them in storage, he had no cash on hand "to Purchase Capt. Wards Cargoe, But must be obliged to Draw Bills of Exchange on you for the whole Cargoe."<sup>124</sup> Henry Laurens encountered similar challenges. Some tobacco and snuff had been consigned to him in June 1747 and had arrived "to a very bad Markett, the Town being Gluttred with

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<sup>121</sup>Guerard Letterbook, Guerard to Rock, 20 and 30 July 1753, 159, 161. The skins had come down in time.

<sup>122</sup>Pringle to Thomas Williams, 19 March, 1739, Pringle Letterbook, 1:77.

<sup>123</sup>Pringle to William Cookson & Wellfitt, 17 February 1742, Ibid., 1:325.

<sup>124</sup>Ibid.



the former & very little demand for the Latter."<sup>125</sup>

Such letters were much more than fault finding or attempts to get reparations for a poor cargo or one ruined by saltwater. They were also a means of establishing one's reputation for a keen eye for wares and an attempt at a more harmonious relationship in future. The personal touch was also essential. Pringle delighted in sending gifts to his friends and colleagues in other cities. John Erving in Boston was the recipient of "Two Red Birds" for his wife, although Pringle apologized that he had failed to find a turtle to send them the same time.<sup>126</sup>

Merchants were constantly doing favors for each other, such as attempting to trace debtors and sending messages farther on their way.<sup>127</sup> Leading merchants were part of a network that reported liars and cheats to its members. In an age of little cash and a proliferation of bills of exchange and letters of credit, trust was essential, for

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<sup>125</sup>Laurens to Richard Grubb, June 24, 1747, Laurens Papers 1:8

<sup>126</sup>Pringle to John Erving, 2 June, 1744, Pringle Letterbook, 2:705. Turtles were his favorite gift to send to his friends and relatives elsewhere -- Andrew often received them, as in June, 1743, Ibid., 2:562.

<sup>127</sup>Pringle to Samuel Travers in London, October 22, 1739. Pringle had sent a letter to a Seth Pilkington of Bath, NC for Travers, although "the Gentleman is a Stranger to me." He continued that he would "always esteem it a very Singular favour to have the Pleasure or rendering you any agreeable Service here." Ibid., 1:148.

ultimate success depended on a reputation for reliability and a sense of community with others. Pringle often attempted to trace people for merchants in Britain, and news that a merchant was reneging on a payment would withdraw all sources of credit from Charles Town to Boston to London and Hull.<sup>128</sup>

#### IV

To eighteenth-century Europeans, the path of deerskins to their European destinations and the return journey of manufactured goods to the Indian nations seemed to represent a journey from a "wilderness" through a variety of increasingly sophisticated middlemen to the mother country. London was at the hub of their world representing "civilized" customs, religion, and consumer goods, and it was an Englishman's duty to change the lowly ways of the "savages." What actually happened, of course, is that both cultures changed profoundly as a result of contact.

What is perhaps surprising is how similar most of the face-to-face trading relationships were at every point in the system of exchange. The basic motivation for trade was

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<sup>128</sup>Pringle to Welfitt, 15 March, 1742, about a Thomas Doughty who owed money to Welfitt. Pringle asked for details so that he could "Recover the money of him if Possible & Oblidge him to Pay it." *Ibid.*, 1:339.

the same wherever a transaction occurred: to exchange a commodity and receive something perceived as more valuable in spiritual and/or commercial sense in return. All these contacts, whatever their location, depended on age-old customs and protocols that attempted to ensure a peaceful and fair trading atmosphere. Individuals had to fit into an existing network in order to prosper in whichever environment they chose to offer their wares to others. Contacts between trans-Atlantic traders depended on exchanging information and on mutual cooperation and trust. Relationships between individual Indians or between natives and newcomers depended on the same elements of mutual trust and confidence. This was as true for Pringle's contacts with William Welfitt of Hull as it was for trader Robert Bunning's dealings with Cherokee chief Old Hop in his village, with the added difficulty that the traders in Indian villages had to master the lore and language of native American tradeways.

## CHAPTER 3

### "Obscure Indian Traders and Packhorsemen"

From its beginnings, trade with the Indians in the South was and remained one of the most lucrative businesses an individual could enter. The participants developed their own hierarchy and networks to keep trade flowing as easily and profitably as possible. Mutual cooperation and aid was essential between politicians, traders, merchants, and servants of all kinds, as well as with influential native Americans with their own network of exchange and diplomacy.

The well-being and survival of the group depended on the actions of every individual, whatever his (or, in rare cases, her) personal background, biases, and connections based on nationality or social status. Many found the trade an avenue to social mobility and respectability, but others began as servants and remained so throughout their lives. The vast sums of money involved in the trade explained why so many risked life and limb for a chance of success which usually outweighed personal fears. Some, like many French coureurs de bois in Canada, were only

fleetingly engaged in the trade and retired with nest eggs to safer occupations in the developing communities of the colonies.

All sorts of people entered the trade: sons of merchant families; freed indentured servants; bonded prisoners sent as soldiers to frontier garrisons especially after the failed Jacobite Rebellion of 1715; sons of traders, especially those born to Indian women. In the early years of the colony, it was one of the obvious career choices for enterprising youngsters. Those with a little capital could invest it in cargoes, but those with few or no resources received goods on credit from Charles Town (later also Savannah) merchants who were willing to risk their capital for the prospect of the huge profits of the trade. Some were part-timers, trading only periodically and incidentally because their plantation, small tavern, or store lay close to one of the major Indian trading paths or an important ferry.

The phrase "Indian trader" was used loosely by contemporaries to describe all those of any race or sex engaged in an exchange relationship with the Indians, especially in the Indian villages. It was most commonly reserved for the storekeepers or other individuals hired for the constant work among the Indians, and rarely used for the prominent merchants based at Charles Town or

Savannah who were involved in the trade. By the second quarter of the eighteenth century, contemporaries recognized that the European side of the business had its own hierarchy and other terms were used to designate certain categories of work within it and also to show the level of importance and influence an individual had within his profession. "Interpreters" could come from any nation or rank of society and possess any level of competence and literacy. A "storekeeper" at the major entrepôts of the trade such as New Windsor or Augusta might be a member of an affluent company, a factor of a merchant from Charles Town or Savannah, or a minor employee of an independent trader who was not much wealthier than the employee himself. A few individuals managed to progress through the ranks and to retire with enough money to establish a dynastic line of planters or traders; however, most of the hundreds of individuals involved in the trade did not. Many -- perhaps most -- retired as small planters whose involvement in the trade disappeared as the frontier moved westward and the economic and diplomatic importance of the Indians and their trade waned.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>I have tracked the 1670-1755 participants on a database compiled from official records, wills and probate records, court records, SCG, etc. The surviving records are not complete enough to give a definitive quantified result but do give one a feel for the kinds of persons who entered the trade and were prominent in it. I only included merchants who actually took out licenses for

## I

Most of the traders who managed to retire with more than a pittance were those labelled "master traders" by their contemporaries. Carolinians and Georgians, whether engaged in the trade or not, recognized the importance of these men to the colony's Indian relations. By the late 1720s "master trader" was used to designate a man who had personal experience of living in Indian country, who had enough money or connections to have access to large quantities of the best quality and most suitable Indian trade goods. He also possessed ties among the allied Indian nations that usually ensured respect for his goods, person, and servants. A master trader was in contact with influential persons in both cultures and was recognized in turn by both sides as "a most useful person."<sup>2</sup> Governors, the Assembly, and merchants listened to the information that men such as Ludovic Grant and James Beamer sent down from their trading posts, trusting their intimate knowledge

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themselves or their subordinates.

<sup>2</sup>For example, Governor James Glen's description of Cherokee trader Robert Kelly on hearing of his 1749 death at the hands of French-allied Indians. BPRO 23:451.

of the peoples and diplomacy of the region and their understanding of any possible repercussions from dangerous incidents provoked by either natives or whites. Governor James Glen might castigate traders in general as rogues but he was the first to commend those who could cut through the tangle of frontier rumor and panic to give a clear assessment of any potentially disruptive situation. The ability to treat in a fair manner without getting Indians or themselves too entangled in a web of debts was another characteristic of most if not all of the longer-lived traders.

Most of the master traders surpassed the lesser ones in amassing and reinvesting money until they could, given luck, become merchants or leading storekeepers themselves. Their probate inventories were among the most complex because they were involved in many economic ventures. By the mid-1750s, their slaveholdings were among the largest. They possessed luxuries such as mahogany furniture, books, fine clothing, and articles of silver.<sup>3</sup>

Those who survived the cut-throat competition of Charles Town and the Indian nations for twenty or more years could hope to leave at least a small fortune to their

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<sup>3</sup>CT Will Inventories Book X (1765-1769): 250-52. Francis Roche died possessing all of the above as well as a backgammon table. His estate totalled £18,220.9.6 SC currency in January, 1768.



heirs. When master trader John McQueen's estate named "Welldone" was inventoried in 1764, he not only owned slaves but at least one other plantation plus property at both Charles Town and Savannah. He was involved in three companies. One of the notes he held was for over five thousand pounds in South Carolina currency.<sup>4</sup> Lachlan McGillivray's career indicated that an impoverished Highlander could make a fortune in the Indian trade. Aided by his Scottish and Indian kin and connections, he rose through the ranks from packhorseman to fame and fortune and a place on the King's Council for Georgia.<sup>5</sup>

A few of the most prominent and wealthiest traders were to lose their lives in the trade. Some of these, such as George Haig in 1748 and Yamasee trader Matthew Smallwood twenty years earlier, were clearly victims through no fault of their own. They were both killed by war parties of Spanish- or French-allied Indians.<sup>6</sup> Others, recognizing the physical dangers but having a relatively large initial

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., Book W (1763-37): 159-67. He held five bonds or notes that passed as the exchange media for specie was scarce in the colony.

<sup>5</sup>For McGillivray's extraordinary career, see Edward J. Cashin, Lachlan McGillivray, Indian Trader: The Shaping of the Southern Indian Frontier (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1992). Cashin's book is refreshing in its examination of both the Scottish and American roots of this extraordinary person.

<sup>6</sup>See below, chaps. 5 and 7.

capital, went into the trade intending to make their fortunes quickly and then get out to invest their spoils in the more lucrative and safer environments of Charles Town or Savannah. These men, such as members of the Huguenot Roche family, soon became more involved in the merchandising end of the trade, although Jordan Roche had spent part of his youth as a factor among the Chickasaws. He progressed to master trader (with a special interest in opening the Choctaw trade) and then to merchant, slaveholder, and member of the Commons House of Assembly who often served as a member of the committee for Indian Affairs.<sup>7</sup> After his death in 1752, his widow was sued by both Governor Glen for £1,700 currency and by merchant James Crockatt for the huge sum of £2,000 sterling.<sup>8</sup>

The master traders maintained a close correspondence with the officials of their provinces and others. Lachlan McGillivray and George Galphin in the Creek trade kept up a long-lasting informational communication with Governor Glen of South Carolina, although they were licensed and traded

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<sup>7</sup>Crane, Southern Frontier, 274; Member of the Indian committee in May, 1741, JCHA 1741-42.

<sup>8</sup>Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, 196; SC Judgment Roll, Court of Common Pleas, [JR-CCP] 1752 Bx 33A No. 62A, SC-Ar. His widow, Rebecca, had been a member of the influential Brewton merchant family before her marriage.

mostly within Georgia.<sup>9</sup> Traders and officials realized that peace and tranquility on the frontier did not depend on one colony alone. Every individual in the interior needed to keep in close contact with each other to keep track of their common problems.

One of the distinguishing characteristics of master traders was that they did not function as lone individuals. The names of the outstanding traders are always found in conjunction with others. The mechanics of the trade developed through individuals forming and recreating different companies for different ventures.<sup>10</sup> This trend evolved by the late 1740s into more long-lasting connections, some of which were so established that outsiders protested any perceived special favors they received from South Carolina or Georgia's governments. James Adair's charge that Governor Glen was surreptitiously involved in the "Sphinx Company," a secret partnership with other traders aiming to seize control of the Choctaw trade in the 1740s, reflected the normal way trade was conducted on the frontier.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>For example see McGillivray's letter to Glen dated April 14, 1754, McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-1754, 501-02. He was informing Glen of "the present State of this Nation" even when there was no real news to impart.

<sup>10</sup>See above 78.

<sup>11</sup>See below, 323.

These larger companies were at times suspected of hindering South Carolina and Georgia officials in the execution of their duties in the nations in order to maintain their near monopoly. Thomas Bosomworth, employed by South Carolina as agent to the Creeks in 1752, reported back to the authorities that the dominant organization among the Creeks was "the powerful Company at Augusta [which] seems to look upon the whole Trade of the Creek nation as their undoubted Right." It was undermining Bosomworth's authority and "as the greatest Part of the Traders in that Nation are under their Influences and Authority and obliged implicitly to obey the Dictates of their Masters," Bosomworth encountered widespread resistance whenever he tried to exercise his authority. The company's leading figure, Patrick Brown, and his associates, "too often let their private Passions into their clandestine Information, and work their particular Spite and Malice against the Person they are sett to destroy."<sup>12</sup>

The individuals who first worked together to control the Creek trade were Patrick Brown, Kennedy O'Brien,

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<sup>12</sup>Appendix to Bosomworth's Journal, November 1752, Indian Affairs 1750-1754, 329-30.

Alexander Wood, and Francis Corbin.<sup>13</sup> About 1740, Northern Irish immigrant Patrick Brown had moved away from the forks of the Congaree river, the Catawba trade's center controlled by his brother Thomas and his friends.<sup>14</sup> Patrick realized that the Catawba trade was declining along with the population of that tribe and that if he wished to make his own fortune, he needed to venture farther inland. In light of Thomas Brown's increasing debts, this was a wise decision. Patrick settled at Augusta and by 1743 was already the most important storekeeper and landowner there. His 1749 petition for land south of Augusta was approved by Georgia's authorities, with his bond easily accepted for he had already "acquired a handsome Fortune by the trade."<sup>15</sup> He held various partnerships with other leading traders, Alexander Wood, John Rae, George Galphin, William Sludders, George Cussins, Jeremiah Knott, John Pettigrew, Isaac Barksdale, Daniel Clark, and Lachlan McGillivray. Outsiders called these men the "Augusta Company." Brown was probably the dominant member of this band of associates

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<sup>13</sup>See Kathryn E. Holland Braund, "Mutual Convenience - Mutual Dependence: the Creeks, Augusta, and the Deerskin Trade, 1733-1783," Ph.D. Diss., Florida State University, 1986, 37-38. O'Brien, possibly Augusta's first trader, (as opposed to Savano Town/ New Windsor) left the trade in 1741; Braund, Deerskin and Duffels, 42-43. His name is also given as O'Brian, O'Bryen etc.

<sup>14</sup>Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, 53.

<sup>15</sup>October 1749, CRG 6:225.

until his death in 1755.<sup>16</sup> Each of these individuals was a master trader with his own employees in the various Creek towns.<sup>17</sup>

Similar to the Augusta Company, an informal network of leading Cherokee traders worked together from the 1720s in such a way as to merit the designation "the Cherokee Company." At several times a partnership existed under that very name. James Beamer was one of the leaders in this group of master traders among the Lower and Middle Cherokees, along with Samuel Brown, Daniel Hunt, John Barker, William Hatton, Gregory Haines, Jacob Morris, Cornelius Dougherty, Hugh Gordon, and Lachlan McBean. In 1732, Beamer sold his co-partnership to Colonel John Fenwicke as a means of settling the debts he owed merchants Fenwicke and Joseph Wragg of Charles Town.<sup>18</sup> The Cherokee traders were not as affluent or politically influential as the Augusta Company, nor did they a group manage to amass as much money. Many were constantly sued for debts and could go the Charles Town while undertaking a mission for the colony only if the governor gave them immunity from arrest for debt. On June 18, 1748, Beamer was put under

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<sup>16</sup>Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, 191; Braund, Deerskin and Duffels, 43-46.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., Chapter 2.

<sup>18</sup>Records of the Secretary of the Province, WPA transcripts, SC-Ar, vol. 64 (1731-1733): 253, 262.

the protection of the House for fifteen days so that he could act as interpreter to a party of Cherokees who were visiting Charles Town.<sup>19</sup> Beamer himself had not made a fortune in the trade. In July 1753, when Glen addressed Cherokee demands for better prices, indeed parity with the prices the Creeks received, he referred to their friend, James Beamer, as one who "went very young into your Country to settle as a Trader. Now he is grey headed and yet in Debt."<sup>20</sup> It was Beamer's influence and knowledge more than his wealth that placed him among the ranks of the master traders.

Cornelius Dougherty was another trader whose influence gave him the status of master trader as he made his mark on the frontier. According to the lore of early frontier historians, he was around 120 years old when he died in 1788. He was certainly very old indeed, for he had been active in the Cherokee trade as early as 1719 according to his own 1751 account. Perhaps the "Doherty" from Virginia who had traded among the Cherokees from 1690 was his father.<sup>21</sup> Dougherty became an important trader at

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<sup>19</sup>JCHA 1748, 327.

<sup>20</sup>Glen to Upper and Lower Cherokees, July 5, 1753. McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-1754, 442.

<sup>21</sup>J. G. M. Ramsey, Annals of Tennessee (Charleston: John Russell, 1853), 63; McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-54, 112, 115; according to Baldwin, First Settlers, 73, a Philip Dougherty arrived before 1700. No doubt Cornelius's

Hiwassie where his opinions on Cherokee-Carolina relations were respected by both cultures: his Indian wife ensured him a respected niche in Indian society, and Governor Glen referred to him as "always a willing Composer of Differences."<sup>22</sup> Although illiterate, he frequently acted as interpreter and often visited Charles Town as an official escort with bands of Cherokees.<sup>23</sup> Unfortunately, prominence did not assure business success and by the 1750s, although he owned black slaves and some of his business ventures involved thousands of pounds in currency, he was often in debt.<sup>24</sup> In May 1758 another Cherokee trader, Robert Gowdie sued him for repayment of a debt of £10,407.18.2.<sup>25</sup>

Master traders such as Beamer and Dougherty played important roles as mediators between the two cultures. With his Cherokee wife and offspring, Beamer was accepted as a reliable mediator by the Cherokees who brought their

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illiteracy was a contributing factor to the various spellings of his name: Douty, D'Hartie, Docherty, Doharty, Dogherty, Dorothy, etc.

<sup>22</sup>McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-54, 449.

<sup>23</sup>In November 1751 he was to interpret for and assist ninety Indians. JCHA 1751-52, 119. He was far from being the only illiterate master trader.

<sup>24</sup>McDowell, Indian Affairs 1754-1765, 330.

<sup>25</sup>JR-CCP 1758, Bx 45B No. 56A. Gowdie also got £100 damages.



problems involving other whites to him, such as complaints about squatters on their lands above Long Cane Creek in 1756.<sup>26</sup> Beamer also relayed to the governor Cherokee complaints about other traders such as Gowdie, who only dealt with the Indians when they were bringing deerskins back from the hunt. Gowdie managed to acquire their best skins when they were desperate for manufactured items, ammunition, and cloth but he ignored them with their growing and continuous need for European goods during the rest of the year.<sup>27</sup>

Governors and other officials actively sought the advice of master traders about events in their parts of the world. Beamer was summoned before Glen in 1753 to inform the governor about the rumors of Cherokee "Dissatisfaction or Disorder." In this instance, Beamer was the spokesman for all the Cherokee traders. He reassured Glen that all was currently peaceful in the nation, despite Virginia's attempts to increase its trade with the Cherokees and the continued and increasing threat from the French and their native allies. Beamer also used this opportunity to plead for forts among both the Lower and Upper Cherokees, something headmen and traders alike believed would safeguard the trade by giving Indians and traders a secure

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<sup>26</sup>McDowell, Indian Affairs 1754-65, xiii.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., Beamer to Glen, September 22, 1754, 8-9.

place of refuge in times of trouble.<sup>28</sup> Beamer also warned Glen of the dangers inherent in letting too many unsupervised lesser traders into the nation. These were the "white Men, who under the Notion of Traders, live a debauched and wicked Life, and have Nothing to do, and for Want of Subsistence become a Burthen to the Cherokee Indians."<sup>29</sup>

Most traders probably fell into a middling category, not making much of a fortune or reputation for good or evil.<sup>30</sup> Cherokee trader James Adair was one of the middle-ranked traders whose aim of amassing a fortune in the business was not fulfilled. His distinguishing characteristic, however, was his ability to pick up the pieces of a ruined reputation and lack of business success to try yet another avenue. He had been a Catawba and Chickasaw trader before venturing into the even riskier Choctaw trade, and he finally settled down among the Cherokees.<sup>31</sup> When all these failed, he wrote his

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<sup>28</sup>McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-54, 446-47.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., 447.

<sup>30</sup>It is almost impossible to quantify the different ranks in the trade; not only are the financial records incomplete, but status also depended on intangible factors such as respect. The personnel also slipped in and out of these blanket categories, but there were probably twenty master traders among the Creeks and Cherokees at one time.

<sup>31</sup>For his impact on the Choctaw trade and revolt, see below, 319-20.

influential book, The History of the American Indians, published in 1775, partly to vindicate his past conduct, partly to castigate Governor Glen for his attempt to monopolize the Choctaw trade, and partly to make some money while presenting his first-hand evidence to support the theory that the Indians were the descendants of the lost tribes of Israel.<sup>32</sup>

It is impossible to evaluate the middle and lower ranks of traders categorically, for the evidence is too patchy. It is clear that economic success, social status, and respect were as important in delineating lesser traders from middling-ranked ones, as it was for classifying master traders. Respect and friendship between Indians and Europeans did not depend solely on wealth. Everyone who participated in the trade over a long period might not amass a fortune, but their survival and contentment with their way of life required acceptance by Indians and by colonial authorities. Some might progress from a servant to a middling trader, and loss of a cargo could mean ruin and a return to a lower rank. To remain safely and comfortably in their villages, secure in the knowledge that their licenses would be renewed, traders had to post bonds, obey colonial regulations, as well as follow native

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<sup>32</sup>James Adair, History of the American Indians, [1775] ed. Samuel Cole Williams (New York: Promontory Press, 1986).

conventions and customs. One of the changes evident by the mid-1750s was the increasing numbers of whites swarming into what Glen called the "Back Parts" of the "Woods," those squatters and "strowing white people" did not play the game according to the rules established between the different cultures over the previous half-century and more. These included beaver hunters who had no vested interest in seeking the goodwill of the natives.<sup>33</sup>

Some middling traders combined settling on the frontier with trade, especially after the late 1730s. Two of these men from the Congaree area were Herman Geiger, a recent German immigrant, and George Haig. Geiger's inventory of goods reflected his combination of planting and trading. He owned cattle and horses, a grindstone, scales and weights, a fully-equipped trading boat, twenty-one wagons, and tackling for eight horses. He also owned slaves.<sup>34</sup> Haig's October 1749 probate inventory captured the possessions of a man killed in his prime, one combining the roles of trader and frontier planter. The trading paraphernalia included an old brass scale with lead weights and ten horses, fifteen packhorses, forty-four mares and colts. Other items listed were sheep and hogs, five

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<sup>33</sup>McDowell, Indian Affairs, 306, 533.

<sup>34</sup>CT Will Inventories Book R (1) (1751-53): 107-09. One slave named William Smith, was worth £380.

chamber pots, sixteen old law and history books, forty-two gallons of rum, and an old silver-hilted sword. The estate was valued at just over £4,000.<sup>35</sup>

One of the distinguishing features that delineated a medium-ranked from a lesser trader was the number of white employees or black slaves he employed. The lesser ones who traded on their own or for others also needed aid but received that mostly from their Indian clients. George Stevens whose scalped and disemboweled body was discovered near the Cherokee town of Great Telliquo in February 1735, had left his "People" and packhorse train to search for a missing pack of bullets.<sup>36</sup> Other traders were suspected of a hand in his murder, for he was influential among the Indians and had been involved in a dispute over the ownership of some beaver skins.<sup>37</sup>

Many of the lesser traders were almost indistinguishable from the traders' servants and slaves in the way of life they maintained in the nations.<sup>38</sup> While

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., Book B (1748-1751): 174-76, dated October 30, 1749. See below 333-35, for the circumstances surrounding his death.

<sup>36</sup>SCG, April 5, 1735.

<sup>37</sup>This incident was still under investigation in 1738. JCHA, February 1734 RSUS Alb/4/2, 116; Alb/4/3, 181; CJ June 5, 1735 RSUS Ala/2/2, 139; JCHA 1737, 388, 449.

<sup>38</sup>Faragher, Daniel Boone, 20-22. His controversial argument is that by the end of the eighteenth century, it was even hard to distinguish between whites and Indians as

there were huge profits to be made in the trade, many of the lesser traders died possessing little of real value. Some such as Alexander Long (known as Sawney to the Indians) were well-known for their many years among the Indians, their language skills, and their previous infamy.<sup>39</sup> Long had been a trader among the Indians since at least 1711, first among the Yuchis and later among the Cherokees. During the 1720s he had written a journal and a "Small Postscript" that he believed would be of interest and value to the colonial government in understanding native Americans, so he petitioned the Assembly for funds to take it to London. This request was rejected, for although his knowledge of Cherokee life was large, the Assembly decided that he had no new insights to offer "even if they could be depended on."<sup>40</sup> His past history was the major stumbling block that prevented this literate trader from entering the ranks of the respected and wealthy. No doubt his years in exile among the Cherokees and later possibly among the French Indians, ensured that he had little chance of amassing capital. Few merchants would

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"the two economies converged" and had a "shared set of general social values."

<sup>39</sup>See below 242.

<sup>40</sup>JCHA, April 13, 1725, RSUS Ala/1/3, 299, 300, 304; JCIT., 55; A. Long, "A Small Postscript 1725," ed. David Corkran, Southern Indian Studies 21 (1969): np; JCHA 1725, 86.

risk giving him their goods on credit, so at times he worked for other traders. His will inventory, dated 16 May, 1763, recorded few possessions, the most valuable of which were his five horses. He owed nearly four hundred pounds currency, while his estate was assessed at only £106.2.6.<sup>41</sup>

Most of the 694 traders who can be traced as active from 1670 to 1755 were probably men like Long who straddled the lower levels of the trade. Two hundred and one, or 29% of the participants warranted just one reference in the sources, as did Anthony Galloher and James McNally who were mentioned in the South-Carolina Gazette in 1735 as finding and helping to bury the body of George Stevens after his violent death in Indian Country.<sup>42</sup> They may have been small traders in their own right, or "licensed men," that is, added to Stevens' license to trade for him. "James Ballensis, an Indian Trader," escaped eternal anonymity when the Gazette reported that he had "drop'd from his Horse" and died suddenly in 1733.<sup>43</sup> Another trader mentioned only once was John Cameron, who broke out of Charles Town jail on January 5, 1752. He was there "on an

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<sup>41</sup>CT Will Inventories, Book V (1761-1763): 441.

<sup>42</sup>SCG, April 5, 1735.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., August 25, 1733.

action of debt, at the suit of messrs. Stuart and Reid."<sup>44</sup>

In some instances, it is clear that the Indian trade was a family business for a lower caste of trader, especially for mixed-blood offspring. Three Broadways (sometimes Broody) were active in the trade in the 1750s, a father and two sons. William Broadway was an employee of James Francis, while his father and brother were in James Beamer's service, Edward as a packhorseman who at times acted as an interpreter.<sup>45</sup> The Welches also considered the Indian trade as their family profession and in this case they were clearly of mixed blood. Thomas Welch was a leading trader in the early Chickasaw trade who was dead by 1729.<sup>46</sup> His half-Chickasaw offspring, James, Joseph, and Thomas Jr. were all active in the trade.<sup>47</sup>

Most of those who attempted to make a living for themselves were to begin and end their career as "hirelings," usually functioning as packhorsemen. Some could not even be counted as servants, either free or

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<sup>44</sup>SCG, January 8, 1752

<sup>45</sup>CJ, RSUS E1p/5/2, 62, 76; McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-1754, 51.

<sup>46</sup>SC Wills, vol. 62A (1729-1731), 199; see 212.

<sup>47</sup>Records of the Public Treasurers of South Carolina, 1725-1776, Sc-Ar Microfilms M/3, Reel 1, 1727; SCG, Dec 30, 1732, account of "half-breed" Thomas' death at the hands of Choctaws; May 21, 1765, McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1754-1765, 548.



indentured, but were slaves -- a term encompassing both blacks and native Americans. Most of their names have not survived in the records.

When officials and respectable traders wished to allot blame for the mishandling of the trade, they could always fault packhorsemen and other powerless individuals. In his 1755 survey of the Indian trade, its management, and its weaknesses, Edmond Atkin singled out the misbehavior of traders and their employees as the major evil. In particular, he blamed traders for "permitting and employing their Servants, even Pack horse Men, whom they have sent to and left in Towns alone, to trade with the Indians; whose Behaviour, being for the most part the most worthless of Man, is more easy to be conceived than described."<sup>48</sup> In the same fashion that Indian leaders blamed bloody incidents on the hot blood of their younger tribal members, so, too, did whites blame packhorsemen for all kinds of misdemeanors, ranging from raping native women to cheating tribes over fair trading prices. The loquacious James Glen used this convention often; in June 1748 he mentioned the great expense and other impositions made on the government by "Obscure Indian Traders and Packhorsemen" by their "lying Letters and false Reports." In the particular incident that incurred his wrath, persons "who could

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<sup>48</sup>Atkin, Report, 22

neither read nor write" had managed to spread rumors that had been costly to South Carolina.<sup>49</sup> Long before that date, packhorsemen, as the ones on the bottom of the trading structure, were an easy group for their superiors to castigate, often in an attempt to deflect criticism away from their own activities.

The work of the hirelings and servants may have been menial, but it was not easy and often required a degree of skill. Packhorsemen were in charge of the horses and of all the equipment needed to get the long caravans of goods and hides safely to and from Indian country.<sup>50</sup> By the 1740s, Archibald McGillivray and Company employed fifteen packhorsemen working under one trader to handle 103 horses.<sup>51</sup> Skilled captains such as John Coleman, possessed impressive logistical skills to direct horses and goods over flooded streams and through dense forests which often harbored enemy Indians.<sup>52</sup> All packhorsemen needed the same basic hunting and survival skills as higher-ranked participants in the trade. They were, however, at the mercy of their employers and of government officials, as

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<sup>49</sup>CJ, June 29, 1748. RSUS E1p/3/4, 345.

<sup>50</sup>According to William Byrd, it took fifteen or more persons to look after a hundred horses in Gregorie, "Seventeenth Century Trade," 15-16.

<sup>51</sup>Crane, Southern Frontier, 126.

<sup>52</sup>June 11, 1718. JCIT., 291.

well as of the Indians.

There were clearly many more packhorsemen engaged in the Indian trade than the handful whose names have survived. A petition of leading South Carolina merchants to lieutenant-governor, Thomas Broughton in 1735 stressed the importance of the trade not only in terms of the "Seventy Six or Seventy Eight Thousand Deer Skins" exported yearly, but also because it helped "the poorer sort of People there being no less than Three hundred who find constant Employment therein."<sup>53</sup> Most of the names of "hirelings" at this level have not survived. Of the known 694 participants in the Indian trade, sixty-six were referred to as packhorsemen or some other kind of servant.<sup>54</sup> Since nearly every trader of any substance needed help with the transportation of goods, the actual number must have approached at least two hundred a year from the mid-1720s onward. They are greatly underrepresented in the official records.

Initially, the trade had depended on Indian "burtheners" (burdeners), individuals who bore packs of

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<sup>53</sup>Charles Town merchants' petition to Broughton, July 1735. BPRO 17:413.

<sup>54</sup>The Journals of the Commissioners of the Indian Trade for the period of the government monopoly between 1716-1718 are the only detailed records of the names and payments of these lowly persons over a period of time. McDowell, JCIT, 69-321.

skins on their backs along the well-worn Indian trails to the settled areas. To European officials, these men were not always trustworthy. In 1716, twenty-one Indians arrived at Charles Town each with a pack of hides sent from the Cherokee factor; yet, only fifteen packs had been packed and sent from the nation. An investigation showed that the bundles had been divided and repacked en route by the Indian porters so that more individuals would receive gifts for their services.<sup>55</sup>

Added to this kind of criticism, the native Americans themselves were increasingly critical of the system. One reason for Cherokee receptivity to an increasing Virginia trade initiative in the early 1720s was that the Virginians did not use Indians as beasts of burden, but employed horses.<sup>56</sup> George Chicken had complained that Indian carriers would "not carry any burthens with out being first payed and as I am informed very often leave their burthens half way of the place they are designed to be Carried to, So that the Traders are Obliged to pay double burthenage for every Pack."<sup>57</sup> Natives needed strong incentives to

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<sup>55</sup>JCIT, July 14 -24, 1716, 79-84. Of course, the Indians saw this as a way of gaining extra needed goods, without taking more men away from essential work.

<sup>56</sup>See below, 235-36.

<sup>57</sup>"Chicken's Journal, 1725, in "Mereness, Travels in the American Colonies, 128.

act as porters for they realized that those who took goods to the European lowlands were increasingly likely to contact the new diseases. No wonder, therefore, that by the mid-1720s, horses were increasingly familiar in the hinterland and were the preferred means of transportation, thereby creating a demand for white servants within the system.

By 1735, over 800 horses were involved in the trade.<sup>58</sup> Will inventories of traders who died while still active in the trade showed that the most successful ones kept a stock of horses, both as packhorses and for their personal transportation. Upper Creek trader John Eycott, who was dead by 1751, had possessed nineteen packhorses, nineteen pack-saddles and three "covering skins to each saddle," as well as fifteen other horses. His estate also received nearly two hundred pounds currency for stabling Indian horses.<sup>59</sup> When the half-Indian Thomas Brown Junior died in 1748, his horses were inventoried and valued at £720.<sup>60</sup> References to the bells that traders attached to

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<sup>58</sup>Petition of merchants to Broughton, July 1735. BPRO 17:413.

<sup>59</sup>CT Will Inventories, Volume R (2): 173, dated 7 August 1751; JCHA 1748, 385; Ibid 1751-52, 36, 45. Such saddles had been made for fifty shilling apiece in 1716, JCIT, 77 and in 1767, a pack saddle was inventoried as worth £3. Will Inventories Volume V: 123.

<sup>60</sup>CT Will Inventories, Volume B: 12.

their horses when they left them while at camp emphasized the high value placed on horses, as did the energy that officials expended to retrieve strayed or stolen horses that had been acquired by Indians but claimed by traders as their property.<sup>61</sup> Horse-stealing became so rampant that the South-Carolina Gazette ran a front-page story about it in July 1739, believing the problem was "occasioned either by Pack-horse-men and others picking up Horses in the Settlements and selling them in the Indian Countries; or by your travelling Jockeys, who as there is great Reason to believe, exchange the Horses of different Provinces."<sup>62</sup> As late as 1752 Glen reported to London about the Creeks "carrying off great numbers of horses from our Traders among the Cherokees, and our Outsettlements . . . under pretense that they were Indian Horses."<sup>63</sup>

Packhorsemen who can be traced over time were atypical for being in trouble or for rising from those lowly ranks to later respectability in the eyes of colonial society. For those few years when there are records of all who paid

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<sup>61</sup>Brown, "Historic Trade Bells," 69-82; William Bartram, Travels of William Bartram through North & South Carolina, East & West Florida, ed. Mark Van Doren (1791: reprint, Dover Publications, Inc., 1928), 350-51; Indian Affairs 1750-54, 244, 247-48, 527; also chap 7, Haig story.

<sup>62</sup>SCG, July 14, 1739.

<sup>63</sup>December 16, 1752, BPRO 25:132.

for trader licenses, as in the late 1720s, those who endorsed their licenses to cover servants of all kinds did not need to give the names of their employees. Cherokee traders Gregory Haines and William Hatton paid £10 for having unnamed packhorsemen added to their 1726 and 1727 licenses, and widow Catherine Chicken in July 1727 turned over £110 to the public treasurer that her husband had received from traders to license "several packhorsemen."<sup>64</sup> Persons who paid for more than one full license did not have to give the name of their partners, let alone those of the most menial of their employees. Among the changes made to the trading regulations in 1751 was a clause that made it illegal for traders to dismiss their men in Indian country, or to hire an employee there.<sup>65</sup> The deaths of many servants were listed without names, just by mentioning their masters. Others are only known by name because of their untimely deaths or maiming.<sup>66</sup>

Some servants who entered the trade in the aftermath of the Yamasee War did find it an avenue to advancement.

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<sup>64</sup>Records of the Public Treasurers of South Carolina, 1725-1776, Reel 1, giving a full list of licenses and monies received from 1726-1730. Hatton paid £10 for six months for two packhorsemen.

<sup>65</sup>31 August, 1751, McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-1754, 136; also Cooper, Statutes at Large 3:754-55.

<sup>66</sup>As in the case of packhorsemen James James, shot through the arm, and Edward Gilmore, killed in an incident near Fort Prince George. SCG, June 14, 1760.

When the trade became a public monopoly, a few of those whose names appeared in the public records emerged as traders in their own right within a decade. The most notable of these -- so probably the most exceptional -- was the literate Scotsman, David Dowey. He began as a packhorseman for the province in 1718 earning £160 currency per year while in charge of buying and then driving the horses to the Cherokee factor. He was suspected at that time of "Designs" of defecting to Virginia to get away from his debts -- perhaps thus fitting the expectation of this category of Indian trader. He was still involved in the South Carolina trade in 1751 and was proud of his thirty-two years among the Cherokees, stating that he had "always traded on his own account" in the remoter Overhill area.<sup>67</sup>

The other successful survivor was Thomas Devall. He, too, began as a packhorseman among the Catawbias but became an influential trader among the Upper Creeks. The natives must have respected him highly for one chief took the English name of "Devall's Landlord." Despite one rebuke for taking black slaves illegally to Indian country, he was generally commended by Carolina officials for his skill as

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<sup>67</sup>His name is also spelled Dowie, Dawie, David. JCIT, 265, 271, 300-301; CJ, RSUS Elp/5/2/, 105; McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-1754, 57. See below fn 133 for his connection to merchants Andrew White and John Fenwicke.



interpreter and for his hospitality.<sup>68</sup> He rose from government-employed packhorseman in 1717 to independent trader ten years later and was active through to his death in 1761.<sup>69</sup> He was among the eleven of the sixty-six traceable packhorsemen who were clearly literate and one of only four known to have owned slaves -- a symbol of social and material success in the colonial Southeast.

Probably more typical than these two were men such as William Mackrachun and Edward Carroll. Mackrachun warranted one reference in the surviving Indian Books when he, one of John Pettigrew's employees, was killed by a young Chickasaw in 1752. Carroll was shot in Cherokee country in February 1748 after incurring the wrath of an Indian, who had called him a "Devil & a Witch," although an English eyewitness did not believe he had done anything to provoke such an attack. The Indians did not want to avenge his death because he was "not a Trader," maintaining that it was "hard to take the Life of one of their Warriors for what was as nothing." In this case, South Carolina's authorities finally managed to convince the Upper Cherokees of the need to revenge any murder. All British lives lost

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<sup>68</sup>McDowell, Indian Affairs 1754-1765, 375; Hasting's Journal, 1723, BPRO 10:186; JCIT, 176, 283. His name is also spelled Duvall, Dual, Da Vall, etc.

<sup>69</sup>Abstract of Colonial Wills of the State of Georgia 1733-1777, (Atlanta: Department of Archives and History, 1962), 40.

in the interior were to be avenged, however unimportant the victim had been in life, just as Indians avenged their dead and demanded similar justice from the colonial authorities.<sup>70</sup>

Many packhorsemen seem to have been rovers by nature; indeed, they have been called the "true driftwood of Carolina society."<sup>71</sup> John Carney, hired by the colonial administration as a packhorseman in 1717, was a former soldier from Fort Moore. He was discharged, rehired, and then finally "deserted the Service," all in the space of a few months.<sup>72</sup> One of James Beamer's packhorsemen in the late 1750s was a Frenchman who had deserted from the French in 1752.<sup>73</sup> In January 1724, a trader's request to employ another renegade Frenchman was rejected on the grounds that he might be a spy and so should not be allowed "into Indian Country."<sup>74</sup>

Some servants were hired to take care of different

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<sup>70</sup>JCHA 1748, April 7, 1748, 171; June 20, 1748, 355; CJ, April 10, 1748 RSUS E1p/3/4, 191, 214.

<sup>71</sup>John Philip Reid, A Better Kind of Hatchet: Law, Trade and Diplomacy in the Cherokee Nation During the Early Years of European Contact (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976), 155.

<sup>72</sup>JCIT, November 1717 to June 1718, 226, 265, 266, 284.

<sup>73</sup>SCG, September 22, 1759. His name was Peter Arnaud.

<sup>74</sup>JCHA, January 23, 1724, RSUS A1b/2/3, 381, 393.

functions, such as maintaining a store in an Indian village for a substantial trader who had a license to trade in more than one village. Jeremiah Swiney was employed by William Clements in the Lower Creek town of Oconees until he was killed by Iroquois in 1750. The first rumors of his death were regarded as "Apocrypha" because the official reporting the incident did not trust Clements. Swiney and another servant, Jenks, as well as a leading Chickasaw, however, had been killed and the store plundered and burned.<sup>75</sup>

Charles Jordan was employed in the 1750s as a storekeeper in Coweta for Peter Randon (or Randall), a middling-ranked trader, who in his turn was employed by a master trader, John Pettigrew. While Jordan was literate and therefore perhaps of higher standing than most packhorsemen, he behaved in the way expected of such a lowly servant by getting drunk with the Indians and running around Coweta naked.<sup>76</sup> Many of these men found Indian society more accepting and charitable than their European backgrounds and chose a way of life that made them open to charges of being "white Indians."<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>75</sup>McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1750-1754, March 19, 22, 1750, 11-13.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., 59, 303 for later similar complaints of his drunkenness and abuse of the Indians.

<sup>77</sup>See Axtell, "The White Indians of Colonial America," The European and the Indian, 168-206.

Other servants acted as unlicensed traders while employed by a licensed trader. This practice was constantly attacked because these men acted "with the same footing as the Principal" but usually without adequate supervision. Their employers were criticized, because they were expected to "give security for behaviour" of their servants and prove that the employee had not run away from a previous master.<sup>78</sup>

It is probable that some of these men, especially the unnamed ones, were indentured servants. Some of the lesser- to middling-sized traders by the 1750s had entered the trade in that fashion. Bernard Hughes, active in the Cherokee trade in the 1750s, was probably the "Barnard Hughs," an Irish servant aged around twenty-five, whose master advertised for him as a runaway speaking "but indifferent English" in 1737.<sup>79</sup> Trader and influential Creek Mary Musgrove's second European husband was her former indentured servant, Jacob Mathews.

Many of the Jacobite prisoners sent to frontier garrisons in 1716 as bound servant-soldiers stayed to become active in the trade when their term of service was over. They had acquired familiarity with the Indians and

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<sup>78</sup>Mereness. Travels in the American Colonies, 136, 167,

<sup>79</sup>SCG, March 5, 1737.

traders who visited forts and they could transfer the skills and knowledge of Indian ways and languages they acquired at their frontier garrisons into a future career. Creek master trader of the 1750s, Ludovic Grant, was one of these who had arrived as prisoner on the Susannah in 1716 and many others on that ship and on its companion, the Wakefield, such as Lachlan McBean (McBain), many McGillivrays and McQueens, later became familiar names in the Indian trade network.<sup>80</sup>

Blacks and Indians also participated directly in this Carolinian trading network, although their names are even more obscured. Most were slaves, but there were exceptions. In 1711, two traders paid a bond for three "Indians that trade for them" -- they were not regarded as slaves but as employees.<sup>81</sup> After the Yamasee War and in the confusion of restructuring the trade, at least two Indians were active employees of the government's monopoly. Indian Jack was rewarded in December 1717 for his services as an interpreter to Cherokee factor William Hatton. Indian Sauhoe was authorized by the Indian trade commissioners to receive £3 a month plus an allowance to function as packhorseman in the Creek trade. He was cheap

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<sup>80</sup>See Duncan, "Slavery in Colonial South Carolina," 57-61.

<sup>81</sup>March 1711, JCIT, 7.

labor compared to the £10 a month that John Carrell, Alexander Muckele, and Daniel Kennard were to receive for the same job title and work.<sup>82</sup>

A comment made in 1751 by the Cherokee chief called the Raven of Hiwassee made it clear that several Indians were used by traders to function as hired hands in Indian towns. In suggesting a punishment for some Cherokee towns that had been behind the murder of trader Daniel Murphy and the theft of goods from Bernard Hughes' store, the Raven suggested that those towns should not only have their traders removed, but also that "no Indian nor Half-breed should be Factor from any white Man among them, till they acknowledge their Faults, and see the Want of a white Man, and that they themselves, and their Women and Children should have weary Leggs to walk to Traders in other Towns to buy what they want."<sup>83</sup> Perhaps the Gun Merchant, a leading Creek chief, acquired his English name and his status from acting in that capacity.<sup>84</sup>

Blacks were also employed in the trade, although this practice was increasingly condemned. A House committee in

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<sup>82</sup>June 11, 1718, JCIT, 286-288. Indians and blacks acting independently in this fashion were included in my data-base, while those clearly slaves were not.

<sup>83</sup>Talk of the Raven, May 14, 1751, McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-1754, 75.

<sup>84</sup>Cashin, Lachlan McGillivray, 60.

May 1742 wanted to discourage "Eucheas or other Indians" from coming "into the Settlements," for it was especially important that the Indians should not "have any Intercourse with the Slaves at any Plantation."<sup>85</sup> The trading regulations of 1751 contained the clause that "It shall not be lawfull for any Indian Trader to employ any Negro or other Slave in the Indian Country," and set the fine at £100.<sup>86</sup> Indian agents and commissioners, worried about the same problem and warned against allowing surveys of lands too close to Indian towns "as it is necessary to keep up [the Catawbas] as a distinct People to be a distinct Check upon the runaway Slaves who might otherwise get to a head in the Woods and prove as mischevious a thorn in our sides as the fugitive Slaves in Jamaica did in theirs."<sup>87</sup> In May 1751, the dangers of allowing the races to mix in the backcountry were stressed, for six blacks were "seduced by the half breed with [trader James] Maxwell to run off to the Cherokees." Only three of these were recovered.<sup>88</sup> The Indian nations were a "Natural Fortification" to the English colonies by acting as a guard against renegade

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<sup>85</sup>JCHA 1741-1742, May 26, 1742, 536-537.

<sup>86</sup>August 31, 1751, McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-1754, 136.

<sup>87</sup>Commissioner William Pinckney's Representation, June 29, 1754 BPRO 26:78.

<sup>88</sup>CJ, May 1751, RSUS E1p/5/2, 121.

blacks as well as by their more obvious feature as a barrier against other European powers.<sup>89</sup>

Despite these official concerns, blacks were constantly brought into the nations by traders.<sup>90</sup> A slave named Timboe was active in the Creek trade in 1718 for his master, Colonel Alexander Mackey. Mackey was awarded £2 a month for Timboe's five-month-long "extraordinary Service, and being Linguist."<sup>91</sup> One unnamed black in 1752 was outfitted by trader Robert Steil for the Catawba trade and, according to a government-employed interpreter, the Indians themselves complained for they did not like having him among them.<sup>92</sup>

With time, contact between natives and blacks was restricted by law, and most accounts of blacks in Indian country were complaints against the owners, or of agents attempting to seize or purchase runaways from the Indians. Tobias Fitch in 1725 had a frustrating time trying to recover a black slave from the Creeks at Apalachicola. The "Negro Sat in the Square in a Bould Manner" along with two

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<sup>89</sup>BPRO 24:303.

<sup>90</sup>For blacks in Creek country, see Kathryn E. Holland Braund, "The Creek Indians, Blacks, and Slavery," Journal of Southern History 57 (1991): 601-36.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid., 287.

<sup>92</sup>Matthew Toole to Gov. Glen, January 13, 1752. McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-54, 201. His name is also given as Steel.



Spaniards and even after the slave was seized by Fitch, he was set free by the chief who steadfastly refused to surrender him. Fitch also failed to recover four slaves belonging to trader John Sharp, as well as a white woman kept as a slave by the Dog King.<sup>93</sup> Three runaway slaves were killed by Indians in 1734 and their owner received compensation from the Assembly.<sup>94</sup> In 1753, three Frenchmen who had been redeemed from the Chickasaws amongst whom they had been prisoners, and John Case a "Mallotta" born in Virginia, left their English trader escort while hunting for buffalo on their way down to Charles Town. The mulatto was regarded as an "extraordinary woodsman" with at least seven years of experience among the Chickasaws. Not surprisingly, these men were never captured.<sup>95</sup>

## II

Other trade-related jobs and skills were not confined to the above social and professional strata. Interpreters, for example, could be found at all levels of the trade and among natives, whites, and blacks who were not otherwise

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<sup>93</sup>"Fitch's Journal, 1725," in Mereness, Travels in the American Colonies, 184-85, 210-11.

<sup>94</sup>JCHA, February 13, 1734 RSUS Alb/5/1, 71.

<sup>95</sup>John Buckles' Journal, January 20, 1753, McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-1754, 384.

directly involved in the trade. Some of the best interpreters were listed as packhorsemen or were lesser traders.

While a few individuals were employed officially by the province of South Carolina as interpreters, they were not a special class of men of high status based on education, but traders from all ranks of the trade who had good oral skills.<sup>96</sup> Many were unable to write their own names -- something that was not crucial when most Europeans also functioned in a mostly oral culture. One of these was Stephen Forrest, who was employed in the 1740s as the official interpreter to the Lower Creek nation at a salary of £150 a year. As he was illiterate, he petitioned for a secretary to help with official communications. The Assembly decided to increase his salary to £200 out of which Forrest himself could pay for an assistant.<sup>97</sup> In 1748 he was dismissed from his post and took out a license

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<sup>96</sup>This is in contrast to the situation among the Iroquois, where the English tended to educate and then employ the same individuals who made a profession from this skill. Nancy Hagendorn, "At Home in their Manners and Modes of Expression": The Education and Training of Interpreters," unpublished colloquium paper presented at the Institute of Early American History at Williamsburg, February 15, 1993.

<sup>97</sup>JCHA 1741-1742, February 24, 1742, 412-415; May 21, 1742, 512; May 22, 1742, 517.

for the Creek trade.<sup>98</sup> He was subsequently employed as an interpreter on an as-needed basis. He was, for example, enlisted to aid Thomas Bosomworth on his mission to the Creeks in 1752, but when Bosomworth met him, Forrest was "in Liquor" and the talks were stalled until Forrest was sober.<sup>99</sup>

As the surviving records were written by officials and employers, they give the impression that trader-interpreters were not always from the more responsible segment of the profession. Ambrose Davis, alias the Collier, was a lesser trader and interpreter to the Cherokees by the 1750s. Agent James May wrote to Governor Glen that Davis "abused the Prince & Head Men of Ioree," and had refused to aid him in arresting a troublemaker. According to May, Davis stated that he "might be damned and my Orders too, I might wipe my back Side with it."<sup>100</sup> Despite his outspoken personality, Davis was continuously in demand as an interpreter and was later employed by Colonel Byrd of Virginia at the new Fort Prince George at

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<sup>98</sup>JCHA 1748, June 18, 1748, 326-327; June 22, 1748, 342; June 25, 1748, 359.

<sup>99</sup>Indian Affairs 1750-1754, August 24-25, 1752, 283-284. He also worked to undermine Bosomworth, telling the Indians that it was he, Forrest, who had news for them from the governor. He was still a Creek trader in 1772, see "Taitt's Journal, 1772" in Mereness, Travels in the American Colonies, 538.

<sup>100</sup>McDowell, Indian Affairs 1754-1765, 80, 83.

Keowee for £1 a day and was commended for his "great Care and Diligence." He later rendered conspicuous service during the 1760 Cherokee siege of that fort.<sup>101</sup>

Creek trader John Barton was another illiterate interpreter active by the 1730s. He was Georgia official Patrick McKay's interpreter in 1735 although neither of them was happy with their relationship. McKay knew of Barton's reputation as "the boldest linguister in the Province of Carolina, Yet I shall keep him no longer then I've deliver'd the talk to the Indians." Barton had tried to avoid going with McKay, only condescending to go, according to McKay, when he managed to get his allowance raised first to £35 a day plus two horses, and then finally, when McKay was in despair for others had also refused to work for him, to £40.<sup>102</sup>

The traders used most often in formal receptions and ceremonies either in Charles Town or Savannah, or in the nations when personages such as Oglethorpe or Glen summoned chiefs to their presence, were usually leading traders who had been in their nations for many years: Lachlan McGillivray, Eleazer Wigan, Robert Bunning, and James Beamer. They had long proven their reliability and skill in translating native customs and languages. Robert

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<sup>101</sup>Ibid., 472, 500.

<sup>102</sup>Aug 10, Nov 20, 1735, CRG 20:69, 72, 111-12.

Bunning had been among the Lower Cherokees since before the Yamasee War and remained active through the 1750s. He had visited England as the official interpreter to the Cherokee chiefs who sailed with Sir Alexander Cumming in 1730 and was still interpreting in 1758 for £20 currency a month.<sup>103</sup> Acting as interpreter when needed was a sideline, for he remained a trader in his own right, as did all the Cherokee interpreters.

Other "linguists" were the Indian wives of traders or the offsprings of these unions.<sup>104</sup> The political prominence of Mary Musgrove and her first husband, Johnny, reflected the usefulness of persons born and bred in two cultures. James Beamer's Cherokee son, Thomas, was a man of some property who acted as a trader and interpreter and who was accepted in both white and Indian worlds.<sup>105</sup>

Some Indians who do not seem to have been a product of mixed marriages were also used as interpreters. "Captain Caesar," an influential Cherokee chief in the 1750s, was often used as an interpreter. He was also a leading

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<sup>103</sup>UHJ, June 1731, RSUS Ala/2/1, 95; McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-1754, 74; Williams, Dawn of the Tennessee Valley, 216. His name is often reproduced as "Bunyan." He received £20 currency a month in 1758.

<sup>104</sup>See Chapter 4 for trader wives as interpreters.

<sup>105</sup>His nuncupative will, referring to him as Indian trader was proven in February 1761, Carolyn T. Moore, ed., Abstracts of the Wills of the State of South Carolina, 1760-1784 (Columbia: The R. L. Bryan Co, 1969) 3:5-6.

influence on the Young Emperor and was a shrewd diplomat along with his other skills. He interpreted at Charles Town "for the Young King" in May 1751.<sup>106</sup> In June 1749, a "Notchee interpreter" was used in talks with the Natchez Indians.<sup>107</sup> In 1763, a Catawba chief referred to as Colonel Ayers, was allowed to interpret for his nation.<sup>108</sup>

There were always individuals who participated illegally in the trade, that is, without taking out licenses and posting bonds in South Carolina or Georgia. Some of the traders who at one time or another had an acceptable role in the network traded illegally on other occasions without giving a bond at Charles Town or Savannah. It was sometimes hard to get to the cities to post bond and take out licenses at the correct time of year. Lachlan McGillivray explained in 1754 how he had lost his license for his usual Upper Creek towns the previous year because his duties to the colony had made it impossible for him to go down to Charles Town.<sup>109</sup> Chickasaw and Choctaw traders were usually exempted from

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<sup>106</sup>McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-1754, 72.

<sup>107</sup>CJ, June 1749 RSUS E1p/4, 526.

<sup>108</sup>November 5, 1763, BPRO 30:63. He may have been a descendant of Thomas Ayres, a turn-of-the-century trader. See Merrell, Indians' New Word, 235 for a different explanation of the name.

<sup>109</sup>Petition of Lachlan McGillivray [sic], McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-1754, 518. He was given satisfaction.

having to apply in person every year because of the great distances involved.<sup>110</sup> Some of the illicit traders, however, clearly wanted to trade as unfettered by regulations as possible and deliberately flaunted regulations. Others were trading with a license but breaking some rules, especially Georgia's total ban on selling rum to Indians or colonists.

Illegal traders were a feature of the trade from its earliest years. In March 1711, eight unlicensed traders among the Yamasee were reported to the Assembly for their "Contempt" because they had torn up the warrants served on them.<sup>111</sup> South Carolina Council member Edmond Atkin in the 1750s believed that there were more unlicensed traders among the Cherokees than the other nations because of their remoter location. He stressed that these individuals "being the lowest People, having little thought of paying their Creditors for their goods, often greatly undersell the fair Licensed Traders, which makes the Indian very uneasy, suspecting therefrom that the latter wrong them."<sup>112</sup> Some, like Samuel Elsenore, while he was licensed for one area, would "meet the Indians in the

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<sup>110</sup>SCG, July 14, 1733. The Chickasaw and Natchez Indians then in town had traveled over nine hundred miles to get there.

<sup>111</sup>March 9, 1711, JCIT, 5-6.

<sup>112</sup>Jacobs, Atkin Plan, 34.

Woods" at the end of their winter hunts and get their skins before they returned to their towns with their licensed traders who had fitted them out with goods, and to whom the Indians had accumulated debts.<sup>113</sup> Elsenore was also one of many accused of taking rum to the Creeks without a license.<sup>114</sup> As Indian commissioner, William Pinckney reported to the Assembly in 1749, he "hath had frequent Application . . . by the licensed Traders for Redress against Interlopers and Persons visiting and trading with the Indian Nations without License . . . to the great Prejudice of the licensed Trader." He wanted more authority placed into the hands of officials to "enable him to support the honest and fair Traders." While a licensed trader's goods could be seized for breaking the law, there was no such provision against illegal traders.<sup>115</sup> It was not surprising that legal traders complained of the actions of those who did not have the money or inclination to post bond and obey the law. Middling trader James Adair warned against the "Arab-like pedlars [who] skulk about" in the villages. These "lawless traders had furnished the Indians . . . with so great a

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<sup>113</sup>McDowell, Indian Affairs 1754-1765, 355, his name is also spelled Elsinor, Alshenor, etc.

<sup>114</sup>Ibid., 325.

<sup>115</sup>May 17, 1749, JCHA 1749-1750, 126-27.



quantity of prohibited liquors, [that it] might enable some of them to decoy the savages to squandering away thousands of drest deer-skins." <sup>116</sup>

Agents visiting Indian nations were kept busy trying to keep up with the illegal traders and packhorsemen and with rounding up runaway blacks and indentured servants. Traders applied directly to these officials to add the names to the back of their licenses of their men who had previously been trading without authority. In 1725 Indian Commissioner George Chicken examined the position of John Hewet who had been employed as a trader-servant by John Millikin and Henry Guston, but illegally. The two traders said they had employed him only "out of Charity" and not because they wished to defraud the government of any revenue.<sup>117</sup> The journal of John Herbert, the commissioner who undertook a special journey to the Cherokees in 1727, showed that these officials spent much time chasing after illegal traders and runaway apprentices. On November 23, 1727, he examined the license of "one Fulton who I found was come up without any Lycence" and discovered both a white servant and a slave belonging to a Mr. Willison who

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<sup>116</sup>Adair, History of the Indians, 394, 396.

<sup>117</sup>"Chicken's Journal, 1725," Mereness, Travels in the American Colonies, 119.

were in the nation "without any Authority."<sup>118</sup> The following day, he was told that a runaway apprentice was also in the nation.<sup>119</sup>

As the Georgia-South Carolina dispute of the 1730s indicated, some the traders regarded as illegal in one colony were legal in the eyes of another.<sup>120</sup> Rumors of Virginia traders active among the Cherokees in September 1717 were worrying, for it seemed that they were trying to "supplant us in our Trade by under-selling their Commodities in general."<sup>121</sup> During the 1734 dispute between South Carolina and the Cherokees that resulted in a boycott of the trade by all the English colonies, there were again fears that the Virginians were not only continuing to trade, but had even contributed from the beginning to the Indians' "insolent" conduct.<sup>122</sup> This "growing Evil" was attacked by a 1749 South Carolina House committee which reported on the "Inconveniencies happening

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<sup>118</sup>A. S. Salley, Journal of Colonel John Herbert, Commissioner of the Indian Affairs for the Province of South Carolina, October 17, 1727 to March 19, 1727/8 (Columbia: Historical Commission of South Carolina), 10-11.

<sup>119</sup>Ibid.

<sup>120</sup>See below, chap. 7.

<sup>121</sup>JCIT, 211.

<sup>122</sup>Richard P. Sherman, Robert Johnson, Proprietary and Royal Governor of South Carolina (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1966), 94.

in the Indian Nations from Interlopers." It concluded that many of the current problems were "occasioned by great Numbers of such People resorting thither from Georgia."<sup>123</sup> Traders from other English colonies were, however, useful scapegoats more than a real threat.

Another feature of the trade was the network of credit and debts. Many participants became wealthy from brokering vast sums of money as well goods and hides. Others, from master traders to packhorsemen, amassed crippling debts and, like Catawba interpreter and trader Mathew Toole, needed special dispensation and protection from creditors in order to visit Charles Town.<sup>124</sup> All made and lost huge sums of money if a cargo of consigned goods or of deerskins was lost or damaged. Their business connections changed with remarkable frequency but can often be traced by examining the records of the provincial court of common pleas.

Court records suggest that the Indian traders and the merchants involved in the trade were profusely litigious. In an age of shifting short-term companies and of constant deaths, natural or otherwise, of the partners, most of the disputes concerned the repayment of debts. Many involved

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<sup>123</sup>December 7, 1749, JCHA 1759-1750, 322.

<sup>124</sup>October 28, 1752, McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-1754, 358-59.

notes of loans or credit payable upon the end of a certain period or at the end of a business venture. It was common for a trader to sign a note pledging to repay a sum of money to a merchant or master trader for goods, cash, or credit received before a trading trip into Indian country. Repayment was due on his return, often in skins, when he had acquired hides in exchange for his wares after the winter hunts. In 1719, Colonel Theophilus Hastings was sued for a debt of £319.15.3 by the merchants Samuel Wragg, Jacob Satur and Joseph Wragg. This was an accumulation of debts owed for goods received over a long period. The itemized account began six years earlier and confirmed that Hastings had managed to repay part of the original debt in deerskins. The judgement, as usual in cases of debt, was in favor of the merchants who recovered their money as well as damages.<sup>125</sup> In contrast to a twentieth-century perception of litigation, these transactions were regarded as a normal part of doing business in the colonies, and were usually without any lasting adversarial relationships. This and other cases against Hastings, or instigated by him, did not blemish his reputation. He remained a respected member of the Commons House and progressed in importance and wealth.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>125</sup>JR-CCP 1719, Bx 14A No. 211A.

<sup>126</sup>See chap. 6.

Some of the suits involved considerable sums of money. From 1755-1756, Cornelius Dougherty and his then partners, John Elliott and James Beamer, were involved in two costly law suits. The first involved the wealthy merchant, James Crockatt, from whom they received their goods on credit. The sum of money that Crockatt demanded -- £6,777.9.6 currency -- reflected the enormous amounts that were involved in just one company's trading goods acquired from this one merchant. In the second case against the partners, Governor Glen sued for £6,007 currency.<sup>127</sup> In one of the largest amounts involved in such a case, David Douglass, a prosperous Augusta storekeeper, was forced to pay a sum of £2,400 sterling to Jeremiah Knott in a 1753 judgment.<sup>128</sup>

Other cases were against executors of estates as the creditors of the deceased attempted to regain their capital. Sometimes probating an estate could take years as the executors of deceased executors were sued for repayment. In an action filed in 1760, John Rae, Lachlan McGillivray, George Galphin, as the survivors of Patrick Brown, Isaac Barksdale, and Daniel Clark, all deceased, sued trader Enoc Anderson for payment of a note dated 1754

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<sup>127</sup>JR-CCP 1755, Box 39B 64A; 1756, Bx 43A 212A.

<sup>128</sup>Ibid., 1753 Bx 34B 48A. This was about £15,000 in South Carolina currency.

owed to Brown, Rae, and Co.<sup>129</sup> Will inventories often listed the notes due to or payable by an estate. In 1757 Jeremiah Knott held notes totalling almost £12,000, including one for £3,200.<sup>130</sup> Elizabeth Mercier, widow of George Haig, initiated two suits as executrix of Haig's estate to regain outstanding debts.<sup>131</sup>

Operating on credit had other disadvantages for the debtor, for promissory notes were transferrable. Some traders complained that officials tried to take advantage of their impoverished state. Captain Daniel Pepper, the commander at Fort Moore from 1737 to 1745, was accused in 1744 of buying up the notes owed by traders to merchants and then arresting them when they came to Fort Moore.<sup>132</sup>

In the early years, accounts winding up a company were sometimes calculated in deerskins, and not in actual sums of money. The accounts of Colonel John Fenwicke and Andrew White on June 23, 1726 were recorded in weight of dressed deer skins without any attempt to convert them to cash

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<sup>129</sup>Ibid., 1760, Bx 49B No 6A.

<sup>130</sup>CT Will Inventories, February 21, 1757, Book S: 84-93.

<sup>131</sup>JR-CCP 1755, Bx 40A 151A; 1756, Bx 42A 65A.

<sup>132</sup>Petition of Cherokee Traders, CJ, March 1, 1744, RSUS Elp/2/3, 107-09.

values.<sup>133</sup> When specie was present as part of an estate, the amounts mentioned might be in sterling, as well as in South Carolina's (paper) currency. Stephen Crell's estate appraised in July 1769, reflected the different means of exchange on the frontier. He had died possessing forty-four dollars and a doubloon, plus one "Johannis and Thirty Coppers."<sup>134</sup>

### III

Other individuals outside the network of Indians, traders and merchants themselves were actively involved, if sporadically, in the trade. These included the men and women who received money for "entertaining" the Indians either on their way to Charles Town or in that city. Minor artisans, such as tailors, saddlers, and gunsmiths who were not part of the direct exchange of goods and furs also furnished essential services that contributed to a successful trading experience for Indians and whites alike.

By the end of the 1730s, many of those who helped to feed the native Americans and otherwise aid them on their

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<sup>133</sup>Records of the Secretary of the Province, Volume E (1726-1727): 20-23. Among the notes settled was one of David Dowey's who was trading independently for White by this time.

<sup>134</sup>Will Inventories Book W (1763-67): 15. His total estate was valued at £257.8.6.

way down to the settlements were small planters and storekeepers, including many widows. Elizabeth Haig, widow of George Haig, remarried twice but retained the store at the Congarees where she and George had settled.<sup>135</sup> She took over Haig's role as storekeeper and serviced the needs of the growing white planter and squatter elements in that area.<sup>136</sup> Her home also remained a place where Indians stopped on their way from Cherokee country for it lay close to the major Cherokee trail. She received money from the Assembly in 1752 for entertaining sixty-six Cherokees on their way to Charles Town in November 1751 and £18.17.6 for "dieting" seven Catawbias for seven days in August 1750.<sup>137</sup>

Major Charles Russell, a former commander of the fort "at the Congarees," died in 1737. His widow, Mary, remained in the area and provided for her children by keeping a small plantation and store.<sup>138</sup> She, too, was constantly compensated by the Commons House for her services and expenses in attending to the Indians.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>135</sup>For George Haig's demise, see below, 332-336.

<sup>136</sup>In that role she petitioned the Commons House in January 1752 for establishing a ferry over the Congaree River. JCHA 1751-1752, January 23, 1752, 93.

<sup>137</sup>JCHA 1751-1752, March 5, 1752, 119.

<sup>138</sup>This was the location of the township of Saxe Gotha from 1733. Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, 52.

<sup>139</sup>JCHA 1749-1750, February 9, 1750, 402; JCHA 1751-1752, January 11, 1752, 45.



When she died in 1754, her estate submitted three more accounts for payment.<sup>140</sup>

Accounts for entertaining Indians in Charles Town showed that not only the most prosperous merchants dealing in imports benefitted from the Indian trade, but also many small traders and artisans. Every visit by a group of Indians was followed by a spate of bills for the Assembly's consideration, ranging from pasturage and stabling for Indian horses to food and drink for the Indians themselves.<sup>141</sup> Silversmiths, such as Alexander Petrie in 1748, made "ear bobs" for the Indians and saddlers such as John Laurens and Benjamin Addison repaired or made saddles.<sup>142</sup> Tailors John Owen and Andrew Taylor submitted many accounts for making "cloaths" for the Indians in the 1740s and 1750s.<sup>143</sup> Gunsmiths were particularly active when Indians came to town. Visits were followed by accounts from gunsmiths for repairing and cleaning Indian guns, since they did not have constant access to gunsmiths in the nations to help them maintain their weapons in prime

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<sup>140</sup>JCHA 1752-1754, April 27, 1754, 458.

<sup>141</sup>Margaret O'Neale submitted accounts from 1749 to 1754, for example Ibid., Feb 20, 1753, 94-95.

<sup>142</sup>JCHA 1748, 62; January 27, 1742, JCHA 1741-1742, 353; February 9, 1759, JCHA 1749-50, 402.

<sup>143</sup>JCHA 1741-1742, January 24, 1742, 412; JCHA 1749-1750, January 26, 1750, 356.

condition.<sup>144</sup> Miscellaneous items bought as presents for the Indians included swan shot, rum, and sugar, as well as the usual cloth, flags, drums, and hats.<sup>145</sup>

The local physicians also made money when the Indians were in town. In 1735 Nicholas Lynch and John Martini received payment for supplying "Physick and bleeding some Indians."<sup>146</sup> In early 1750, the Assembly considered accounts for medicines for sick Indians, plus a bill in February from a carpenter for "Making Coffins for Indians." Another account was for "carrying two sick Indians and their Goods in a Cart to Mrs. Russell's."<sup>147</sup>

Not all accounts were paid. The Assembly and its committee for petitions and accounts scrutinized every bill for additions, inflation, and unnecessary expenses. An interesting account submitted by a Susannah Brunett was recommended for nonpayment by the committee on petitions and accounts. She had asked for £26.5 "for keeping and maintaining Indians at Saludy old Town" but this was

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<sup>144</sup>For example January 19, 1742, JCHA 1741-1742, 318.

<sup>145</sup>March 20, 1752, 176, April 24, 1752, JCHA 1751-52, 176, 244; January 11, 1754, JCHA 1752-1754, 310; merchant Samuel Prioleau received £8 for a drum and Colonel Miles Brewton fifteen guineas for a flag, February 20, 1742, JCHA 1741-1742, 400-01.

<sup>146</sup>JCHA, February 5, 1735, RSUS A/1b/5/1, 61, 69.

<sup>147</sup>January 27, 1750, February 9, 1750, March 14, 1750, JCHA 1749-1750, 360, 402, 462.

rejected as "being in the Out Settlements and in their hunting Ground." The Indians therefore should have taken care of their own provisions on their own land.<sup>148</sup> One of Mary Russell's accounts in 1742 was reduced by £7.10, to exclude a charge for twenty pounds of sugar given to the Indians for there "is no Manner of necessity of giving the Indians Sugar, upon the Road." This was part of a general tirade against the current high cost of Indian accounts in general. In the old days, the visitors only needed "a little Corn, or Rice and Beef" which they could get at any plantation, and were "very well satisfied. . . . But of late the Traders, or Persons who come down with them, carry them to almost every Tavern on the Road, where they are supplied with Liquor; which tends greatly to augment the Article of Indian Expenses."<sup>149</sup>

By 1746, the annual costs of Indian gifts and diplomacy had reached £12,000. In May 1748, the Assembly challenged Glen's assertion that Indian expenses were not unreasonable. It continued its policy of cutting down on Indian expenses as much as possible. Glen countered that such actions would damage the whole structure of Indian diplomacy if people refuse to feed the Indians on their way

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<sup>148</sup>Ibid., February 5, 1754, 353.

<sup>149</sup>February 16, 1742, JCHA 1741-1742, 377.

down unless they had "ready Money."<sup>150</sup> Diplomacy Indian style expected presents and lavish entertainment as elements in the ritual of any formal negotiations.

The cost of diplomacy and trade with the Indians had thus become a major issue between the governor and council. They were only united in attempting to attain financial aid for both South Carolina and Georgia's Indian expenses from London. Dispatching an agent to the nations to straighten out problems cost £1,500 a year by 1744 and every agent needed interpreters plus a clerk.<sup>151</sup> Delivering a message or "sending an express" between Charles Town and Fort Moore, that gateway to Indian country, cost at least £20, as well as food for the rider.<sup>152</sup> At times, the messengers petitioned to recover extraordinary expenses such as loss of a horse drowned while crossing a river, or for their clothing.<sup>153</sup> In 1749, Great Britain underwrote the annual purchase of presents for Georgia and South Carolina Indians and finally authorized the long desired

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<sup>150</sup>June 8, 1748, JCHA 1748, 292.

<sup>151</sup>CJ, December 7, 1744, RSUS E1p/2/3, 397. Clerks received £30 a month.

<sup>152</sup>JCHA 1739-1740, 171.

<sup>153</sup>The Eveleigh firm tried to get £100 for a horse that was "spoiled" on the way to the Cherokees. They were awarded £50 directly and another fifty if the horse did not survive. June 11, 1746, JCHA 1745-1746, 218-19.

fort in the Cherokee country. The South Carolina Assembly, however, thought that the colony still had to bear more costs than were necessary.<sup>154</sup>

By 1755, the Indian trade was no longer regarded as a business whose success or failure had repercussions for the majority of Carolinians, and it had become increasingly difficult for Governor Glen and others to claim that hundreds of colonial lives and fortunes depended on costly protection for the trade and its personnel. Even the leading merchants no longer felt compelled to champion the profession. Not one was involved exclusively in the Indian trade as merchants increasingly invested in other ventures. South Carolina's exports included more indigo and rice than skins and black slaves supplanted Indian trade goods among the leading imports.<sup>155</sup> The future seemed to lie with developing plantation agriculture and the Indians were increasingly seen as a barrier to that system's expansion.

The Indian trade and its hierarchy crumbled even further with the advent of the Cherokee and Seven Years' Wars. Many traders who were prosperous by 1750 managed to

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<sup>154</sup>Glen to Assembly, March 31, 1749, JCHA 1749-50, 17-18.

<sup>155</sup>For statistics relating to Charles Town's overseas trade, see Converse D. Clowse, Measuring Charleston's Overseas Commerce, 1717-1767: Statistics from the Port's Naval Lists (Washington: University Press of America, 1981).

weather those storms, but it was no longer a venture that attracted ambitious Carolina and Georgia youths. The Augusta Company's partners might prosper and grow in the Creek trade but the middle and lower "hirelings" found it increasingly difficult to acquire a "treasure" in the trade although those content to remain employees of a company could find work. Many other traders gave up on the Indian side of business, remaining in their old neighborhoods to serve the white settlers and their black slaves who swarmed into the older frontier areas.

## CHAPTER 4

### Trader Life in Indian Country

Almost from the beginnings of the trade with the southeastern Indians, British traders spent long periods of every year in their clients' villages. While the trade was a source of "much Blood and Treasure," many participants decided its dangers were compensated not only in monetary rewards but also by the way of life the trade created for them.<sup>1</sup>

Key strategies that obviated some of the terrors and dangers of working hundreds of miles away from one's employers and metropoli such as Charles Town and Savannah included finding niches within native societies. They also worked together as a tight-knit group exchanging information that ranged from local gossip to movements of French or Spanish soldiers and their allied Indians and kept government officials aware of their services to the British Empire's commercial and diplomatic well-being. Perhaps the main ingredient to what that trader-turned-writer in the 1770s, James Adair, called "a Reasonable

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<sup>1</sup>UHJ, March 24, 1736, RSUS A1a/2/2, 213.

Life," lay in forging bonds that gave them an acknowledged place within Indian society, a move facilitated and confirmed through marriages to Indian women.<sup>2</sup>

## I

Lasting relationships with Indian women often meant the difference between life and death to a trader. Adair's book contains anecdotal accounts of how he and a few other traders of his acquaintance were saved from certain death by their Indian wives. One unnamed Indian wife staved off an attack by hostile Indians, telling her trader husband to "fight strong, and run off," which he did, knowing that she would be safe as "her family was her protection."<sup>3</sup> In another instance when a "surly and ill-natured" trader was "chopped to pieces" by French-inspired Creeks, one of his partners escaped because his wife knew where he would be hiding and took him enough provisions to flee on foot to Augusta.<sup>4</sup> It was often these familiar or clan connections that saved the traders lives, livelihood, and perhaps their sanity.

Over and above the obvious attractions of a convenient

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<sup>2</sup>Adair, History of the Indians, 444.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 281.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 278-79.



"She-Bed Fellow," a native wife was an asset to any trader who anticipated a long stay in Indian country.<sup>5</sup> She transformed an alien into an accepted member of society and performed economic services that ranged from processing deerskins to taking care of the mundane requirements of food and comfort. The wives were essential cultural brokers, translating and interpreting their native culture, customs, and language for the traders.<sup>6</sup> This ensured that traders did not commit cultural blunders that resulted in losing clients -- or their lives. Trader wives were the first to acquire new goods, words and world-views that they explained to their sisters, mothers, and brothers. They were, however, firmly rooted in their native societies and rarely wanted to, or could, become part of the white colonial scene. Traders regarded Indian wives and their mixed-blood offspring as part of life in Indian country. The value of such connections came from the traditional roles and status of women within their native societies.

Historian Theda Perdue has stated that "clan membership was essential to one's existence as a human being within Cherokee society because of the pervasiveness

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<sup>5</sup>Lawson, New Voyage, 192.

<sup>6</sup>Clara Sue Kidwell, "Indian Women as Cultural Mediators," Ethnohistory 39 (1992): 87-107.

of the kinship system."<sup>7</sup> These totemic clans were the most meaningful social element for the southeastern Indians. Clan loyalty came ahead of town or tribal identification. Perdue further argues that within Cherokee society, "to be without a clan . . . was to be without any rights, even the right to live."<sup>8</sup> It was fellow clansmen who avenged a murder.<sup>9</sup> Thomas Nairne described the Chickasaws' clan system, and its usefulness to Europeans:

It is the easyest thing in the world, for an English Traveller to procure kindred among the Indians, It's but taking a mistress of such a name, [clan] and he has at once relations in each Village, from Charles Town to the Missisipi, and if in travelling he acquaints them with what fameily he is incorporated into, those of that name treat, and wait on him as their kinsman.<sup>10</sup>

These ties, however, went beyond merely receiving hospitality on a journey.

As these clans were exogamous -- women had to marry

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<sup>7</sup>Theda Perdue, Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society, 1540-1966, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1979), 11; Hudson, Southeastern Indians, 5, indicated the similarities of Southeastern Indian social patterns, and Adair commented that their "customs" were "so nearly alike." History of the Indians, xxxvi.

<sup>8</sup>Perdue, Slavery and Cherokee Society, 12.

<sup>9</sup>See John Phillip Reid, A Law of Blood: The Primitive Law of the Cherokee Nation (New York: New York University Press, 1979) for an excellent account of the lex talionis among the Cherokees in the eighteenth century.

<sup>10</sup>Nairne, Muskhogeian Journeys, 60-61.

outside their clans -- foreign males encountered a traditional social device that encouraged their reception into native society.<sup>11</sup> Indian males and females retained the clan of their birth throughout life, having acquired membership in their mother's clan. While a new husband moved to live with his wife's clan, he did not become a member of that clan.<sup>12</sup> Initially, it was probably not much more exotic for a Creek woman to cohabit with a white Carolinian than for her to marry a Chickasaw or a Cherokee. In fact, it could be preferable as it did not inflame any traditional clan or tribal enmities, as, for example, Creeks felt for the Cherokees after the 1715 massacre at Tugaloo.<sup>13</sup>

The southeastern Indians believed that marriage within one's own clan or one's father's clan was "an unclean thing," "the greatest crime in the world," comparable to the worst sort of Incest" in European society. The catastrophic decline in population that had occurred with contact underscored the need for new sources of strangers to act as marriage partners. As early as 1708, Nairne had commented on the "break up of their Townships . . . since the use of fire armes the fatell small pox and other

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<sup>11</sup>Braund, Deerskin & Duffels, 11-12.

<sup>12</sup>Wright, Creeks and Seminoles, 18-19.

<sup>13</sup>See above, 28.

European distempers."<sup>14</sup> If Adair's estimate that there were ten times as many women as men among the tribes by the mid-eighteenth century is even half true, that also indicates a practical reason for accepting European husbands, whatever other qualities particular individuals might bring with them.<sup>15</sup>

Since inheritance was matrilineal, a foreign father did not disrupt that aspect of traditional society. Many early European observers had noticed this custom, often without comprehending exactly what the rules were. Nairne, however, had understood the system and commented in length on this phenomenon that was so different from prevalent European concepts. He realized that "the Chiefs sisters son alwaies succeeds and never his own."<sup>16</sup> Thus alien blood did not confuse issues of clan, town, or tribal status. Indians initially had little concept of private land ownership, being more oriented to usufruct, that is whoever used the land had rights over it. In theory, this gave the women, as the ones producing perhaps fifty percent or more of the food supply, more control over the land than the men. Males traditionally owned the tools or weapons they used, as well as their clothes and what

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<sup>14</sup>Nairne, Muskhogeian Journeys, 63.

<sup>15</sup>Adair, History of the Indians, 241.

<sup>16</sup>Nairne, Muskhogeian Journals, 33, 39, 61.

Europeans regarded as personal possessions, but dwellings and agricultural tools, used mostly by women, were owned by women. As a rule, what people used in their work or fashioned themselves was considered theirs.<sup>17</sup> It was thus easy for a man to remove his possessions from his wife's home if the relationship ended, for everything he owned was portable. As many European fathers, such as George Galphin in Georgia, would find to their astonishment, they had little control over the education of their children -- even teaching male children the arts of war and hunting was a role for the mother's brother or another close male relative within the mother's clan.<sup>18</sup>

Divorce was so common that Indian marriages resembled serial monogamy. John Lawson, raised in the English patriarchal system of the early years of the eighteenth century, commented with surprise on the ease of divorce and how "all the Children go along with the Mother."<sup>19</sup> Divorce for most of the southeastern tribes was "at the choice of either of the parties," another shock to Europeans whose women did not enjoy this right.<sup>20</sup> Among

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<sup>17</sup>Reid, Law of Blood, 126-29.

<sup>18</sup>Wright, Creeks and Seminoles, 19; Braund, Deerskin and Duffels, 132.

<sup>19</sup>Lawson, New Voyage, 192-93.

<sup>20</sup>Bartram, "Observations on the Creek and Cherokee Indians, 1789," Eur. Amer. Eth. 3:65.

the Creeks, a man could remarry as soon as he left his wife, but a woman had to wait until after the annual Green Corn harvest festive, the busk, with its purification ceremonies.<sup>21</sup> While only Chickasaw men could initiate divorce, Nairne believed that women could "by sullen pouts or other methods of Female Management order matters so that her husband will dismiss her." The Chickasaw experience was an exception to the usual rule in the Southeast.<sup>22</sup>

While polygyny was allowable, most Indian marriages were monogamous. A few chiefs had more than one wife, but this custom seemed to become less prevalent with time among the Indians closest to the English, the Creeks and Cherokees. An observer of the Yuchis of Georgia in the early 1730s remarked that "among them no one knows of polygamy."<sup>23</sup> Occasionally, sororal polygyny was practiced since a man took a wife's unmarried or widowed sister who lived in the household as a second wife.<sup>24</sup> At least in

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<sup>21</sup>Cashin, Lachlan McGillivray, 71.

<sup>22</sup>Nairne, Muskhogean Journey, 47.

<sup>23</sup>Smith, "Description of Virginia," in Tyler, ed. Narratives of Early Virginia, 114; Philip Georg Friedrich von Reck, Von Reck's Voyage: Drawings and Journal of Philip Georg Friedrich von Reck, ed. Kristian Hvidt (Savannah: The Beehive Press, 1980), 42.

<sup>24</sup>William S. Willis, "Colonial Conflict and the Cherokee Indians, 1710-1760," Ph.D. Diss., Columbia University, 1955, 135-42, is a detailed account of Cherokee views on marriage.

Creek society, the husband needed the consent of his first wife before he could take another even in this fashion.<sup>25</sup> Once again, the Chickasaws may be the clearest exception. Nairne observed in 1708 that the Chickasaw "men of note have all 3 or 4 wives a peice," and John Buckles, a trader estimating the population of that nation in 1754, reckoned that "every Fellow has at least 2 or 3 Wives and young Girls."<sup>26</sup> Not surprisingly, a few of the traders, most clearly George Galphin, whole-heartedly embraced this feature of native life.<sup>27</sup>

These attitudes to divorce, exogamous marriage, and matrilineal inheritance explain how easy it was for Indian women to assimilate European traders into the traditional patterns of tribal life as temporary, semi-permanent, or lasting partners. Nairne quipped that these informal marriages were so valuable that "there are some of our Countrymen of such prudence and forecast, that in case one family should fail them, take care to make themselves akin

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<sup>25</sup>George Stiggins, "A Historical Narration of the Genealogy, Traditions, and Downfall of the Creek Tribe of Indians," in Sturtevant, Creek Sourcebook, 38.

<sup>26</sup>Letter of John Buckles to Governor Glen, June 26, 1754, McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-1754, 514; Nairne, Muskhoegan Journals, 46.

<sup>27</sup>He seems to have had a wife back in Ireland as well as his black and Indian consorts. See Friedrich P. Hamer, "Indian Traders, Land, and Power -- a Comparative Study of George Galphin on the Southern Frontier and Three Northern Traders," M.A. Thesis, University of South Carolina, 1982.

to severall."<sup>28</sup>

Most Indian women also had a freer choice of marriage partners than most European women of this time, for "a marriage is settled by the agreement of both people."<sup>29</sup> While the prospective bridegroom negotiated first with the woman's parents, and she had to listen to his proposal, "she is at her own choice whether to stay" and accept him.<sup>30</sup> Bernard Romans, an observer of Indian life in the 1760s and 1770s, was struck with the simplicity of Creeks marriage. It was "without much ceremony, seldom any more than to make some presents to the parents, and to have a feast or hearty regale."<sup>31</sup> There were no religious ceremonies or religious vows, no applications or forms to sign or mark, merely an acknowledgment by the town that an acceptable union was taking place. This is one reason why so many traders found it easy to contract such a marriage that gave them stable relationships and an acknowledged position in Indian society, without feeling guilty about committing official polygamy and breaking any Christian vows.

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<sup>28</sup>Nairne, Muskhogeon Journeys, 61.

<sup>29</sup>Von Reck, Voyage, 48.

<sup>30</sup>Adair, History of the Indians, 146.

<sup>31</sup>Romans, Natural History of Florida, ed. Rembert W. Patrick, (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 1962), 97.



Indian-white marriages are difficult to uncover because of the lack of formalities. It is rare that a white official or trader married in a Christian ceremony, for most unions were "à la façon du pays," to use the phrase common in another, more northerly sphere of the British fur trade: Hudson's Bay.<sup>32</sup> Jennifer Brown's study of the traders of that region has shown a similar trend of forging connections with native women, and the emergence of a métis community. Native families there were not accepted by whites as legitimate wives and children but were legally designated as "strangers in blood."<sup>33</sup> There are many parallels between the two regions. For example, in the earlier years, lending or exchanging wives or daughters with honored foreign guests was a feature of both.<sup>34</sup> British authorities, whether the Hudson's Bay Company [HBC] or South Carolina's government, failed to control their minions who were trading among the Indians. The HBC had initially forbidden marriages with native women, but,

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<sup>32</sup>Sylvia Van Kirk, Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society in Western Canada, 1670-1870 (Winnipeg, Manitoba: Watson & Dwyer Publishing Co., c. 1980), chap. 2 for an overview of this "custom of the country" in Canada.

<sup>33</sup>Jennifer S. H. Brown, Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade County Families in Indian Country (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980), xii, xvii, xxi, 61-78.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., 60; also above 53, fn 36, for Creek Emperor Brims offering his daughters unsuccessfully to two British officials.

because of the blatant refusal to comply, changed that regulation by 1770.<sup>35</sup> With time, it was the métis daughters of earlier HBC employees who were pursued in marriages by the traders of the next generation, for they had many advantages over full-blooded natives or white imports: they were familiar with both societies, and could help newcomers rapidly learn the language and customs of their new society.<sup>36</sup> Similarly in the Southeast, the offspring of leading traders and native women frequently married into the next generation of traders. Thus, over time, most of the so-called "half-breeds" had more white than Indian blood in their veins. One of the clearest examples is Alexander McGillivrey, the Creek leader who plagued the new state of Georgia.<sup>37</sup> While his mother and grandmother are always referred to as "Indians," they, too, had white fathers. Alexander's "blood-pool" was more white than Creek, for he had a French grandfather on his mother's side. Not one of those marriages, however, not even that of his father, was legally recorded, although Lachlan was perhaps an exception in regarding his Creek spouse, Sehoy

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<sup>35</sup>Brown, Strangers in Blood, 51-59.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., 73.

<sup>37</sup>For Alexander McGillivray, see John W. Caughey, McGillivray of the Creeks (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1938).

Marchand, as his only wife.<sup>38</sup> The parallel with the HBC is not absolute, however, for the Canadian Indians did not accord their women as high a status as those in the Southeast. Furthermore, the HBC employees were transients in Indian country and aimed at retiring home to Britain. That intention was not the norm in the South, although Lachlan McGillivray did so with the outbreak of the American Revolution.

Few Indian-trader marriages made their way into the official records. In April 1736, General James Oglethorpe, one of Georgia's founders, wrote to its Trustees in Britain applauding a white man's marriage to an unbaptized Indian. The people of Savannah "thought they had done a very pretty thing in getting an Intermarriage." The bride was related to Tomochichi, the chief of the Yamacraws who had welcomed Savannah's settlers and helped to ease their early years. It was Tomochichi who had given her away, British style.<sup>39</sup> Her trader bridegroom, however, rather spoiled the effect of what many believed a magnanimous act, by writing to Oglethorpe that he hoped "time will wean her of the Savage

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<sup>38</sup>Cashin, Lachlan McGillivray, 71-73.

<sup>39</sup>Oglethorpe to the Trustees, Frederica, 24 April, 1736, "Letters from General Oglethorpe", Collections of the Georgia Historical Society, 3 (1873): 31-32.

way of Living."<sup>40</sup> Between these two sources emerges a rare glimpse of a Christian marriage ceremony between an English trader and an Indian performed by the Reverend Dr. Samuel Quincey, and, even rarer, the bride's name -- Tuscanies -- is revealed. In another instance, Robert Johnson, a lower ranked South Carolina trader, wrote his will in 1725 on the occasion of his marriage to Catharina, an Indian woman. She was pregnant at the time and he wished to ensure "her residency in my house" if she did not remarry, and a sum of money if she did. The child was "to have equal share with my other children," for Johnson had sons and daughters from a previous marriage.<sup>41</sup>

While most trader marriages were not sanctified by a Christian service, it is clear that such liaisons were not "unclean" in the eyes of the Indians. Their concept of marriage and family stability, was very different from the European. Most tribes had rigid standards and punishments to deal with adultery which they regarded as a heinous crime. In some nations, it was punished merely by cutting off a woman's hair, in others, the punishment included

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<sup>40</sup>Joseph Fitzwater to Oglethorpe, August 1735, CRG 20: 427.

<sup>41</sup>Carolyn T. Moore and Agatha Aimar Simmons, eds. Abstracts of the Wills of the State of South Carolina, 1670-1740 vol. 1: 217-18. He had paid a license fee in June 1730, Records of the Public Treasurer, SC-Ar microfilm M-3.

cutting off the tip of the nose.<sup>42</sup> Adair said that "the trading people's ears are often in danger by the sharpness of this law."<sup>43</sup> In the 1730s, "one Cockran," a trader among the Creeks, had one of his ears lopped off for adultery with the wife of a tribal leader. This was an interesting case, for Cockran had earlier been offered that same chief's daughter as a "Bedfellow."<sup>44</sup> Early in the eighteenth century, the Chickasaws who were "very jealous of their wives" put adulterous wives and their lovers to death.<sup>45</sup> At the other end of the spectrum, the Cherokees saw nothing wrong with adultery, since wife and husband were free to separate at any time, the man just by leaving their dwelling or the woman by merely putting his few possessions outside it.<sup>46</sup> Relationships with unattached Indian women, however long lasting, were acceptable as long as the women consented, for young girls "are the mistresses of their own bodies," as they related to a young Frenchman

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<sup>42</sup>Romans, Natural History of Florida, 64.

<sup>43</sup>Adair, History of the Indians, 151n.

<sup>44</sup>"Letter of Sutherland to My Lord," SCHM 68 (1967): 83.

<sup>45</sup>Nairne, Muskhogean Journeys, 47; Romans, History of Florida, 64; Adair, History of the Indians, 151-52, saw a "graduation" of punishments among the Chickasaws, with death as the price for continuing lapses.

<sup>46</sup>Reid, Law of Blood, 116-19.

in the 1720s.<sup>47</sup>

The desirability of promoting or sanctioning such interracial marriages was debated not only in British society but also among the French at Mobile. Governor Bienville and Father [Père] Henri Roulleaux La Vente, the first priest at Mobile, wrote vituperative letters to their home authorities about each other's views. La Vente disliked the casual cohabitation that took place between traders, often long-ranging Canadian coureurs de bois, and Indian women. This Jesuit priest advocated stable Christian marriages that would encourage the spread of Catholicism and civilization among the Indians. Bienville contended that this would not be the result, but that French morals and culture would be debased as colonists and traders sank even closer to the level of the "savages."<sup>48</sup>

Whatever the official colonial policy on interracial marriages, such liaisons were inevitable given the paucity of European women on the frontier. As early as 1737, an agent for Georgia commented on the huge number of mixed offspring: "all the Indian Traders had wives among the Indians . . . and he believed there were 400 children So

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<sup>47</sup>"Journal of Diron D'Artaguiette, 1722-1723," in Mereness, Travels in the American Colonies, 73.

<sup>48</sup>For a most readable account, see Higginbotham, Old Mobile, 280-83.

begotten."<sup>49</sup> One of the most prominent of these offspring was Coosaponakeesa, or Mary Musgrove-Mathews-Bosomworth. She was Georgia's counterpart to Pocahontas in the "Indian Princess" mystique.<sup>50</sup> However, even her ancestry, both Indian and white, is obscure and much debated.<sup>51</sup> In one version, her mother was sister to Creek "Emperor" Brims, implying that she was closely related to Chigelly, the principal Lower Creek chief at the time of Georgia's founding. This may be just one more myth created by Mary herself. She was in reality the daughter of a Tuckabatchee woman of unknown status and name, as the Georgia council members knew in 1749.<sup>52</sup> Mary's father was a British

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<sup>49</sup>Mr. Tanner's Report in John Perceval Egmont, The Journal of the Earl of Egmont: Abstract of the Trustees Proceedings for Establishing the Colony of Georgia, 1732-1738 ed. Robert G. McPherson (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1962), 272-73.

<sup>50</sup>For a perceptive discussion of the impact on Europeans of the "Noble Indian Princess myth," see Rayna Green, "The Pocahontas Perplex: the Image of Indian Women in American Culture" Massachusetts Review 13 (1975): 698-714. This is an exploration of both the positive and negative imagery connected with the Indian woman, showing on balance, that the only "good" Indian woman is a traitor to her native culture and religion. J. Frederick Fausz, "Opechancanough; Indian Resistance Leader," in Gary B. Nash and David G. Sweet, eds., Struggle and Survival in Colonial America (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1981), 21-37.

<sup>51</sup>Rodney M. Baine, "Myths of Mary Musgrove" GHQ 76 (1992): 428-35, is the most recent -- and accurate -- attempt to set the record straight.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 429-30.

trader named Griffin but many early genealogists, and even some recent scholars, have speculated against the best evidence that her maternal grandfather was the well-known explorer and trader, Dr. Henry Woodward.<sup>53</sup> Her brother's name, however, was Edward Griffin. Mary, probably born around 1700, had married the son of a leading South Carolinian soldier, Indian trader and Council member of the early years, Colonel John Musgrove, around 1716. He also had an unnamed Creek mother.

These prominent offspring were exceptionally prone to those weaknesses that result from the disruption of traditional culture. Johnny Musgrove was a trader and skilled interpreter who visited London in 1734 with a party of visiting Creeks dignitaries. He spent much of his time there, as at home in Georgia, drunk.<sup>54</sup> Thomas Jones, whose mother was a Choctaw Indian and whose father's career led from trader to respected Council member, was yet another interpreter with a drinking problem.<sup>55</sup> Mary Bosomworth became unstable according to Georgia officials after her friend General Oglethorpe left Georgia. She remained one of the largest landholders in the colony but

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<sup>53</sup>Corkran, Creek Frontier, 31, 63.

<sup>54</sup>Egmont, Journal of the Trustees, 66. Musgrove was too drunk on 19 October 1734 to interpret a talk between the Trustees and the Creeks.

<sup>55</sup>Letter dated September 24, 1723, BPRO 10:156.



lost power as her influence over a new generation of Creek leaders dwindled. According to her last husband, she expended much energy and money to end the Creek-Cherokee war, undergoing "Hardships and Fatigues which it is scarce creditabel that a Woman of her Corpalency could ever have endured." She was hardly the lithe young princess of the Pocahontas mold by this time.<sup>56</sup> She spent over ten years bitterly fighting for compensation for her services to Georgia and South Carolina, and was moderately successful in 1759 when she received the sea island of St. Catherine and some cash.<sup>57</sup>

Possibly the luckiest psychologically of the métis were those whose fathers had lowly positions in the white hierarchy and who identified completely with their mother's side. Most of these have left no trace in the official record; yet, many of the trouble makers in the nations by the 1750s are identified as "half-breeds." Andrew White, accused of slaughtering a trader in Cherokee country, blamed the incident on his "Passion" while on the war path pursuing Creeks who had killed one of his Indian relatives. He said he had never been "disrespectful" to whites before, for "I account myself as much a white Man as an Indian. My

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<sup>56</sup>McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-1754, 350-51.

<sup>57</sup>J. P. Corry, "Some New Light on the Bosomworth Claims," GHQ 25 (1941): 221.

Father was a white Man and I respect all white Men on that Account."<sup>58</sup> He was solidly stuck between two cultures and two systems with different outlooks on murder or manslaughter. While he was initially prepared to throw himself on the mercy of the colonial system of justice, it later appears that the Cherokees resisted handing him over.<sup>59</sup>

## II

Alliances between native women and white traders were simultaneously rewarding and confusing as both parties had their own preconceptions of what was an appropriate activity and role for the other. Just as Indian women had more control over their marital status, so, too, did their well-defined economic sphere result in their wielding more power and influence within their world than did most European women of the time.<sup>60</sup> This was confusing to their

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<sup>58</sup>Talk of Skiagusta of Keowee, nd [April 1752], McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1750-1754, 249-50.

<sup>59</sup>David H. Corkran, The Cherokee Frontier: Conflict and Survival, 1740-1762 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), 32, 35; Journal of Thomas Bosomworth, July 29, 1752, Ibid., 272.

<sup>60</sup>See Kathryn E. Holland Braund, "Guardians of Tradition and Handmaidens to Change: Women's Roles in Creek Economic and Social Life During the Eighteenth Century" American Indian Quarterly 14 (1990): 242.

white consorts but they were the visitors in an alien society and had to accept some facets of a situation they neither understood nor liked. From the first settlement of Virginia, many observers had commented on the division of labor in Indian society, regarding the men's work as "fishing, hunting, wars, and such manlike exercise. scorning to be seene in any womanlike exercise . . . the women and children do the rest of the work."<sup>61</sup> Thus arose the often recited and rehashed images of "lazy" native men, and the poor, overworked "squaw" as a powerless beast of burden, no better than a slave.<sup>62</sup>

Early observers who sympathized with the overworked Indian women had not understood what they saw. John Smith and William Byrd II had, indeed, seen women working hard at the everyday tasks of weeding and harvesting well-tended fields. What they had not seen was how the men also helped in the initial stage of preparing the fields for sowing, sometimes clearing large trees by girdling and burning. Creek men "rarely go to war till they have helped the women to plant a sufficient plenty of provisions."<sup>63</sup> The

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<sup>61</sup>John Smith, "Description of Virginia," in Tyler, Narratives of Early Virginia, 101; above, 54.

<sup>62</sup>Green, "Pocahontas Perplex." The darker side of the image was Indian women as sensual, tempting creatures, overburdened and neglected in their own culture.

<sup>63</sup>Adair, History of the Indians, 276.

division of labor in the Southeast placed primary responsibility for acquiring most of the meat on the men. This activity meant the removal of the younger men from their villages for long periods every year. As time passed and skins became increasingly valued as the means of exchange for necessary European-made goods, hunting was valued more than ever as a serious business and hunting expeditions lasted longer as the herds in the vicinity of the settled villages disappeared and the processing of the skins also demanded more time.

The work of the Creek women consisted of

dressing the victuals, preparing, scraping, braining, rubbing and smoaking the Roe skins, preparing cassine drink, . . . making cold flour for travelling, gathering nuts and making their milk, likewise in making baskets, brooms, pots, bowls and other earthen and wooden vessels.<sup>64</sup>

These were all essential activities in everyday life. Men could not go hunting without the shoes women fashioned for them from buffalo or deer skins, and one way in which women could show their disapproval of a prospective sortie without the chance to veto such an action in official councils, was to refuse to make these shoes or to provide the necessary dried food. The traders were able to benefit in terms of material comfort from their spouses' domestic and gardening activities, but were not at their economic

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<sup>64</sup>Romans, Natural History of Florida, 96.

mercy the same way as native men.

The division of roles along gender lines was not absolute. Women were essential to the production end of the skin trade and many had traditionally traveled with Indian war and hunting parties.<sup>65</sup> Indian women went on the war path with men to sing "the enlivening war song in the time of an attack" and to prepare the food.<sup>66</sup> They were also the cooks, and essential to grinding corn for making bread. In March 1740, Oglethorpe's Indians attacking St. Augustine had to be provided with "Rice, instead of Corn, . . . having no Women with them to parch or pound their Corn."<sup>67</sup> Lawson had commented that "Savage Men never beat their Corn to make Bread; but that is Womens Work, especially the Girls."<sup>68</sup>

Among the Chickasaws, women on expeditions did more than household-type chores. Nairne had seen Chickasaw women actually in battle and Romans mentioned that he had "several times seen armed women . . . going in pursuit of

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<sup>65</sup>Women's role as producers and processors of items needed for the intercontinental trade was completely ignored by European observers. See Braund, Deerskin and Duffels, 22-23.

<sup>66</sup>Adair, History of the Indians, 343.

<sup>67</sup>July 1, 1741, JCHA 1741-1742, 179.

<sup>68</sup>Lawson, New Voyage, 216

the invading enemy."<sup>69</sup> A band of French-allied Choctaws in 1739 had "by mistake . . . captured six [Abeka] women who were hunting."<sup>70</sup> Some women who accompanied hunting parties chose this lifestyle instead of the traditional role of wife and mother. At times it was essential to do "men's work," such as hunting or defending the old and young if the able-bodied males were all out hunting or on the warpath.

One commonly given reason for the difficulties of writing either women's history or Native American history is that history is written by the victors. Thus one gropes towards the Indian female experience under a double disadvantage. Most historians are painfully aware of the "invisibility" of females in general in our written past.<sup>71</sup> This is even more true for the history of non-literate Indians. Native women who made it into the official record were leaders in their society, those complaining about trader or other abuse, those who figure posthumously as "murdered" by hostile Indians, or those

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<sup>69</sup>Romans, Natural History of Florida, 71.

<sup>70</sup>Rowland Dunbar and A. G. Sanders, eds., Mississippi Provincial Archives, 1729-1740: French Dominion [MPA-FD] (Jackson, MS: Printers of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, 1927) 1:395.

<sup>71</sup>Elise Boulding, The Underside of History: A View of Women through Time (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1976), 8.

enslaved by Europeans. This problem of sampling reinforces the idea of the women -- especially of minority groups -- as victims.

Ironically, Indian women, so often designated as victims, were in a position to decide the fate of captives taken in war. Women who had lost family members and partners could opt whether to save captives from death to take the place of the deceased through adoption. Adoption meant that the newcomer would, in effect, become the deceased. If the dead person was a woman's husband, an adoptee would thus receive his clothing, his weapons, and his widow. He acquired the dead person's name, family affection, and status within the tribe, and was treated in all respects as if he were that person. Adoption was never automatic, although it became more common with the depopulation of the eighteenth century and the increasing need to replenish tribal numbers, especially after the devastating 1738 smallpox epidemic. Women made these life-and-death decisions. If the captive's fate was death, women made it a long-drawn out affair, making "a furious on-set with their burning torches," inflicting pains and mutilations as the fiery torture was prolonged over several days. It was they who scalped and dismembered the victim, all the while singing "with religious joy."<sup>72</sup> Small

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<sup>72</sup>Adair, History of the Indians, 418-19.

wonder that Governor Glen could refer to the Indians as "Cruel & Barbarous . . . even their Women, those who in all other Nations are called the Soft & tender Sex, with them are Nursed up in Blood, & taught to delight in Murders & Torturing."<sup>73</sup>

The master traders always boasted that their consorts were important leaders in their tribes: James Adair purportedly wrote his book while enjoying the company of a "Chikkasah female, as great a princess as ever lived among the ancient Peruvians, or Mexicans."<sup>74</sup> Many Indian women were important tribal leaders, meriting formal titles such as "war woman" or "beloved woman."<sup>75</sup> When influential Indians visited Charles Town for formal conferences with the governors, their wives and other female relatives expected to receive gifts and even took part in the ceremonies.<sup>76</sup> There are accounts of women taking a lead in talks, as did Senawki, Tomochichi's wife, with John

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<sup>73</sup>Caroliniana Library, Columbia, SC, James Glen Papers 1738-1777, #7 c. 1750 speech by Governor James Glen, "Our Situation With Regard to the Indians," 4.

<sup>74</sup>Adair, History of the Indians, 447-48.

<sup>75</sup>For example, McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1750-1754, 269; William Bartram had the name of War-woman's Creek explained to him by "an ancient trader" as a place where a Cherokee woman's "valor and stratagem" had won her tribe a decisive victory, in Bartram, "Observations, 1789," 32.

<sup>76</sup>For example, the Creek chief Allic's wife, daughter and sister attended and received lavish presents, CJ, 22 November 1746. Photostat # 2, SC-Ar.



Wesley, one-time Indian agent for Georgia.<sup>77</sup> Among the Creeks, Mary Bosomworth was also designated a "beloved woman" by the 1750s. Her status among the Creeks was not derived from her acceptance by white authorities but stemmed from her kin connections.<sup>78</sup> This in turn helped the English authorities to pursue their interests through her mediation.

### III

Indian women gained status among their peers by marrying men who brought novelties into their homes for the traders came laden with the most modern technology and labor-saving devices. Adair had observed "the Women are the chief, if not the only manufacturers."<sup>79</sup> They were therefore, like consumers today, receptive to new goods that made their lives easier. Why make and then have to lug around a heavy earthenware pot if your husband could furnish lightweight, practically unbreakable copper kettles? Metal axes and hoes made gardening -- another women's activity -- much more efficient. It was not a case

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<sup>77</sup>February 14, 1736, Egmont, Journal of the Trustees, 131-32.

<sup>78</sup>McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-1754, 397, 495.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., 456.

of falling for a few beads and looking glasses: an alliance with a trader enhanced a woman's quality of life. A trader's position as provider of guns, ammunition, cloth, paint, and hatchets made the his compound a dynamic place where the latest news and gossip as well as goods circulated, thereby adding to the woman's status in the village. At least one historian believes that these trader compounds had replaced the old council houses and sacred grounds as new centers of village life as early as 1730.<sup>80</sup>

A veteran trader among the Cherokees noted in 1725 that "the women rules the roost and wears the breeches and sometimes will beat their husbands within an inch of their lives."<sup>81</sup> There are certainly documented instances of women not doing what their menfolk -- European or native -- wished. The most famous example occurred during a Cherokee attempt in the 1760s to reduce a British frontier fort to starvation. The official reports said the women opposed such action because they did not wish to lose their ribbons and other trifles. A more persuasive argument for the women's conduct is that many had "husbands" within the fort, and this was why they persistently and unrepentantly

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<sup>80</sup>Arrell M. Gibson, The Chickasaws (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971), 40.

<sup>81</sup>Alexander Long, "A Small Postscript of the ways and maners of the Indians called Charikees," ed. David R. Corkran Southern Indian Studies 21 (1969): 30.

sneaked corn and other provisions to their men.<sup>82</sup>

Many Indian and especially métis women played important roles in frontier diplomacy. Mary Bosomworth is the most obvious example of an official envoy and trader - - although it was her first two husbands who held the licenses from Carolina and Georgia -- who was a leading interpreter between the different cultures. She could keep Indian leaders, to whom protocol was so important, content. Georgia's leaders often enlisted her services when Indian delegates visited Savannah, as in September 1721, to "amuse them for a while as she best knew how."<sup>83</sup> Perhaps her rather strange second marriage to a possible ex-indentured servant, was a way of ensuring that she could continue to get trading licenses and other acknowledgments of status from white society.

Other women, often unnamed, played key interpretive roles. When a "linguister" was needed in 1717 to aid a garrison and trading factory, an agent reported that the colony had access to "an Indian Woman, for that Purpose."<sup>84</sup> Another, only identified as "Bartlet's Wife,"

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<sup>82</sup>See Robert L. Meriwether, The Expansion of South Carolina, 1729-1765 (Kingsport, TN: Southern Publishers, Inc., 1940), 230-35.

<sup>83</sup>"Stephens' Journal of the Proceedings in Georgia, 1737-1740." CRG 4:204.

<sup>84</sup>JCIT, November 22, 1716, 127.

played a similar role in listening to, and determining Creeks grievances in 1735.<sup>85</sup>

Many Indian women relayed vital information to the colony's officials and traders. In 1751, James Maxwell, a leading if somewhat corrupt trader among the Cherokees, was warned by an unnamed Indian woman that some "Northward" -- Iroquoian -- Indians had killed a trader, and that another had narrowly escaped the same fate. He consulted the local headmen, and was told that more of these Indians were on the way, so that the traders in the area and the "Wenches kept by the white Men" were well advised to leave quickly.<sup>86</sup> In the 1750s, an Indian named Nancy Butler brought the commander of one of the frontier forts crucial news that the headmen of the Cherokee town of Tellico had succumbed to French propaganda and were planning a campaign against the English. Nancy was a spy, getting her information directly from the "King" of Tellico's wife. James Butler, a leading trader in the Cherokees at that time, might have been her father, while another member of the same family, Hugh, had been an agent to the Cherokees in the late 1730s. Another "Cherokee Wench," Oxinaa, periodically relayed intelligence to the same English commander, including details of a conference between French

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<sup>85</sup>CRG 20:185.

<sup>86</sup>McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-54, 117.

officials and the leaders of Tellico.<sup>87</sup>

In contrast with the free wives, exercising a high degree of independence in their personal life, many Indian women were slaves. In an unusual will dated 1707, a low-status trader, Richard Prize, left his estate to his daughters, Elizabeth and Sarah. However, he also freed "an Indian woman of mine by whom I have two Children Elizabeth and Sarah." He in effect legally acknowledged his children, if not their Indian mother, although he did set her free and bequeathed her two Indian slaves.<sup>88</sup>

#### IV

The comforts of a family life within Indian country helped many a trader decide to make a lifetime career from the trade. Proof that the trading life was both economically profitable and satisfying socially can be seen in the length of time some master traders remained in the trade. As early as 1751, Robert Bunning mentioned that he had been among the Cherokees for thirty-seven year, Cornelius Dougherty for thirty-two years, James Beamer for

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<sup>87</sup>McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1754-1760, 281, 362-63, 410-12.

<sup>88</sup>Records of the Secretary of the Province, (1700-1710), 165-66.

twenty-seven, and Ludovic Grant, for twenty-six years.<sup>89</sup> They had acted for the government on numerous occasions as official envoys, carriers of information, and interpreters. It is clear that Dougherty and Beamer had native wives and offspring, as probably did the other two.<sup>90</sup> Thomas Beamer, James' half-Cherokee son, seems to have been an exceptional figure, respected in both his worlds. He, also a trader, aided his father's escape from Cherokee country at the outbreak of the Cherokee War in 1760 and took care of his mother's safety.<sup>91</sup> James Beamer had been instrumental in organizing a company to control the Cherokee trade, working in partnership in the 1730s with other leading traders and merchants such as Daniel Green, Samuel Brown who was possibly of Indian descent, Joseph Baker, William Hatton, Gregory Haynes, Jacob Morris, Lachlan McBean, as well as Dougherty.<sup>92</sup>

Adair comes closest to giving us a depiction of

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<sup>89</sup>Memorial of Robert Bunning and Others, November 22, 1751, McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-1754, 148.

<sup>90</sup>It is always hard to determine who was, or had, half-breed offspring. Only 15 of 686 traders were clearly of mixed-blood, with at least three probable others; at least 31 had recorded Indian spouses. Because of the nature of official records, most of the offspring or wives have not made it into the European records.

<sup>91</sup>Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, 221-22; Moore, SC Will Abstract 3:5-6.

<sup>92</sup>See chap. 3. Hatton had "Indian" offspring, see McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1754-1760, 20.

everyday trader life by the mid-eighteenth century, when most master traders lived just outside the traditional Indian village. Unfortunately, he was reticent about his personal life, although there is reason to believe that he, too, had Indian children. Traders set up their compounds at "a very convenient distance" from the Indian village in order to safeguard their livestock from "Indian Youth," according to him. Was this a result of trader insecurity, despite marital ties with the natives, or did it also reflect an Indian desire to keep aliens out of their immediate villages? John Sharp's 1720s compound was similarly outside his Cherokee trading village. When his compound was attacked by some Creek youths and left without goods, furniture, or victuals, the local villagers were close enough to watch the incident from the safety of their town. Sharp may have had no marital and therefore no clan ties that made his native trading partners feel they had to defend their trader.<sup>93</sup>

The master trader's complex was larger than any Indian leader's compound with its storage sheds, granaries, and hot-houses.<sup>94</sup> These buildings were centers where women, slaves, packhorsemen and other servants worked at various tasks, from loading goods on to horses to the time-

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<sup>93</sup>See chap 7 and Appendix III.

<sup>94</sup>Adair, History of the Indians, xviii-xx, 442-46.

consuming, back-breaking work of scraping deer skins free of fur and excess membrane from both sides, then soaking the thin core in a solution of brains. Before the final process of smoking that turned raw skins into soft, malleable "dressed skins," the brains-drenched skins had to be continuously worked until dry.<sup>95</sup> Most master-trader households included slaves, both Indian and black, despite the nominal prohibition of the Commons House of Assembly in 1701 against sending any black "Servant or Slave" beyond Savano Town into Indian country.<sup>96</sup> Under her Trustees, Georgia had a total but ineffective ban on black slavery. By the middle of the eighteenth century, well over half the traders owned slaves, and agents sent to the Indian nations by South Carolina were charged with sending black slaves out of the area and fining their owners.<sup>97</sup> Many slaves had special skills, as did Creek trader Alexander Wood's black woman, who could speak English, Chickasaw, "and

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<sup>95</sup>As someone fortunate enough to attend a workshop on "preparing deer skins the Indian way" at Jamestown Settlement in January 1990, I can attest to the skill and patience of those who processed them, as well as to the physical endurance required. If the wet skins are not continuously kneaded until dry, they become hard -- as I discovered.

<sup>96</sup>See Duncan, "Servitude and Slavery," 604.

<sup>97</sup>See chap. 6. "Fitch's Journal, 1725," in Mereness, Travels in the American Colonies, 185-87, 209-12. Of the 335 traders active 1730-1750, at least 62 owned black slaves.



perhaps French."<sup>98</sup> George Galphin in Georgia was an immigrant who found the Indian trade a means of social mobility and much personal satisfaction, living at his establishment at Silver Bluff overlooking the Savannah River with Creek and black wives and children, many of whom he freed in his will.<sup>99</sup>

"Male bonding," as one might term it today, also occurred, both between white traders, and between individual traders and natives. A trader community emerged, for they had to keep in touch with each other and pass on information for their common safety and profit. They acted as each others' executors and inventoried the estates of deceased colleagues, as well as setting up both formal and informal, short and long-term partnerships. The Augusta storekeepers in particular were in great demand as executors. John Rae functioned as executor to traders John Blenfield and John Pettigrew. His daughters, Jane and Mary, even received legacies from Blenfield.<sup>100</sup> Marriages

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<sup>98</sup>SCG, September 22, 1746.

<sup>99</sup>Galphin's will dated 1776 in Willie P. Younge, comp., Abstract of Old Ninety-Six and Abbeville District Wills and Bonds, reprint, (Vidalia, GA: Georgia Genealogical Reprints, 1969), 128-29.

<sup>100</sup>Abstract of the Colonial Wills of the State of Georgia, 1733-1777 (Atlanta: GA Dept. of Archives and History, 1962, 13. Isaac Barksdale, Rae's partner was another witness and they had both witnessed George Hunter's will.

between trader offspring or with widows, Indian or European, were common. John Cragg married Mary Welch, widow of James Welch in 1733. Cragg had been executor for traders Martin Keane and James Kelly, and he received a legacy in trader Darby McLaughlin's will.<sup>101</sup> Traders also sued each other to receive compensation for promissory notes that had not been repaid in a timely fashion; however, they also helped each other in times of trouble. One man had moved from Virginia, only to find that his partner-to-be had died. He was in "a starving Condition and forced to apply to the Traders for Relief," and had received food and shelter from them.<sup>102</sup>

The most famous example of the power of clan brotherhood occurred in 1760 when the Cherokee chief, Little Carpenter, also known as Attakullakulla, saved his friend, Indian Superintendent John Stuart, from the fate of most of the denizens of Fort Loudoun in 1760.<sup>103</sup> This was not an isolated case. The Cherokees remained silent when

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<sup>101</sup>CT Wills, Book 4 (1736-1740): 4, 43-44, 197, 243; Wills Book 6 (1747-1752): 43-44; JR-CCP 1741 26A Bx 53A, merchants Joseph Wragg & Richard Lambton vs. Cragg as executor of James Kelly.

<sup>102</sup>Grant to Glen, May 4, 1752, McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1750-1754, 238.

<sup>103</sup>Howard H. Peckham, The Colonial Wars 1689-1762 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 201-05; P. M. Hamer, "Fort Loudoun in the Cherokee War 1758-61," NCHR 2 (1925): 442-58.

Colonel George Chicken asked them in 1725 about Alexander Long's possible defection to the French.<sup>104</sup> Some Indians refused to turn over a Samuel Jarron who had "escaped the Watch" at Keowee, a Cherokee town. The Indians' leader explained "we look upon him . . . as one of our Brothers. He has lived among us several Years; he has had some of our Women, and has got Children by them. He is our Relation, and shan't be taken up."<sup>105</sup>

Not surprisingly, in light of the frequency of trader-Indian cohabitation and an attitude on the Indian side that resembled serial monogamy, one legacy of the mingling of cultures and genes was the prevalence of venereal diseases. Syphilis was a virulent plague in the backcountry. As early as the 1690s, a trader wrote home to Scotland that he had left the trade, "frie from that Epidemick Vice, too accustomed to Indian traders [who] cohabite with the women, a thing I abhor'd to think of."<sup>106</sup> He was clearly in a minority in his views. A century later, however, William Bartram did not think the disease was ubiquitous "unless among the white traders, who themselves say, as

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<sup>104</sup>"Chicken's Journal, 1725," in Mereness, Travels in the American Colonies, 130.

<sup>105</sup>Letter of Captain Paul Demere to Governor Glen, April 2, 1758, McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1754-1760, 456.

<sup>106</sup>"John Stewart to William Dunlop, 20 October, 1693," SCHM 32 (1931): 172.

well as the Indians, that it might be eradicated if the traders did not carry it with them to the nations when they return with their merchandise."<sup>107</sup> Some ex-traders, according to Adair, became experts in making "anti-venereal, a large dose of old Jamaica [Rum] and qualified mercury mixt together," which they gave their slaves.<sup>108</sup>

The European who came into the nations, while he fitted into native society in many ways, disrupted the traditional balance. He came with patriarchal values and expectations. He benefitted from the female's traditional roles, heading a household where women gathered the wood and made the fire, parched his corn and cooked for him, turned the skins of the freshly killed deer into processed, consumable goods, as well as acting as his "middlemen" in transactions within his adopted society and giving him an accepted place there.

Native American women who had white fathers or husbands formed a special social class within Indian society. As the earliest wives-between-cultures were the daughters of important tribal leaders or native traders, they already had a certain prominence in their society. Their relationship with resident traders enhanced that status as they experienced new technologies, goods, and

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<sup>107</sup>Bartram, "Observations, 1789," 37-39.

<sup>108</sup>Adair, History of the Indians, 364.

ideas at an earlier stage that the majority of their nations. Wives of master traders such as Lachlan McGillivrey were privileged women who enjoyed a more luxurious lifestyle than most of their peers. As the eighteenth century progressed with an increasing flow of Europeans into Indian country as settlers, lowly servants, or soldiers, an increasing number of casual relationships occurred that did not offer native women, increasingly denigrated as "wenches," more than a few trinkets and perhaps a mixed-blood child. The increasing dependency on European goods and liquor, coupled with the missionary zeal of some protestant sects was to change the old balance between the sexes, but at least through 1755, these were not yet perceived by most native Americans as the deep, destructive blows to their traditional life that they indeed were.

## CHAPTER 5

### "Ramblers in the Woods" to 1717

The early history of the organization and policy behind South Carolina's early trade with the Indians seems on the surface muddled and confusing. The trade and its handling lay in the hands of officials, acting either for or against the nominal heads of government, the Lords Proprietors. Governors came and went and sometimes returned for another stint at the helm of this infant colony. They and those under them vied for control of the trade.

The unifying element in the history of the period's Indian relations was not merely the age-old desire to accumulate wealth: it was those individuals who had been to Indian country and traded directly with native Americans there. These men gave meaning and continuity to the puzzling period through the Yamasee War and its aftermath. They not only channelled information to leaders in Charles Town and beyond to London, but their accounts of their travels, adventures, and hopes for profit inspired other promoters of colonization, some of whom, like Daniel Coxe,

never set foot in the American South, but whose active publicity encouraged further speculation and colonization.<sup>1</sup>

In the early years, it seemed as if ever person in the colony was involved in the lucrative Indian trade if he -- or she -- had the wherewithal to acquire trading goods. Lords Proprietors, governors and lieutenant governors, merchants, and planters of every social level were involved in the trade to some degree. Recent immigrants to any country come with high hopes for social and economic success, and South Carolina was a new venture, populated initially by many with previous experience of colonization in Barbados. Everyone, from those who came with some capital to indentured servants, hoped to survive to establish their and their family's fortune in a new environment. The Indian trade promised immediate profits and laid the groundwork and capital for later wealth based on plantation crops and black slaves. While many early traders went on to those more "civilized" ways of increasing their wealth and status, other scions of South Carolina's dynastic families kept an interest in, and awareness of the importance of this business and often acted

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<sup>1</sup>Paul E. Kopperman, "Profile of Failure: The Carolana Project 1629-1640," NCHR 59(1982): 1-23; Crane, Southern Frontier, 50-58. Coxe's plans were revised in the 1690s through a petition to King William for areas ranging from Virginia to the South Seas. This spurred the French to establish themselves in the Mississippi area.

as agents or Indian commissioners.

## I

The founder of the Woodward family fortunes in South Carolina, Henry, is perhaps the clearest example of an individual who, with some education, vision, and guts, established both his family fortune and the colony's conduct in the Indian trade. He was a prototype, showing later individuals how they might attain both these goals. The ways in which he gained prominence and fame in both native and Anglo American spheres remained models for many years to come.

Woodward first appears in the records as a young, literate ship's surgeon who asked to be left behind in the Carolinas while on Thomas Sandford's 1666 exploratory voyage. He volunteered to stay in order to learn the languages and customs of the Indians. His many subsequent adventures included capture by the Spanish and a time as prisoner at St. Augustine, whence he escaped when the English pirate, Robert Searle, raided the town in 1668. After a spell at his old career for his rescuers, he survived a shipwreck in the Leeward Islands, where he amazingly and most fortuitously encountered the colonists heading for Carolina to set up a new settlement on the



Ashley River.<sup>2</sup>

Woodward was the leading figure in Indian trade and exploration in the early years.<sup>3</sup> He was known to the coastal Indians, having "married" at least one Indian woman who was important in her tribe. Some sources believe she was Mary Musgrove's grandmother.<sup>4</sup> Because of his familiarity with the coastal Indians and his eagerness to experience more of the new environment, Woodward was much in demand as an Indian expert among the leaders of the colony. In July 1671, he went on a mission from Carolina to Virginia for Sir John Yeamans, a leading settler from Barbados, returning along routes that brought him into contact with tribes whose remnants later formed part of the Catawba tribe. His contacts with the Proprietor, Lord Ashley, were more formal: he had been hired through Andrew Percival, Ashley's agent at St. Giles, his South Carolina plantation,

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<sup>2</sup>For a genealogical account of the Woodward family, see Joseph W. Barnwell, "Dr. Henry Woodward, the First English Settler in South Carolina, and Some of his Descendants," SCHM 8 (1907): 28-41.

<sup>3</sup>For an excellent summary of his importance, see W. P. Cumming et al. eds. The Exploration of North America: 1630-1776 (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1974), 90-91.

<sup>4</sup>Baine, "Myths of Mary Bosomworth"; for the popular romantic view, see the Charleston News and Courier, Sunday, June 8, 1958, complete with a drawing of "Henry Woodward with His Squaw at His Side." This article by Jack Leland entitled "Dr. Henry Woodward, the Indians' Friend," did not mention Woodward's heavy involvement in the Indian slave trade!

as their Indian agent. Woodward was to receive one-fifth of the profits of the Indian trade under Percival's directions.<sup>5</sup> The account book showing the state of their accounts from 1674-1678 -- and therefore of the process of opening up the trade and the kind of goods used in it -- has survived.<sup>6</sup> The notebook shows Woodward's negative balance invested in trading goods. They included both novelty items such as jews' harps and looking glasses, plus more practical objects such as weapons, gunpowder, "Hatshetts," and English woolen goods, such as strouds and "duffelds." As well as listing goods and their costs, the account book shows the high costs involved in the trans-Atlantic trade of this period. Woodward had to pay not merely freight across the ocean, but also warehousing; customs inspections and charges; payment to coopers for opening chests at the customs and then closing them again; "Markening Irons to mark ye Skinns"; for a padlock; a commission to William Saxby, the proprietary board's treasurer; further costs for freight from England of those skins, such as bear and beaver skins in 1677, that were shipped farther to Antwerp and

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<sup>5</sup>Daniel W. Fagg, Jr, "St Giles' Seignior: The Earl of Shaftesbury's Carolina Plantation," SCHM 71 (1970): 119.

<sup>6</sup>"Account of Henry Woodward and the Earl of Shaftesbury, 1674-1678," SC-Ar Manuscript Notebook. This was until very recently in the possession of the Shaftesbury family and I am indebted to Chuck Lesser at the South Carolina Archives for notifying me of its current location.

Amsterdam. Deerskins, some "in Oyle," headed the list of imports to England, along with otters, grey foxes, and raccoon skins. Some Indian slaves were listed as unsold from the shipment. Woodward himself crossed to England with this first large cargo of furs and skins.<sup>7</sup>

Woodward continued his interests in exploration and encountered Indians far beyond the coastal peoples of the Carolinas. He was instrumental in forging the 1674 alliance with the Westo Indians, a tribe renowned as a "bold and warlike people."<sup>8</sup> As so often, it was native Americans who initiated trading relationships by appearing at St Giles' Plantation and asking that Woodward return to their villages with them. They were already armed with "fowling peeces" that they had received along with cloth through trading "drest deare skins furrs and young Indian Slaves" with the Virginians.<sup>9</sup> That trade occurred at "set times of the year," and Woodward saw that the Carolinians could easily divert and profit from this existing demand for trading goods. Before he left the Westos, they had promised to bring skins down to Charles Town the following March.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid; Fagg, "St. Giles' Seigniory," 119.

<sup>8</sup>BPRO 1:116.

<sup>9</sup>"A Faithfull Relation of my Westoe Voiage, by Henry Woodward, 1674," in Salley, Narratives, 130-34.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 134.

In 1681, the proprietors mentioned that the trade had not been initiated "merely our of a seigne of gaine: But with this further consideration, that by furnishing" the tribe with goods and weapons "they could not fetch from Virginia New England New Yorke or Canider without great labour and hazard; We tyed then to soe strict a dependance upon us, that we thereby kept all the other Indians in awe."<sup>11</sup> They had understood the diplomatic and economic advantages of such an alliance with the leading native power of the area.

While Woodward was visiting the Westos, he met some Savannah, or Shawnee Indians, located at that time west of the Appalachicola River. They, too, made friendly overtures and were already familiar with trading with white men -- in their case, with the Spanish whom they said "were not good."<sup>12</sup> Ironically, the Savannahs would later be used by anti-proprietor private traders to break the Westos' hold on the Indian trade. The Goose Creek "grandees" seized that opportunity as a means of grasping the profits for themselves.

The Westo alliance epitomized the long process of formal and ceremonious trading relations between the settlers and the surrounding Indian nations. While this was

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<sup>11</sup>BPRO 1:116.

<sup>12</sup>Salley, Narratives, 134.

an agreement between an agent of one of the Lords Proprietors with just one tribe, it signalled the nature, pomp, and formality that would be so characteristic of trading relationships. It was the foreigners who had to fit into existing customs and practices, vie with white competition from foreign nations and other English colonies, and deal with tribes and villages that were not always inclined to be friendly. The Carolinians learned the value of alliances with a strong nation who, with the aid of European arms, could use their internecine skirmishes to generate a vast supply of Indian slaves to ease the chronic labor shortage felt by the new colony in its early years. Indian allies could also be unleashed against the Spanish and their allies by promising goods and weapons as rewards for captives or scalps.<sup>13</sup>

The Westo alliance was the cornerstone of proprietary Indian policy until 1680 and the puzzling outbreak of war between that nation and the settlers.<sup>14</sup> On the surface, hostilities began when members of the tribe killed some settlers. Verner Crane believed that this event was deliberately manipulated by many in the colony who wanted to use it to end the proprietary hold over the Indian trade.

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<sup>13</sup>Sirmans, Colonial South Carolina, 25, pointed out that South Carolina enslaved more Indians than any other English colony.

<sup>14</sup>Crane, Southern Frontier, 17.

In 1677, the proprietors had issued an order that had made trade with the leading tribes virtually their monopoly, but there were private traders and merchants who wished to challenge it. The war that erupted in 1680 saw the private traders arming, aiding, and unleashing the Savannahs against the Westos so successfully that by 1683 it was estimated that only around fifty of the former allies were left alive.<sup>15</sup> This once formidable tribe was almost eradicated by war and enslavement, the way it had formerly reduced its enemies and sold its captives to the colonists. In 1708, however, John Oldmixon stated that the war, although "troublesome," for the colony, was soon over with "not much Blood shed or Money spilt," a combination of elements that so often occurred in connection with the Indian trade.<sup>16</sup> The bloodshed was, after all, mostly Indian and not white, and therefore of little concern to the Europeans.

Woodward had probably not approved of the war. He was a loyal servant to the proprietors, and his second marriage to the widowed daughter of Colonel John Godfrey, an ex-Barbadian friend and agent for another proprietor, Sir Peter Colleton, indicates where his loyalty remained.<sup>17</sup> Woodward

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 19-20.

<sup>16</sup>John Oldmixon, "From the History of the British Empire in America, 1708," in Salley, Narratives, 329.

<sup>17</sup>Fagg, "St. Giles' Seignior," 119.

was even accused by rivals in South Carolina of furnishing the Westos with arms and ammunition, and forced to travel to London in 1680 in order to refute the charges.<sup>18</sup> He successfully exonerated himself, and returned with a proprietary commission to explore beyond the "Apalatean Mountains."<sup>19</sup>

Another challenge for control of the Indian trade in the 1680s, came from Henry Erskin, Lord Cardross, with his personal colony named Stuart's Town. This was a settlement granted within the bounds of proprietary Carolina of Scottish Covenanters who had sought refuge at Port Royal.<sup>20</sup> After much delay in its organization, this colony became a fact in 1684. The Lords Proprietors were only too happy to establish a large, extensive border county between the main holdings of their colony and the Spanish. Cardross, an ex-privy council member for Scotland, had been promised his own court of law and expected to govern as he wished, knowing he came of stock superior to South Carolina's local rulers.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>BPRO, 1:118. This is echoed in later charges brought against Thomas Nairne.

<sup>19</sup>A. J. Salley, Journal of the Grand Council of South Carolina, 1671-1680 (Columbia: Historical Commission of SC, 1907), 84-85; Cumming, Exploration, 92.

<sup>20</sup>See Map 3, p. 198.

<sup>21</sup>Crane, Southern Frontier, 26-28; Sirmans, Colonial South Carolina, 37; George P. Insh, Scottish Colonial Schemes, 1620-1686 (Glasgow: Maclehose, Jackson and Co., 1922), 186-210.

The existence of this short-lived colony at Stuart's Town was a direct challenge to Spanish influence in the area. Cardross unwisely forced the Spanish to act against him through his inciting the Yamasees and other Guale Indians to attack Spanish allies, such as "the Trinecho's" -- Timucuan Indians -- across the Westo River, expecting "a great booty" from what most Carolinians regarded as an "unadvised project."<sup>22</sup>

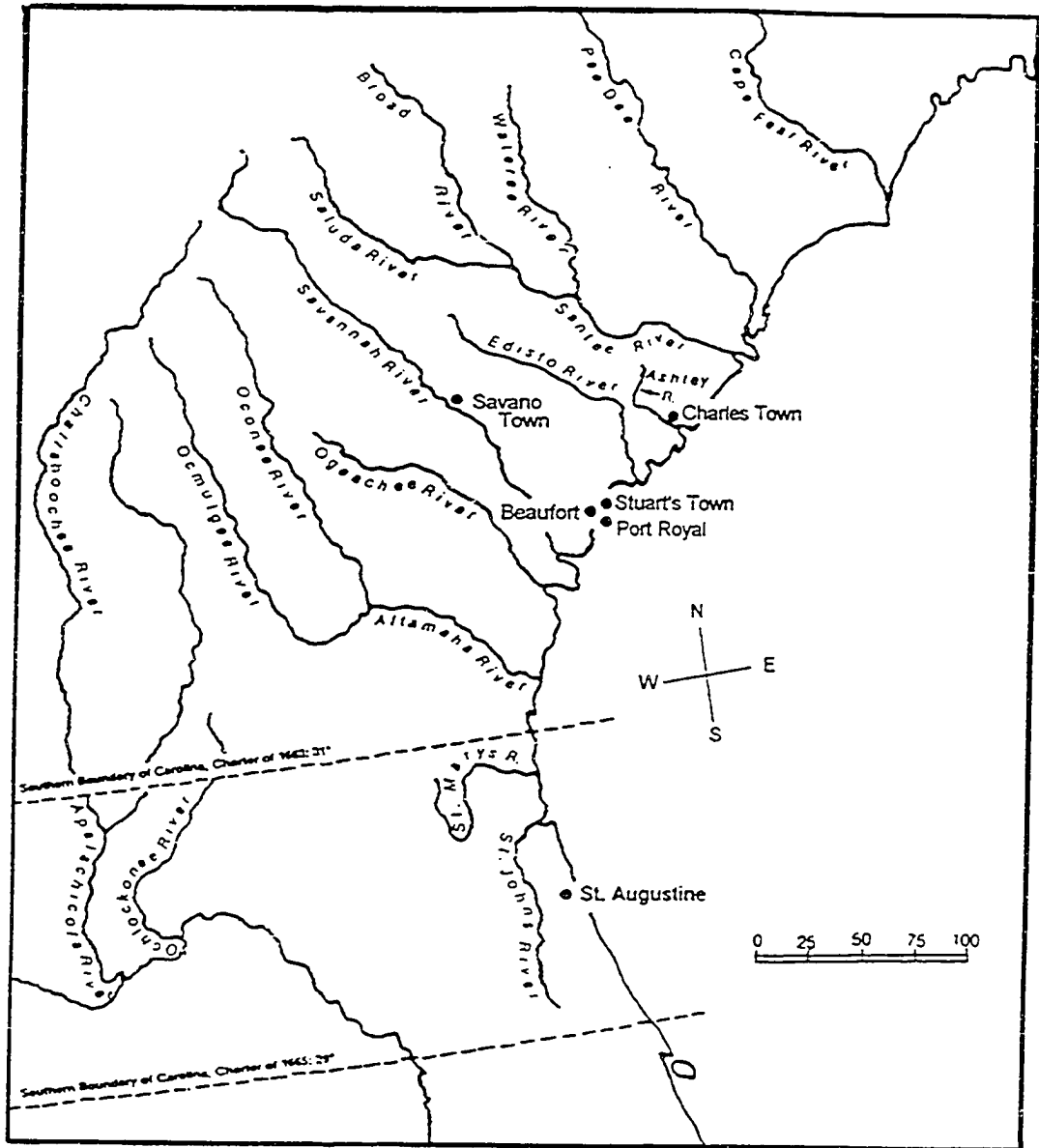
Cardross was also foolhardy in attempting to divert the Indian trade with the Lower Creeks from Charles Town to Stuart's Town, thereby alienating the only people who might have safeguarded his colony. He influenced a young Charles Town trader named John Edenburgh to use his influence among the Indians for that purpose, working closely with Caleb Westerbrooke.<sup>23</sup> Charles Town traders used the inland waterway which came close to Stuart's Town as their main route to the Savannah River, already the location of the developing inland center of the Indian trade known as Savano

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<sup>22</sup>Letter of Henry Woodward to John Godfrey, March 2, 1685, Salley, BPRO 2:49.

<sup>23</sup>Deposition of John Edenburgh, 5 May, 1685. Cardross had offered him a fourth of any profits from a Creek venture. Salley, BPRO 2:63-64. "Westbrook" according to Crane.





Map 3: Carolina to 1710

Town.<sup>24</sup> Cardross further claimed that trade with the Yamasee Indians was his prerogative and arrested Henry Woodward and others on April 19, 1685, despite the fact that Woodward had a commission from the Lords Proprietors to trade with those Indians.<sup>25</sup> Cardross argued that "noe Englishman had any power to come into his precinct for that the Scotch were an Independent Government."<sup>26</sup> Woodward's father-in-law signed the May 1685 warrant against Cardross who repeatedly refused to go to Charles Town to answer the charges against him, claiming sickness.<sup>27</sup> When the predictable Spanish invasion and total destruction of Stuart's Town occurred, Cardross was long gone to Holland, leaving only about twenty-five men to be dispatched in the Spanish "punitive expedition" of August 1686, which followed a time of deprivation, illness, and frustration for the Scots.<sup>28</sup> This episode was an omen of themes to come, for

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<sup>24</sup>Savano Town was located about six miles from present-day Augusta, Georgia, but on the other (east) bank of the river. I am using this spelling variation to distinguish it from the later town of Savannah set up by Oglethorpe. James W. Covington, "Stuart's Town, the Yamasee Indians and Spanish Florida" The Florida Anthropologist 21 (1968): 10.

<sup>25</sup>Dr. Woodward's Deposition, 5 May, 1685. BPRO 2:61-62. Woodward was thirty-nine years old at the time.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup>Board to Lords Proprietors, 5 May, 1685. Ibid., 65.

<sup>28</sup>Insh, Scottish Colonial Schemes, 210.

it aired a colony's claims of exclusive control of the Indian trade with certain tribes against those of other British colonies. This would later resurface in disputes between South Carolina and Virginia, and, in a replay in the old lands of Guale over the Lower Creek Trade, between South Carolina and Georgia in the 1730s.

By 1685, Woodward had also pushed to the Chattahoochee River and even as far west as Coweta, one of the leading Lower Creek towns, with a large quantity of goods.<sup>29</sup> Since he was a serious challenge to Spanish influence in the Appalachee area, a force of Spanish soldiers and mission Indians were sent against him. Woodward ducked out of Coweta before this band arrived, leaving a message for the Spanish commander that, while he had to leave at that time, he would return. That did not happen, however, for Woodward left the area a sick man and died soon afterwards.<sup>30</sup>

Woodward's influence on the conduct of the trade and on diplomacy with the Indians is inestimable. The trade he opened with increasingly distant tribes continued and grew after his death. By 1708, a report to London commented that "Indians seated upward of seven hundred miles off are supplied wth Goods by our White men." The Appalachees in particular "Consume great quantities of English goods," a

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<sup>29</sup>Crane, Southern Frontier, 34.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

demand that Carolina traders from Woodward on tried to fill.<sup>31</sup> While it is tempting to say that Woodward opened the trade with the western tribes almost single-handedly, that ignores the influence of many other traders, both European and Indian, who have not made such a lasting impression on the written record.<sup>32</sup> Often those who initiated trade connections between natives and newcomers were the Indians themselves. While we know the names of only few of the lesser sort who invaded Indian country in this early period in the continuous search for pelfry and profit, they, too, just like the grandee planters of Goose Creek, the anti-proprietary party men, also played a role in the evolution of Indian affairs.

## II

On the European side of the business, "the leaders in government and in the [Indian] trade were identical," for "the Indian trade was the chief instrument of Carolina expansion."<sup>33</sup> Among the early South Carolina notables

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<sup>31</sup>Letter from Governor and Council to LPs, 17 September, 1708, Salley, BPRO 5:207.

<sup>32</sup>David K. Eliades, "The Indian Policy of Colonial South Carolina 1670-1763," Ph.D. Diss., University of South Carolina, Columbia, 1981, 74.

<sup>33</sup>Crane, Southern Frontier, 22, 23.

involved in the trade were James Moore Senior, Joseph Boone, and Maurice Mathews. They had arrived in the colony from Barbados hoping to make their fortunes and believing they could gain their ends by leading an anti-proprietary party, one politically opposing religious toleration and any proprietary claims of a monopoly over trade with the Indians.<sup>34</sup> Most of these leaders had extensive plantations outside Charles Town at Goose Creek.

James Moore succeeded in establishing a dynasty that played a leading role in the history of both Carolinas. "Ambitious and impecunious," this "Irish adventurer" married into the family of the important Barbadian, Sir John Yeamans, who died in 1674.<sup>35</sup> Moore was soon involved directly in the Indian trade, including the slave trade. He was also one of those "heroic" figures who was infected with a desire to discover what lay in the interior of this new continent. He and Maurice Mathews went on an expedition into Cherokee country in 1690 to explore the possible sources of profit that lay there, reporting back on the possibility of finding mines there.<sup>36</sup> Later, as governor,

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<sup>34</sup>Sirmans, Colonial South Carolina, 17, 25.

<sup>35</sup>Crane, Southern Frontier, 40; John P. Thomas, "The Barbadians in Early South Carolina," SCHM 31 (1930): 87. Moore's wife, Margaret Berringer was the daughter of Yeamans' widow by a previous marriage; Sirmans, Colonial South Carolina, 81-82.

<sup>36</sup>Salley, BPRO, 1:40, 119.

he led Indian allies and a hodgepodge of Europeans hunters and traders against Spanish settlements in both East and West Florida.<sup>37</sup> Both he and his side-kick Mathews, reviled by his enemies as "his Welsh Highness," shrewdly combined politics with business, by opposing the proprietors' hold on the trade.<sup>38</sup> This was a popular cause as new colonists greedily eyed the profits of the trade and Indian lands.

Governor James Colleton finally forbade trade with the Indians except under his direction, but this regulation was largely ignored.<sup>39</sup> Discontent over the monopoly of the trade was a reason for Colleton's overthrow by another resident proprietor, Seth Sothel, during whose administration the first effective law relating to control of the Indian Trade was passed in 1691. The bill's passing indicated that anyone with the authority to control the trade would use their position to make it their personal monopoly.<sup>40</sup> The law made it illegal to take "rum, brandy or spiritts whatsoever" into Indian country and made it clear that traders could not operate freely. It was only the governor who could "send such persons as he shall like

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<sup>37</sup>See above, 14-16.

<sup>38</sup>Sirmans, Colonial South Carolina, 41; Crane, Southern Frontier, 119.

<sup>39</sup>Sirmans, Colonial South Carolina, 47.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., 50,

to any place without the limitts of trade" as set out in the act.<sup>41</sup> Facing opposition on many grounds, Mathews was sent to England to plead the upstart administration's case.

One thing was clear: whatever the fate of Sothel as governor, the hold of the proprietors and their agents over the trade was broken. The future lay in struggles between local political leaders, between governors, council, and the Commons House of Assembly. By 1698, the Commons House was preparing a bill "That everybody may buy skinns at Their owne Plantations for their owne use from their Neighbor Injans " This act also reflected another theme of the early years: jealousy of other English colonies, it declared that "ye Virginians be prohibitted from Tradeing in This Province," as well as expressing the need to "Discourage" the French "from makeing any further Progress in ye Injan trade In This Province."<sup>42</sup>

Reforming and regulating the trade remained a key political issue and, while Governor Joseph Boone and later Moore and their cohorts were accused of using the trade only for their own profit, this is an over-simplification.

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<sup>41</sup>Cooper, Statutes at Large 2:64-68, citations on pages 66 and 67.

<sup>42</sup>October 4, 1698, A. S. Salley, Jr., ed., JCHA, For the Two Sessions of 1689 (Columbia: Historical Commission of South Carolina, 1914), 22. A committee report in February 1701, echoes the wording of this bill closely, see Salley, JCHA February 4, 1701 to March 1, 1701 (Columbia: Historical Commission of South Carolina, 1925), 14-15.

Criticism of all levels of personnel involved in the trade was rampant; it was necessary to protect Indians from the activities of the, according to Moore, hundreds of illiterate pedlars who were turning the Indians away from an English alliance through their activities, especially enslaving Indians at random.<sup>43</sup> Moore himself and his son-in-law Thomas Broughton were guilty of such activities. The real political issue was who would gain control of the revamped, supervised trade. This dispute spanned the entire period, coming to a head later in the conflict between Governor Nathaniel Johnson and his opponents led by Thomas Nairne.<sup>44</sup> Many of those who clamored for reform were leading dissenters, but their numbers included dissatisfied Anglicans, especially reformers who wanted to give the SPG more encouragement to spread the gospel among the native, black, and white heathens of South Carolina.

The 1698 attempt to pass an Indian Trade bill was rejected on November 16, 1698. This did not mean that the House totally shirked all responsibilities over the trade, for, just two days later, members examined a John Buchanan "Concerning irregularities of Certain Persons yt uses ye

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<sup>43</sup>See above, 9-11, 15-16.

<sup>44</sup>Johnson was governor from March 1703 to December 1708



Injan Trade."<sup>45</sup> During the autumn session of 1700, attempts at a bill occurred and a committee was formed to investigate Indian grievances.<sup>46</sup>

In January 1702, the Commons House was directed by the Upper House to "Consider a way to remove the abuses done to the Yamasee Indians by them that live among and trade with them, and of makeing them Easier in our Neighbourhood and friendship, So as that they may not have reason to return to ye Spaniards."<sup>47</sup> Humanitarian concern for the Indians was always a secondary concern in reforming the trade. In April, Moore believed that the Indians needed protection from "the Severity of their Creditors," another continuous problem in the history of the Indian trade. A new consideration was to prevent the Tallapoosas from "acquainting themselves with the french yt live on the South Side of ye Bay of Apalache."<sup>48</sup> Clearly the need for diplomatic success and supremacy could not be ignored in this time of European war. Even before the outbreak of

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<sup>45</sup>Salley, JCHA 1701, 31, 32.

<sup>46</sup>November 11, 15, and 16, 1700. J. C. Salley, Jr. JCHA, October 30, 1700 to November 16, 1700 (Columbia: Historical Commission of South Carolina, 1924), 17, 18, 22-23.

<sup>47</sup>January 15, 1702, A. J. Salley, Jr., JCHA, For 1702, (Columbia: Historical Commission of South Carolina, 1932), 6.

<sup>48</sup>April 7, 1702, Salley, JCHA 1702, 47-48.

Queen Anne's War, Moore had warned of the dangers of the French settlements, for they were inciting "our Indians to trade with them [and] our Indians are in Love with their liberality and Conversation." A war in Europe meant possible invasion and "We are sure to be always in danger & under ye trouble & Charge of Keeping our Guards; even in time of Peace." As an early convert to the fear of encirclement, Moore linked the French presence on the Mississippi to "the french of Canada's neighbourhood to the Inhabitants of New England." He and reformers such as Thomas Nairne might not agree on many things but they had the same response to the French presence and advocated combating it in every possible way. They understood the dangers inherent in an encircling French presence that would pin the English colonies of North America to a small coastal area.<sup>49</sup>

### III

While these "grandees" fought for control of the trade and its profits at the political level, many of the lesser sort were honing their crafts as traders and interpreters in Indian country. Many of them are unknown to us by name, or

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<sup>49</sup>August 14, 1701, JCHA, August 13, 1701-August 28, 1701 (Columbia: Historical Commission of South Carolina, 1926), 4.

are mentioned but once; however, their experiences and influence among the natives they met and traded with laid the groundwork for the expansion of both trade and settlement. The selfish and vicious conduct of so many of these men was possibly the spark that ignited the Yamasee War.<sup>50</sup> A 1726 tract blamed the war on the magnitude of Indian debts, which the natives "cancell'd . . . by murdering their Creditors."<sup>51</sup> Some trader reputations are known because of their brutal treatment of Indian slaves or of their demands for repayment of what both natives and administrators attacked as exorbitant debts.<sup>52</sup>

Some traders in Indian county before the war well deserved their vicious reputation. Jess Crosley "being jealous of a Whore of his, beat and abused an Apalachia Indian man in a barbarous Manner and also bete Jno. Cocket till he spitt Blood, for onely desiring him to forbear beating the Indian."<sup>53</sup> John Frazier was "apt to beat and abuse the Indians," even their "kings," and Phillip Gilliard "took a young Indian against her Will for his Wife, and Cruelly whipped her and her Brother for accepting a few

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<sup>50</sup>See above, 21-22.

<sup>51</sup>Francis Yonge in Carroll, Collections 2:145.

<sup>52</sup>Crane, Southern Frontier, 167, estimated that 100,000 skins, or over a year's produce, were outstanding for all debts in 1711.

<sup>53</sup>Sept 21, 1710, McDowell, JCIT, 4.

Beades . . . to the great Griefe of the Indians there present."<sup>54</sup> The Altamaha King complained that Alexander Nicholas "lately beat a Woman that he kept for his Wife so that she dyed and the Child within her." His conduct was such that the warriors were afraid to leave their women alone if Nicholas was in town.<sup>55</sup>

Many names reflect the varied national and racial origins of traders whose roles and importance are clear, even if individual histories are lost. Gilliard was one of the Huguenots who had fled to Charles Town who attempted to make a living from the trade. Frazier's name is a common one, but a John Frasier managed to become a leading merchant in the early period. They are the prototypes of the traders of the eighteenth century, for they lived among the farthest Indians and learned their languages and customs at first hand. Amongst the most influential in this early period were Jean Couture, Thomas Welch, and Anthony Dodsworth.

Jean Couture was a Frenchman with a long history as a coureur de bois in Canada before he deserted to the English.<sup>56</sup> Born in France, this adventurer emigrated to Canada, then left that French colony with Henri de Tonti, Robert La Salle's chief Indian scout and trader. He was

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., August 1, August 2, 1711, 13.

<sup>55</sup>October 25, 1712, Ibid., 37

<sup>56</sup>Crane, Southern Frontier, 42-43.

commander of a French post on the Arkansas, but by 1696, this "renegade servant" of Tonti's took a route up the Tennessee River and through Cherokee territory to Carolina.<sup>57</sup> His motives for leaving remain hidden but the life of a voyageur was hard, and there were few benefits from military service in the Illinois country or in Louisiana.<sup>58</sup> An undated, but probably 1699 letter of Edward Loughton and Richard Tranter, fellow traders and explorers, referred to Couture as "the greatest Trader & Traveller amongst the Indians for more than Twenty Years," and commented that he could speak "eight of nine severall Indian Languages" He was "overjoyed" to go with them to discover silver or gold for the English king. Couture had told them of his earlier adventures and discovery of gold, pearls, and "blew stones" (possibly lapis lazuli) in areas where "no Europeans had ever been before." His companions on that expedition had been killed by Indians but Couture's knowledge of native tongues had saved his skin. Couture had no doubt expected rewards for deserting to the English cause and these had not materialized. He felt he had been used "Barbarously" by the government of Carolina, hence this letter was written directly to the Board of Trade by

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid.; Woods, French-Indian Relations, 20.

<sup>58</sup>See above, 33-35.

Loughton and Tranter.<sup>59</sup> James Moore later reported that they "pretend to discover Silver Mines," but thought they were mistaken in the ore's nature.<sup>60</sup> Couture's livelihood did not depend on that and he was employed constantly as an intrepid guide at least through 1700, when he worked for Joseph Blake taking a party of traders to the Mississippi along the Tennessee River.<sup>61</sup> He eventually settled as a trader at Savano Town.<sup>62</sup>

Couture was a link with two men who are credited with opening up trade with the Chickasaws, Anthony Dodsworth and Thomas Welch. He had acted as their guide and interpreter in the 1690s and they had learned those skills from him. Not much is known of Dodsworth who may have died before 1705. Thomas Welch, however, lived on until 1729, also combining the professions of planter and trader at Savano Town. His will mentioned no family, only his debts, but he had at least three probably half-Chickasaw sons.<sup>63</sup>

Welch's importance in Indian and European diplomacy was

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<sup>59</sup>Salley, BPRO 4:194-96.

<sup>60</sup>Moore to "Sir," December 27, 1700, Salley, BPRO 5:10.

<sup>61</sup>Baird, Quapaw Indians, 28.

<sup>62</sup>Crane, Southern Frontier, 44.

<sup>63</sup>CT Wills and Miscellaneous Documents, 62-A (1728-31), 199; JCHA, February 29, 1728, RSUS Alb/4/1/403. See below chapter 6 for son James Welch as trader.

inestimable, for he, like so many obscure minor figures in the backwoods, could make or break an alliance. In 1706 he played a crucial role in destroying the French governor's hopes for a lasting peace between the Chickasaws and the Choctaws. Two years later, he skillfully persuaded many of the tribes of the Mississippi valley, such as the Taensa, Natchez, and Quapaw, to swing to the British side -- important during this period of war.<sup>64</sup> He and Dodsworth were often summoned to give their information and insights into Indian affairs to governors and the Commons House.<sup>65</sup>

Thomas Welch in his turn was also a link with two of the most interesting figures in South Carolina's history, Thomas Nairne and Pryce Hughes, for he acted as their guide and interpreter at various times, and his knowledge and hopes for a prosperous trade and a vast British empire stretching to the Mississippi and beyond indubitably played their part in shaping the visions of Hughes and Nairne.

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<sup>64</sup>Woods, Indian-French Relationship, 20-21; Baird, Quapaw Indians, 29, although they soon returned to the French alliance. He was one of the first to explore and trade as far as the Mississippi.

<sup>65</sup>As, for example on September 2, 1703, A. J. Salley, Jr., Journal of the Commons House of Assembly, For 1703, (Columbia: Historical Commission for South Carolina, 1934), 96.

## IV

For such a prominent figure, much remains unknown about Thomas Nairne.<sup>66</sup> He had functioned as a trader before playing an active role in the administration of Indian trade and affairs in South Carolina. He settled at Port Royal close to the site of Stuart's Town.<sup>67</sup> Most of those in the colony who lived outside Charles Town itself traded with the neighboring Indians and Nairne had developed and maintained a crucial interest in the management of the trade. By January 1702, he was already influential among the Yamasee Indians, for the Commons House ordered that they and he be summoned "for ye better discovery of ye Traders behaviour."<sup>68</sup> He served under James Moore during the 1704 expedition to St. Augustine.

Nairne was interested in all facets of the new world. Robert Ellis of Charles Town wrote to a Fellow of the Royal

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<sup>66</sup>Nairne, Muskhogeon Jounals, 7. Nairne seems to have sprung fully grown into the records in 1695 as a witness to the will of Richard Quintyne, a rich planter from Barbados, an action that suggests Nairne was over twenty-one years old at the time. He later married Quintyne's widow, Elizabeth.

<sup>67</sup>Thomas Nairne and John Norris, Selling a New World: Two Colonial South Carolina Promotional Pamphlets ed. by Jack P. Greene (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1988), 35.

<sup>68</sup>January 20, 1702, Salley, JCHA 1702, 9.



Society that Nairne had promised to "set down of what use each plant is amongst ye Indians, with their Names." Ellis referred to Nairne as one "who lives in the South Ward amongst ye Indians," along with Tobias Fitch "who Trades with another Nation of Indians."<sup>69</sup> Nairne's promotional tract of 1710, "A Letter from South Carolina," purportedly by a "Swiss Gentleman, to his Friend at Bern," is full of useful hints and details of the colony's natural bounties, inhabitants, and beasts. He did not dwell on the Indians, other than to mention the deerskin trade. He mentioned the availability of slaves, but those he referred to were "Negroes" and not Indians.<sup>70</sup>

Nairne has had a mixed press from writers in the last decade. William H. Goetzmann almost rejoiced that Nairne "perished appropriately by hideous death at the hands of his intended victims." This was a gross distortion of his aims and his immediate mission prior to his death at the opening of the Yamasee War.<sup>71</sup> A truer epitaph is that on his

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<sup>69</sup>Robert Ellis to James Pettiver, FRS, April 25, 1704, British Library Additional MSS #4064, the Sloan, LC Transcript, folio 2.

<sup>70</sup>Nairne and Norris, Selling a New World, 43, 52, 58-59.

<sup>71</sup>William H. Goetzmann, New Lands, New Men and the Second Great Age of Discovery. (New York: Penguin Books, 1986), 74-75. Nairne was at Pocotaligo Town to arbitrate disputes between traders and Yamasees at the time of his death.

widow's 1720 gravestone, which mentioned that he had been killed "by the Indians while he was treating with them."<sup>72</sup> The harsher sentiments, however, are still reverberating, most recently echoed by Patricia Galloway. While she admitted that Nairne was "fascinating," and recognised that he, like most of his European contemporaries, "suffered from the normal dose of ethnocentrism," she saw "justice rather than irony" in the fact that he was one of the first victims of the 1715 conflagration.<sup>73</sup> To her, the fact that he had described and understood Indian ways perhaps better than any one else of his generation seemed a "betrayal of humane ideals remarkable even by the standards of his time."<sup>74</sup>

Yet Nairne was not clearly involved with the trade in Indian slaves -- the usual charge against him -- as many people believed. He was not a James Moore or a Maurice Mathews who deliberately pitted one tribe against another, or who profited personally from induced sorties against tribes in alliance with the Spanish or French. Indeed, he seems to have battled politically against those very attitudes. He had been in touch with the Bishop of London begging for missionaries to christianize the native

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<sup>72</sup>N. A. Chamberlain, "Inscriptions from St. Andrews Church Yard," SCHM 13 (1912): 117.

<sup>73</sup>Nairne, Muschogean Journals, vii-viii. She wrote the introduction to this volume.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid.

inhabitants of the continent. As the province's first Indian agent -- and he was widely credited with being the instigator and author of the 1707 act establishing that post -- he accepted the fact of Indian slavery but he seemed to work for his vision of "fairness." He had influential political enemies, many perhaps because of his insistence on some kind of consistent law and enforcement in dealings with the inland tribes and individual Indians.

Nairne was of Scottish ancestry; in fact, his political opponent, Nathaniel Johnson, had tried to exclude him from sitting in the Commons House in January 1706 by stating that the "Scots had been declared Aliens by an Act made a Year ago in England."<sup>75</sup> Like most Scots of that era, he was an obvious target for charges of Jacobitism.<sup>76</sup> Politically, he had aligned himself away from the Goose Creek men, especially over the question of the establishment of the Anglican church. Two acts, the Church Act and the Exclusion Act, were finally passed during the administration of Governor Nathaniel Johnson. As a result, members of the Commons House of Assembly had to prove they had taken holy

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<sup>75</sup>Alexander Moore, ed., "A Narrative . . . of an Assembly January the 2d, 1705/6": New Light on Early South Carolina Politics" SCHM 85 (1984): 184.

<sup>76</sup>J. D. Alsop, "Thomas Nairne and the 'Boston Gazette No. 216' of 1707," Southern Studies 22 (1983): 209-11, believes there may be some truth in this accusation; what is clear is the administration's need of a plausible charge against him.

communion in the Church of England and nowhere else. Some of the Anglicans from Colleton County could not in all conscience, qualify as members. Since there were no Anglican clergy in their area, many had attended dissenter services "rather than wholly neglect the Publick Worship of God."<sup>77</sup> This deprived many Anglicans of conscience as well as dissenters, of seats in the House, and went against the promise many had believed implicit in South Carolina's Fundamental Constitutions, framed by John Locke, that all Christians could participate in public life and be free to worship according to their conscience.

Colleton County to the southeast of the colony was a hotbed of dissenter and other opposition at this time. It was also the area most at risk during any uprisings of disgruntled or Spanish-allied Indians. Its proximity to St. Augustine kept its inhabitants daily aware of their perilous position. As it was also, by the early years of the eighteenth century the new homeland of the Yamasee Indians, Colleton's inhabitants had the opportunity to learn native ways and languages at first hand. It is not surprising that so many of the early leading figures in Indian affairs such as Nairne and Pryce Hughes, owned plantations in the Port Royal-Beaufort area.

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<sup>77</sup>Moore, "Narrative of an Assembly," 183, 186. Dr. Moore's article is the most comprehensive account of this crisis.

In a letter to the Earl of Sunderland in 1708, Thomas Nairne rather pragmatically mentioned how some of the friendly Indians "Imply [employ] themselves in making Slaves of such Indians about the Lower parts of the Mississippi as are now Subject to the french." This was encouraged by the "good prices The English Traders give them for slaves." The following extract regarding the Indian slave trade is often misquoted and therefore misinterpreted, for Nairne wrote that "**some men think** that [the Indian slave trade] both serves to Lessen their numbers before the french can arm them and it is a more Effectual way of Civilising and Instructing, Then all the Efforts used by the french Missionaries." The first three words are often omitted, and the remaining words given as his own dogmatic opinion.<sup>78</sup> As the letter was a plea for the English to take the area and not return it to the French, it was never intended as a vindication of the slave trade but was merely a statement of the fact that the trade existed because of the presence of a rival European power and their allied Indians. Once the French menace was removed, Nairne believed peace would result and end the necessity of participating in such a vile trade. It was diplomacy and the presence of France that kept the slave trade active. The British could not

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<sup>78</sup>Moore, Muskhogeian Journals, 75-6. The highlighting is mine.

disengage themselves from it for the Indians would then take their captives to the French for bounties.

Nairne's concern for the souls of the Indians has a ring of truth to it. He wanted more SPG missionaries, ones paid enough so that they could take the time to learn the necessary and difficult Indian languages and be content to live among the Indians, away from most white people and their concept of a comfortable life. Nairne believed that this could be funded through taxing the Indian traders. The "close Indians," such as the Yamasees, had some experience of Christianity through their contact with the Spanish, with whites who were not primarily interested in them or their deerskins as commodities. Unscrupulous British traders were an unflattering counterpoint to Spanish priests. Nairne felt that having a "good white man live among them" who was not involved in the Indian trade, would help to keep the Indians allied to the colony and show good faith on the part of Britain.<sup>79</sup>

Nairne's ideal was to encourage trade as a means of keeping the Indians contented consumers and customers as a barrier against the other European colonies. Converting the Indians to protestant Christianity played its part in that,

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<sup>79</sup>Frank J. Klingberg, "The Indian Frontier in South Carolina As Seen by the S.P.G. Missionary" Journal of Southern History 5 (1939): 486-88. Nairne's August 20, 1705 letter to Marston, is in SPG MSS, A2, No 156.

too. Another reason for believing Nairne was against cold-hearted extirpation of the natives, can be found in the encouragement and aid he gave to a figure who comes across as genuinely concerned with the souls of the Indians, namely Pryce Hughes.

Pryce Hughes is a forgotten figure in the history of America, one who should be recognized for his part in the drama of colonization, trade, and exploration. His untimely death during the opening shots of the Yamasee War obliterated most traces of him, leaving the story of this ambitious scion of a well-connected member of the Welsh squirearchy neglected.<sup>80</sup>

Hughes was an extraordinary figure, a friend of Nairne's who had explored as far as the Mississippi if not beyond with Thomas Welch as his guide in his search for the location for a colony he meant to establish as a bulwark of British might against French expansion into that area. Pryce Hughes was also an Indian trader.<sup>81</sup> It was in that manner that he had intended to raise the capital to establish his colony for the deserving poor of Wales. His

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<sup>80</sup>See Eirlys M. Barker, "Pryce Hughes of Llanllugan and South Carolina: A Note," in Montgomeryshire Collections 80 (1992): 123-28 for his Welsh connections and reasons for his neglect by Welsh historians. His name should be spelled with the "y": it was the way he signed his name, based on his mother's family name, Pryce.

<sup>81</sup>McWilliams, Fleur de Lys and Calumet, 160.

family was not rich and he needed a practical approach to finance his colony. Unfortunately, his brother Richard, whom Pryce had sent to South Carolina with indentured servants, died unexpectedly in October 1711, and this death depleted his initial capital.<sup>82</sup>

Pryce Hughes came to Carolina with well-thought out plans for establishing his colony. Five letters have survived that outline his concept in thorough detail.<sup>83</sup> He was mobilizing his relatives and in-laws in Britain to choose the "deserving poor" who would form the backbone of the colony, and to organize their passage directly to the Gulf Coast from Bristol. Members of his family had long served as stewards to the Herberts of Powis Castle, a family whose members moved in the rarified atmosphere of the royal court itself. One of his letters, therefore, was to his patron, the Duchess of Powis, dated October 1713, asking her to forward an enclosed letter to her relative and friend, the Duchess of Ormonde, a member of Queen Anne's

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<sup>82</sup>Frank J. Klingberg, comp., "Commissary Johnston's Notita Parochialis," SCHM 48 (1947): 32, recorded Richard Hughes's death as October 24, 1711. CT Wills and Miscellaneous Documents, 1711-1718, 18, SC-Ar. The will was written the day of Hughes' death and recorded on November 11, 1711, one of the servants, Rowland Evans, was executor; National Library of Wales [NLW], Aberystwyth, Powis Castle Papers # 16830, copy of indenture papers.

<sup>83</sup>Crane, Southern Frontier, 99-107.



household.<sup>84</sup> She, in turn, was to present a petition and map to the queen, hoping for backing for the colony that Hughes shrewdly proposed to name "Annarea" in her honor.<sup>85</sup> Unfortunately, the map mentioned has not survived, although a 1730 sketch by Alexander Spotswood of Virginia has survived of a map he attributed to Hughes.<sup>86</sup>

It was probably Thomas Nairne who had inspired Pryce, the eldest brother, to emigrate and pursue his vision. Nairne had visited England in 1710, partly to promote his plans for English expansion into the Mississippi Valley and they probably met then. Perhaps Pryce Hughes had been in London when five Mohawk Indians from the province of New York had attended Queen Anne in April. Interestingly enough, the Duke of Ormonde was in charge of entertaining the notable Americans. The Ormondes were later, as were the Herberts, suspected of Jacobite involvement, so there may be some substance in the charges of Jacobitism against Nairne, and perhaps this is part of the empathy and connection between the leading participants in that tale.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>84</sup>USC, Caroliniana Library, Columbia, "Five Pryce Hughes autograph Letters, Proposing a Welsh Colony, 1713."

<sup>85</sup>Ibid., Hughes to the Duchess of Ormonde.

<sup>86</sup>PRO CO-Virginia 2, copy at the Department of Geography and Maps, LC, Washington.

<sup>87</sup>See Carolyn Thomas Foreman, Indians Abroad, 1493-1938 (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1943), 34-36; Abel Boyer, The History of the Reign of Queen Anne,

Richard Hughes's death from disease in 1711 was reported to Pryce Hughes, still in Wales, by Nairne. Nairne knew Pryce well and reported his willingness to aid Hughes and his servants in Carolina because of "the Respect I bear you."<sup>88</sup> One of Pryce Hughes's extant letters was a draft copy answering Nairne's letter of condolence.<sup>89</sup> Hughes was planning to sail for America once he had settled his affairs in Wales. He said that many "ridicule my Designs"; however, he piously believed that God would ensure the success of his venture.<sup>90</sup>

Soon after his arrival in South Carolina, Hughes became an authority on Indian affairs. He visited many remote tribes such as the Cherokees, Chickasaws, and Choctaws. He attempted unsuccessfully to stop the massacre of the Yuchis by two unscrupulous participants in the Carolina Indian trade.<sup>91</sup> Both English and French sources commented on his

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Digested into Annals, Year the Ninth (London: Thomas Ward, 1711), 189-191; Alsop, "Nairne and the 'Boston Gazette'"; Richard T. Bond, Queen Anne's American Kings (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1952).

<sup>88</sup>Powis Castle Papers, # 814.

<sup>89</sup>Caroliniana, Hughes Letters, with a rough date of 1713, but this one was clearly written much earlier.

<sup>90</sup>Ibid.

<sup>91</sup>They, Alexander Long and Eleazer Wiggan survived their censure for that action to become almost indispensable to officials in the 1720s and 1730s. See below, Chapter 6, JCHA, November 1713, RSUS Alb/1/4/51; See McDowell, JCIT, 49, 51-54, 56, 60 for Hughes's expertise

influence among the Indians along the Mississippi, even among tribes that were officially French allies. He left Charles Town for the last time in 1714 to complete his preparations to site his colony and to receive his colonists. As a trader, he had a storehouse among the Choctaws and possibly another among the Natchez, thus threatening the French in the very heart of their nominally allied Indians. This accounted for his seizure by the French, even at a time when there was no war between the two European powers.<sup>92</sup> He represented an economic threat as well as a diplomatic one to the infant colony of Louisiana, and its governor, Bienville, took Hughes very seriously. While in captivity, Hughes told the governor that Queen Anne was about to send five hundred Welsh families to that area. Bienville, who treated him well and released him early in 1715, described him as the "King's Lieutenant of Carolina," for Hughes carried a commission from South Carolina's Governor Craven.<sup>93</sup>

After his release, no reliable news of Hughes reached London until March 1716. It took so long because the Yamasee War had broken out on Good Friday, 1715, with the

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among the Indians.

<sup>92</sup>Pénicaut, Fleur de Lys and Calumet, 160-64, related that Hughes was discovered sketching and that he and his Indian entourage put up a good fight but were outnumbered.

<sup>93</sup>MPA-FD 3:182.

resultant mass slaughter of British traders and officials unfortunate enough to be caught in Indian country.<sup>94</sup> The circumstances surrounding his death were never made clear and both French allied Indians and Spanish soldiers have been accused of the deed.<sup>95</sup>

Hughes's reputation has not been blackened as was Nairne's. Despite the failure of his plans, Edmond Atkin, referred to him in 1755 as a "Man of some Fortune, Learning and Piety," stating that "Hewse" had wished to instill "Christian Principles" in the Indians, and Alexander Spotswood of Virginia was aware of his exploration and reputation.<sup>96</sup> He was a visionary who did not aspire to riches for himself but hoped only for enough wealth to lead

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<sup>94</sup>BPRO 6:137-39; 159; for the war, see Chapter 1.

<sup>95</sup>Chicken, "Journal from Carolina, 1715," 333, blames "2 Spanyards," possibly correctly, as it mentioned getting the information from "Owen Daus, Mr. Hughes's man" on January 3, 1716. His will was not proven until 1719, and Rowland Evans, one of the indentured servants to the Hughes brothers inherited some of their lands around Beaufort. Under the terms of Pryce's will, the servants were to receive lands if Pryce died before the "expiration of their service." Evans survived to become a respected militia captain until his death in 1733. SCHM 5 (1906): 221-22.

<sup>96</sup>Wilbur R. Jacobs, ed. The Appalachian Indian Frontier: The Edmond Atkin Report and Plan of 1755 (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1954), 59-60; R. A. Brock, ed. The Official Letters of Alexander Spotswood, Lieutenant-Governor of the Colony of Virginia, 1710-1722 Collections of the Virginia Historical Society, n.s. 2 volumes (Richmond: Virginia Historical Society, 1882-1885) 2:331.

and sustain his infant colony in its first years.<sup>97</sup>

Hughes and Nairne's ideals were remarkably similar: to construct a strong British empire in North America. The profits inherent in the deerskin trade could be used to send missionaries among the Indians and to establish settlements of the British poor. These colonies would be barriers against incursions by the French and Spanish. Both men sought ways that would give England supremacy among the European powers in North America and hegemony over the tribes of the Southeast. Force alone would not achieve this, for a lasting empire needed to be based on mutually respected British and native values and goals. Trade was at the heart of their plan. Their vision was, of course, ethnocentric, for Nairne and Hughes had no doubts but that their god and their culture were superior; however, their concept of empire depended on willing cooperation from natives receptive to the ideas and benefits of Christianity and membership in the British economic empire.

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The 1715 war shattered such dreams of a mighty empire to the Mississippi and beyond. Many, if not most, of those involved in the pre-Yamasee War trade were among those

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<sup>97</sup>Carolinniana, Hughes to the Duchess of Ormonde.

killed along with the frontier planters who also traded part-time with neighboring Indians. When the Indian trade resumed, it was with a clear need for trade and trader regulation, and the "grandees" removed themselves from active daily trading and contact with the Indians. Most of those who had traded with the neighborhood tribes did not reenter the trade now that fewer Indians were close to the settlements, but some remained involved indirectly as merchants. New men with less to lose emerged on the frontiers as traders and storekeepers: the ruling families remained interested only in the profits that resulted from transactions with employees who actually lived among the Indians for a large part of every year. These richer planters and merchants might take part in the Indian treaties and ceremonials that occurred mainly in Charles Town but they no longer visited Indian country, unless they were acting as official agents for the colony.

## CHAPTER 6

### Rebuilding a Trader Network, 1717-1734

The period from the Yamasee War to the formation of Georgia was crucial for South Carolina's Indian trade and those involved in it. Many of its established leaders and officials, both white and native, had been killed during the war. Whatever the key reason for the conflict, the brunt of Indian violence had descended on European participants in the trade. Survivors of the war had to reestablish themselves in its aftermath, building on the vestiges of old ties to create new social and economic relationships within a reshaped Indian tribal and political framework. Trader links with merchants and with each other also needed reconstruction.

A new network of traders with its own coherence and hierarchy emerged from the ashes of the old, but only after a period of utter confusion. Initially, the trade of the post-war era was established as a governmental monopoly in the hands of the leaders of a Commons House of Assembly which had successfully led the revolt against the Lords

Proprietors. Later, in the face of local and imperial opposition, control of the trade fell for a short time into the hands of the governor and council. When the trade finally regained some semblance of order and stability, it was as a mixed public and private business under the control of the Commons House. It remained so until the trade came under imperial control in the 1750s. Although the patterns of regulation seemed stable and both old and new traders entered the business and profited, developments in Indian country, European diplomacy, and colonial policy made this period one of high physical risk offset by huge potential profits for those prepared to live and work in the interior of the continent.

## I

In the immediate aftermath of the Yamasee War, the first problem was assessing when to resume trade with the various tribes. Those traders who had survived the onslaught of the Yamasees and their allies played a crucial role both in the formation of treaties that restored a trading atmosphere and in organizing Cherokee aid.<sup>1</sup> The Indians demanded immediate resumption of the trade: it was lack of guns and other necessities that finally drove many

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<sup>1</sup>See above, 28-30.



of the belligerent tribes to sue for peace. Native Americans realized that if they wanted high-quality European goods from a reliable source, they needed to trade with the British. During the war, the Indians had failed to make up their deficits in guns, ammunition, and other items through dealing with the Spanish or the French. Both empires had benefitted somewhat from the conflict, but neither home government had released enough money and goods for local administrators to reap any lasting economic or diplomatic benefits. Thus, by 1718 many Indians sought out those British traders they had dealt with before the war. European administrators, however, had doubts about the wisdom of returning to an antebellum situation. Discontent with trader deceit and cupidity had been widely touted as the leading cause of the conflict; therefore, to ensure the continued existence of the settlement, less bloodshed, and more profits for backwoods traders and cosmopolitan merchants alike, something had to be done to curb these men.

The first step was taken in June 1716 and involved a revolutionary change in the regulatory system. South Carolina's first act to regulate the trade after the Yamasee War established a system where the trade was "for the sole use, benefit and behoof of the publick," under the control of a board of commissioners appointed by the Commons House of Assembly. The commissioners were empowered to fine

anyone of "what degree or quality soever [who] shall directly or indirectly visit, frequent, trade or traffick, to or with any Indian or Indians in amity with this government" without first petitioning for the board's consent. Trade with the natives was restricted initially to just three locations or factories. These were "the Fort at the Savano Town" at the location of the future Fort Moore; a fort "at the Congarees," close to the site of present-day Columbia; and at Winyaw on the Black River.<sup>2</sup> Each location was authorized to house a factor, assistants, and servants.<sup>3</sup> An act of December 15, 1716, clarified many of the loopholes in the original statute by clamping down on illegal trade, especially the use of "negroes or other slaves." It remained legal for private individuals to buy skins, slaves, and furs from "settlement Indians," those living within the area inhabited by white Carolinians.<sup>4</sup>

Both acts were repealed by the Lords Proprietors on June 22, 1718 and replaced by another on March 20, 1719, which aimed at retaining their structure but without the

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<sup>2</sup>The site of the latter was actually changed five times as a result of Indian and trader input. McDowell, JCIT, 80, 111, 202, 265, 206.

<sup>3</sup>No. 360, dated June 30, 1716. Cooper, Statutes at Large 2:677-80.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid. 2:691-94.

overt monopolistic features.<sup>5</sup> It initiated a mixed system which, with later modifications culminating in the act of February 1724, placed it under the control of a single commissioner. This was the system under which trade operated until the Crown assumed control of the southern Indian trade and diplomacy in 1756.<sup>6</sup>

There was little immediate opposition to government control which was generally accepted as necessary to avoid future slaughter and economic loss. The 1719 act had blamed the Yamasee War on the "several persons commonly known by the name of old Indian traders," mentioning their "most profligate and wicked actions" that had "brought a most dreadful and bloody Indian war upon this Province."<sup>7</sup>

William Hatton, chief Cherokee factor in the early 1720s, echoed this, stating that they were "ye Main & Cheif cause of that dreadfull War."<sup>8</sup>

The surviving journals of the Indian Trade Commissioners recreate the rebirth of the trade and its

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid. 3:86-96.

<sup>6</sup>Cooper, Statutes at Large 3:229.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 3:91.

<sup>8</sup>[William Hatton], "Some Short Remarks on the Indian Trade in the Charikees and the Management thereof since ye Year 1717," Philadelphia, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, MSS Photostat Am515, 1. No date is given for its writing, perhaps late in 1723 but before the system changed to sole commissioner in February 1724.

personnel.<sup>9</sup> South Carolina's officials tried to provide competent leaders to deal with the tribes and their demands. The trading center at Winyaw was efficient and grew steadily if slowly throughout this period under the factorship of William Waties, Sr. and his son, until succeeded by Meredith Hughes, previously their assistant, in February 1717. These men, with their assistants and servants, traded with the coastal tribes as far as the North Carolina border.<sup>10</sup> They acted as informants on the actions and intentions of the native Americans of their region. For example, in September, 1717, Meredith Hughes reported that the "Charraws are not Inclivable to Peace, but by their Behaviour and Insolence to the English and the friendly Indians, they intend Mischief."<sup>11</sup> These men, along with Benjamin Galliard at Santee, also expressed concerns about competition from Virginia traders. This was a recurring theme of this period, although there was "only Indian Proff" [proof] that the northern colony was aiding Carolina's

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<sup>9</sup>McDowell, JCIT, 69-321.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., December 31, 1716, 144. Waties Sr. was indisposed and wished to give up the factorship by December, 1716. The assistants included John Vourmerl'n, John Ryles, Richard Harding, Henry Farwell, and Samuel Teed,

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., September 12, 1717, 209.

remaining enemies to attain guns.<sup>12</sup>

While the first post-war act had established three major factorships, more British personnel were commissioned to trade within the various Indian tribes. Colonel George Chicken and agent Theophilus Hastings traveled extensively among the Indians and were not tied to forts Moore and Congaree, although most goods were exchanged at those three locations.

Theophilus Hastings, a Yamasee War hero, was the first factor appointed for the Cherokees. He urged a "full trade with the Charikees" and demanded that he be given five assistants based at the five major Cherokee towns. It is clear that Cesar, the chief at Echota whom the English regarded as the Cherokee emperor, had a great deal of influence on Hastings's demand. Cesar had made it clear that the Cherokees "utterly dislike coming down to the Garrisons"; their only consolation was that only there could they legally obtain rum.<sup>13</sup> Hastings was replaced in 1717 by Captain William Hatton so that Hastings could travel among the Creeks and -- it was hoped -- conclude peace negotiations with them. Hatton had been Hastings's chief assistant at Tugaloo and Echota before his promotion in

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., May 1, September 12, 1717, 175-76, 208; extract from a Feb 6, 1717 letter to South Carolina's agent in London, Berresford, BPRO 7:20.

<sup>13</sup>McDowell, JCIT, November 1-22, 1716, 120-126.

December 1716, and he was, thanks to Hastings's constant requests to the Board, to have assistants designated for the leading Cherokee towns. Initially, these included James Dauge at Tennessee and Terrequo (or Little Tellico), James Hill at Coree/Cowee, William Hall at Tugaloo, John Sharp at Quanassee, and John Chester at Keowee.<sup>14</sup>

Hatton's remarks on the state of the Cherokee trade in the early 1720s reflected the kinds of problems faced by officials among that nation. While he was careful to avoid blaming the five-man board of commissioners for the trade's poor state, he believed that these "honest worthy Gent . . . was not so well acquainted with ye ways of the Indians and their Trade as might have been wish'd," he realized they were hampered at every turn by Charles Town merchants. The merchants charged excessive rates for goods that were not "vendable" among the Indians, for their stocks of trading items were not adequate or bought with an eye to what the natives wanted. On-scene officials far from the arena of politics also had their problems. They were greatly inconvenienced by the lack of packhorses, which forced them into dependence on Indian manpower. Instead of horses, Indian men were employed as "burtheners" to carry the

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 73, 123, 127, 129, 130, 140, 188. Chester succeeded Jury Barker who had died in office, and had been a leading trader before the war, if not always a scrupulous one. 29 June, 1716, JCHA, RSUS A1b/2/1, 333.

bundles of skins down to the settlements. Hatton lamented their "Roguery," estimating that at least one third of the cargoes went missing between Charles Town and Cherokee country. These men, however, did not make a profit from the stolen packs for they merely went among the Catawbas to gamble the goods away.<sup>15</sup>

Not only was this system wasteful, but it also gave the Virginians a chance to seize a major portion of the Cherokee trade. Virginia traders had two major advantages: they used pack horses and they bartered according to the type of skin and its "goodness." They traded for the biggest and best quality skins, leaving only the "Reffuse Skins" for the Carolina traders. Naturally, the Indians benefitted from this competition and thought it "good to have another String to their Bow."<sup>16</sup> Hatton's report was a practical plea for more horses to carry goods and skins, and for competent servants to watch over the horses and other equipment. This would please the Indians who disliked the current system, for they had noticed that many burdeners died of disease after a trip to the English settlements or were killed on the trading path by hostile Indians.

Hatton also relayed Cherokee concerns about the overtures of peace South Carolina was making to their old

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<sup>15</sup>Hatton, "Remarks on the Trade," 2-3.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 4, 6-7.

enemies, the Creeks. Cherokees feared that reopening the Creek trade meant that the Carolinians would be less dependent on their trade and friendship. Indians placed great importance on the ceremonies and atmosphere in which trade or diplomatic transactions occurred. When Captain Charles Russell at the Congaree Fort did not treat Indians on their way to Charles Town with the dignity and ceremony they expected from sincere trading connections, his brusque attitude and stinginess was perceived as an indication that Carolina no longer needed to court Cherokee friendship.<sup>17</sup> Russell apparently believed that Hatton had complained that he was cheating the Indians, so his "abuses" of the Cherokees were really attempts to embarrass Hatton.<sup>18</sup> It was difficult for Hatton to convince this soldier that dispensing corn and other supplies liberally to the Cherokees was necessary for the security of the colony.

As the trade expanded, other trader-officials were appointed to control trade with the leading tribes. Old trader Eleazer Wigan was put in charge of the reopened Catawba trade, until he was replaced at his own request in 1718 by Captain James Hous. John Barnwell who had administered the public store for the Indian trade in 1716-17 and acted as comptroller, became factor to the Tuscaroras

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 15-17, 19, 23-24.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 16-17.



at Port Royal in 1718.<sup>19</sup>

Even before a large portion of the Creeks had concluded a treaty with the Carolinians, officials had demanded clarification about the legality of once again trading with that nation. In September 1717, the Board of Commissioners declared that it was not possible to "impower their Factors" to trade with the Creeks and Chickasaws before they had officially made peace.<sup>20</sup> Traders on both sides wished to return to an exchange situation as soon as possible. The Chickasaws were ready to petition for the reopening of the trade at the same time as the Creeks and demanded a factory at "Coosatees" by December 1717.<sup>21</sup> Setting a provisional date for the resumption of trade after the peace process was under way convinced many tribes to begin negotiations.

To hasten the return of the lucrative Creek trade, the commissioners were wise enough to utilize one of the despised "old traders." Currently a member of the elite, Colonel John Musgrove was authorized to send goods, especially cloth, among the Creeks to exchange for skins.<sup>22</sup> Musgrove had claimed that the Creeks owed him skins, and he

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<sup>19</sup>McDowell, JCIT, January 28, 1718, 252, in response to the violence of a white man named Daniel Callihaun, later a private trader, to the Tuscarora leader, Forster.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., September 11, 1717, 207.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., December 5, 1717, 238.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., December 13, 1717, 241.

was allowed to regain a sum equal to his losses in exchange for this service to the colony. While at first glance it seemed strange to send someone with a reputation for cheating Indians and others, it was actually a shrewd move. Musgrove was well known among the Creeks and had at least one wife and son among its tribal hierarchy. Although he did not remain a permanent link in the reborn trade network, he, along with many of the more dissolute and corrupt pre-war traders, facilitated the process by virtue of their familial bonds within Indian society.<sup>23</sup>

When the Creek trade reopened in 1718, employment opportunities proliferated. The trade developed, if not always smoothly, in the capable hands of such soldier-officials as Hastings and Charlesworth Glover.<sup>24</sup> Robert Graham, one of Hastings's former assistants, became the first chief factor to the Creeks. The demand for packhorsemen and for servants to act as messengers grew, and those hired included some "old traders" as well as a large number of new troublemakers. Some of the names that surface for the first time in connection with the trade became prominent later when the trade was reopened to private traders. The links

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<sup>23</sup>Records of the Secretary of the Province E (1726-27): 34, dated 30 June, 1726; Baine, "Myths of Mary Bosomworth," 433.

<sup>24</sup>McDowell, JCIT, December 21, 1717-January 16, 1718, 245-49.

these men forged as servants to the public gave them the connections among Indian society and fellow traders of all races that later helped them amass modest fortunes.<sup>25</sup>

While most of the colonial officials hired to manage the trade had achieved prominence and respectability through their military skills, many had been traders before the war and hoped to regain that position later. A surprising number of old troublemakers surfaced as indispensable agents of the government, amongst them John Chester. A trader among the Creeks since at least 1711 and later among the Cherokees, he became assistant to Theophilus Hastings at Keowee in 1717, after he brought two Indians to Charles Town to sue for peace in April.<sup>26</sup> He was still in demand as an interpreter in the late 1720s and aided George Chicken among the Cherokees. He had earlier ventured into the Chickasaw trade in 1716 on behalf of the authorities. Verner Crane believed that Chester was a leading figure in the prewar Creek trade with his partner, a Mr. Weaver, but the trade did not make him rich. In December 1726, he was taken sick while on government business among the Catawbas. South Carolina's Assembly voted to pay for his medicine and care

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., July 5, 1718, 300, for example, David Dowey, mentioned in George Chicken's Journal as a trader in his own right by 1725. Mereness, Travels, 98; see above, 117.

<sup>26</sup>Enclosure with a letter from J. Boone, dated April 27, 1717, BPRO 7:18. Chester brought good news of several Europeans missing since the outbreak of the Yamasee War.

and, in February 1728, for his funeral.<sup>27</sup>

Another important figure who managed to transcend the changes in the management of the trade was Eleazar Wigan, an infamous name by 1714, for he and Alexander or "Sawney" Long had in 1712 manipulated the destruction of the Yuchi town of Chestowe with the aid of some Cherokees, purely for personal revenge linked with their trading activities. Long felt that he had been "abused" by the Yuchis about two years earlier when he had demanded payment of their outstanding -- but they believed unfair -- debts. Instead of satisfaction, Long had been partially scalped. When Wigan and Long led a force of Cherokees against the Yuchis to enslave them as redemption of their debts and to satisfy Long's wish for revenge, the Yuchi men preferred to kill first their women and children, then commit suicide, rather than submit to capture and slavery.<sup>28</sup> The backlash from this incident kept Long a fugitive among the remoter Overhill Cherokees for many years. The Commons House of Assembly did not officially pardon him until June 1724, when his services in working to maintain the Cherokees in alliance with South Carolina were finally rewarded "and all former offences

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<sup>27</sup>JCHA, 30 August, 1727, 21 February, 1728, RSUS Alb/3/2/ 585 and Alb/4/1/ 386. The final costs of over £37 to cover the funeral and his medicines were paid without debate.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., 55.

forgiven."<sup>29</sup> There are indications, however, that Long may have temporarily defected to the French after this pardon, but he still managed to reemerge as a small-time Carolina trader.<sup>30</sup>

Eleazer Wigan had overcome the stigma of the Yuchi massacre much earlier. His services in keeping the Cherokees from joining the Yamasees during the war and his perennial value as an interpreter were such that he was used by the commissioners to carry messages and act as translator from as early as 1716. By 1717, he was an official employee, earning £300 currency a year as well as £20 for subsistence and various other miscellaneous sums.<sup>31</sup> He was later a private trader and remained in demand as an interpreter through at least 1732, when he petitioned the Council for a yearly allowance "in consideration of his Long and many Services and his great Age and Infirmities."<sup>32</sup>

The change from the prewar free trade to a public monopoly did not take place without opposition. One might expect that the traders would regret the loss of profits from the new system and refuse to cooperate. It is

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<sup>29</sup>JCHA, June 12, 1724, RSUS A1b/3/1, 52.

<sup>30</sup>"Chicken's Journal, 1725," in Mereness, Travels, 129.

<sup>31</sup>McDowell, JCIT, 129, 177-79, 217; RSUS JCHA, A1b/2/1/129, 131.

<sup>32</sup>CJ January 2, 1732, RSUS A1a/2/1, 200 See also above 28, 129.

unlikely, however, that the lesser traders had the connections to bring about the demise of the public monopoly. A petition often cited as expressing merchant opposition to the system was signed by Stephen Godin, Joseph Boone, Samuel Barrons, and "many other merchants of London" in July 22, 1718. It echoed an unattributed petition of December 1717, which stated that the "Late Act" extending the then current law for a further five years as a public trade, was "a Monopoly . . . for the Country has engrossed the whole Trade thro a Mercenary and Ignorant Temper which reigns in most of our People."<sup>33</sup> Only the London merchants could succeed in changing this system as they worked for a veto of the "monopoly" at a British imperial level.

The London merchants who protested the nature of the trade were acting for their business partners and family members in South Carolina. Boone and Godin clearly wished for involvement in the trade. Godin was the brother of Benjamin Godin, a Huguenot immigrant linked to his fellow French immigrant, Benjamin de la Conseilliere, as partner in trade.<sup>34</sup> The two Benjamins acted as the Charles Town branch of this Huguenot trading enterprise. Joseph Boone

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<sup>33</sup>Unsigned to "Sir," December 17, 1717, BPRO 7:71-73; petition to Lords Proprietors, July 22, 1718 Ibid: 143-45,

<sup>34</sup>Daughter Martha Godin married into the Bull family with their trans-Atlantic commercial ventures. Stuart O. Stumpf, "The Merchants of Colonial Charleston, 1680-1756" Ph.D. thesis, Michigan State University, 1971, 71, 74.

and the Godin brothers were to lead the more heated fight for an end to paper money and for financial security for the next decade and more, regarding their enterprises from an imperial if not global -- as opposed to a narrower colonial -- perspective. Still, this did not prohibit their partners in Charles Town from dealing with the board of commissioners.<sup>35</sup>

It would be a mistake, therefore, to conclude that merchants as a class were totally opposed to the monopoly and boycotted it. Nearly all of the leading trading houses of the period did business with the board of Indian commissioners. Even Godin and de la Conseillere participated, although later complaining about the nature of the trade. Walter Lougher, Messrs. Wragge and Satur, Samuel Wragge and Co., as well as the Eveleigh family, were constantly involved in the trade. When Ralph Izard as a member of the board presented a bond "for faithfull Performance and Execution of his said Office," it was signed by Benjamin de la Conseillere and Izard's brother, Walter.<sup>36</sup> The composition of the five-man board of commissioners was also such that through 1724 prominent

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<sup>35</sup>McDowell, JCIT, July 14, 1716, 79, in this instance - the only one listed in the Journal -- the prices charged by Godin and de la Conseillere were tabled "by Reason of the high Demands they insist on."

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., August 7, 1716, 96-97.

merchants were usually in the majority.<sup>37</sup> While many Charles Town merchants increasingly disliked the system, participation yielded some profits and a chance to influence future policy.

The merchants became more vocal in their demands for a greater share in profits as the trade grew in volume from a low of 5,000 skins in 1716 to 24,000 in 1719. Between 1715 and 1722, merchants could make only a small profit from selling their goods to the board, as opposed to the £10,000 per annum they had amassed before the Yamasee War.<sup>38</sup> Still, even a small profit was better than none at all. Merchants could always overcharge for goods in order to hamper the Indian Board and make as much profit as they could.<sup>39</sup> In May 1723, Governor Francis Nicholson wrote encouragingly to London that there had "been a very good Trade here in Generall and in particular in Skins." Nicholson stressed how beneficial that trade was to the mother country as the skins were exchanged for "woolen and

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<sup>37</sup>Stumpf, "Merchants of Charleston," 103-04. The active merchant-commissioners included Charles Hill, Jonathan Drake, Francis Yonge, John Fenwicke and Edward Brailsford.

<sup>38</sup>Clowse, Economic Beginnings, 207-08.

<sup>39</sup>Hatton, "Remarks on the Trade," 2, complained about the "Extravagant" prices the merchants were charging for inappropriate trading goods.



other Brittish Manufactures."<sup>40</sup>

The culmination of steady opposition from South Carolina and London resulted in a return to a mixed system of trade in 1724, one approximating the pre-war system. Private trading was permitted once more, but the system was initially confined to the existing forts and factories until the Indian towns were allotted properly bonded, supervised, and licensed traders authorized to trade only in towns named on their licenses.

## II

The regulations of 1724 kept the trade on a tighter rein than ever before. There was a single-commissioner system from February 1724 through the 1750s. When the ex-governor and Assembly leader and speaker James Moore, Jr. died soon after his appointment, his successors to 1734 -- George Chicken, John Herbert, and Jonathan Fitch -- performed their duties thoroughly and diligently, if not always impersonally.<sup>41</sup> These men were experts in the Indian trade because of their past involvement in it and their hopes for future profit from it. Fitch's resignation

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<sup>40</sup>Francis Nicholson to Lord Carteret, May 23, 1723, BPRO 10:80.

<sup>41</sup>James Moore, Jr. was sole commissioner from February to March 1724, JCHA, RSUS A1b/2/3/ 462. See Appendix I.

in 1734 ended the line of trader-commissioners, and from then on the higher officials were administrators who represented the politicians of the lowland areas and were not personally involved in the trade. Chicken, Herbert, and Fitch and most of the special agents they appointed for missions to the individual tribes through 1734 had been traders before the Yamasee War and hoped to be so again. The ambiguity over their loyalties and objectivity led to constant attacks on them by traders and Charles Town merchants who feared they would use their posts for private gain at the merchants' commercial expense.

Samuel Eveleigh was the major reason behind Fitch's ouster from office. This prominent merchant's family had been closely involved in the Indian trade from its earlier years. and the current head of that clan kept a close eye on the trade's officials and their activities in Charles Town and in the backwoods. With the return of private trade, his family business had resumed its practice of giving goods to traders to sell on commission. He was prepared to challenge Fitch in all actions which might reduce the Eveleigh family profits from the trade.

The surviving journals and notes of the sole commissioners make it clear that their job was often thankless and personally dangerous. The commissioners of the 1720s and 1730s and their employees earned their money

the hard way. Their prime goal was to keep Indian country as peaceful as possible and to convince the tardier native chiefs and villages to make peace; however, they themselves were attacked politically while risking their lives in Indian country. The careers of Chicken, Fitch and Herbert illustrate the hardships and lack of remuneration and official support these men received. They were rarely made to feel appreciated by their fellow members of the Commons House who, remote from Indian country and its daily perils, seemed to delight in questioning all requests for expenses. Charlesworth Glover, an agent to the Creeks in 1727-28 mentioned physical hardships as asides in a journal. He referred to the way his ink was freezing in his pen as he attempted to write his reports to the authorities.<sup>42</sup> His successor's death in particular highlights the perilous nature of their position. While John Herbert's death in 1733 was from natural causes, the Commons House voted £500 to his children in May "in consideration of his long & faithful service to the Publick in which he lost use of his limbs."<sup>43</sup>

A successful commissioner had to exhibit characteristics that were praiseworthy in both cultures.

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<sup>42</sup>BPRO 13:97.

<sup>43</sup>JCHA, May 2, 1733, RSUS Alb/4/1, 1051. He was dead by March 1733.

They were accepted by both sides as reasonable men: temperate but decisive figures. They were regarded as warriors but also as diplomats. Colonel George Chicken, the first active sole commissioner, had gained prominence as a skilled fighter in Indian country during the Yamasee War, although he was a trader as well as captain in the militia and justice of the peace by at least 1712.<sup>44</sup> The war gave him a chance to develop his organizational and military skills as he took the war to the Indians rather than wait for their attack. He had defeated an enemy force to avenge the deaths of Captain Thomas Barker and his men who had been "foolishly betrayed" at Schenckingh's Fort earlier in 1715.<sup>45</sup> His 1715 expedition into Cherokee country was a diplomatic triumph, a show of force designed to keep nominal allies out of the conflict. Chicken, a "brave and bold officer," had displayed a skillful command of Europeans and Indians during wartime, and those traits ensured that he remained Indian commissioner until his death in 1727.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>Cheves, Yearbook of Charleston, 1894, 315-16. He had been a member of the Council after the 1719 Revolution, and from 1721 had been a commissioner of the Indian trade, along with his friend John Herbert.

<sup>45</sup>See above 27-28 for the impact of his expedition in preventing Cherokee participation in the Yamasee War; Merrell, Indians' New World, 76.

<sup>46</sup>Cheves, Charleston Yearbook, 1894, 316; Klingberg, "Lost Yamasee Prince," 24; Mereness in "Chicken's Journal," 96, was incorrect in believing that he served until 1731.

Chicken's journal of a mission to the Cherokees in the summer of 1725 shows what an effective commissioner could accomplish.<sup>47</sup> The primary object of the expedition was to counter growing French influence among the Cherokees, and he was successful in this. It is also surprising how much influence Chicken had over his trader compatriots, even hundreds of miles from Charles Town. He received at least superficial compliance with regulations and laws during his travels. In one instance, Chicken sent for trader Samuel Brown to answer why he had employed John Hewet "without my leave or Licence." Within the week, Brown and Hewet had caught up with Chicken and explained that Hewet had been employed by a Mr. Marr and currently by James Millikin. Hewet had papers from Catawba trader Millikin that he argued allowed him to act as trader. Chicken, however, did not agree. His employers in those papers had charged Hewet not to trade in the presence of white men "for fear of his being discovered." Millikin and partner Henry Guston had employed Hewet without registering him on their licenses as an employee for over a year. They said this was done "out of Charity," but they agreed to honor Chicken's verdict of a fine of £30. They paid it through a note of merchant Samuel Eveleigh.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Ibid., 97-172.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 98, 103-04, 119.

Among the other regulations that were constantly ignored by traders was a ban against taking black slaves among the Indians. Chicken mentioned in a letter to Arthur Middleton, the president of the Council, that assistant Cherokee factor John Sharp and Captain William Hatton were among the worst offenders and he wished them to forfeit £100 of their bond for this. Interestingly enough, Chichen's major reason for making an example of these rather prominent men was that their slaves could speak Cherokee, and Chicken feared they would "tell falcities to the Indians."<sup>49</sup>

Chicken was also successful in getting answers from the Cherokees about their responses to French overtures for peace. He met with the leading headmen at Tunissey, a leading Lower Town, and they promised "That they never will Suffer any ffrench Man Whatsoever to come amongst them," and would assemble on August 14 for further talks with other Cherokee leaders at Ellijay.<sup>50</sup> They were late arriving, but finally, a week later, the headmen of most of the Lower and Upper Towns gave their answers to Chicken, appointing the Head Warrior of Tunissey as their speaker. This chief made it clear that the Creeks were still blamed for many abuses against Cherokees and whites alike, and that the Cherokees realized that the French were not their friends,

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., 138-39

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., 118.

for they could not supply all the goods the Cherokees needed -- only the English could do so. If the Creeks responded positively to the current Carolina initiative, the Cherokees would seriously consider making peace with them.

Although the likelihood of a general Creek-Cherokee conflict had receded, a state of war still existed in 1725 between the Cherokees and some French-allied Creeks and with parts of the Chickasaw nation. Chicken talked to the Squirrel King of the Chickasaws and his three leading warriors about the state of affairs in October, but they blamed the many incidents on their "Young men . . . that were always playing the Rogue." Chicken clearly had no patience with this perennial excuse. If they wanted to remain under the protection of the English garrison at Fort Moore, all Chickasaws had to follow the rules and regulations and not act as "Wild Wolves in the Woods Seeking their prey." The Chickasaws promised to keep a closer eye on their young folk and to avoid war with the Creeks.<sup>51</sup>

Chicken warned the Indians about the dangers of getting into debt with the traders. This business practice greatly worried colonial officials, for, after all, trader debts and Indian inability to pay old debts was the most widely cited cause for the Yamasee War. The commissioner also explained that new regulations forbade traders from accepting raw --

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 168-72.

unprocessed -- skins. Interestingly enough, the Cherokees answered that it was the Carolina traders who were to blame for this. These traders were so eager to trade that they followed hunting parties into the woods and bartered for skins as soon as possible and in any condition. Chicken thus sent instructions to the traders among the Cherokees forbidding them to exchange goods for raw skins.<sup>52</sup>

John Herbert succeeded Chicken on his death early in 1727 and he, too, was a conscientious office holder.<sup>53</sup> Tobias Fitch, who succeeded Herbert on his death, had a less comfortable career as sole commissioner in the early 1730s. He had, like many officials before him, tried to combine official duties with participation in the Indian trade.<sup>54</sup> Fitch came from a family with roots in the colony stretching back to the 1680s, but that did not ensure the Assembly's approval of his actions -- especially as he had alienated one of the leading merchant families involved in the trade.<sup>55</sup> While he had declared in April 1734, that he

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 129-30.

<sup>53</sup>BRPO 11:136. Chicken's widow, Catherine, was his administratrix when he died intestate, as a letter of administration dated April 7, 1727 confirms. Records of the Secretary of the Province, E (1726-27), 368.

<sup>54</sup>Crane, Southern Frontier, 127.

<sup>55</sup>His father, Jonathan, had arrived searching for religious freedom, as had many other Quakers, but became an Anglican. Tobias later represented Goose Creek as member of the Assembly and as justice of the peace. William F.



would go "cheerfully" into Indian country if commanded to do so, by May, he was anxious to be rid of an intolerable job.<sup>56</sup> He seemed a lone champion at that time of South Carolina's right to pursue her trade as she had always done, despite claims of control of the Creek trade issuing from the new colony of Georgia.<sup>57</sup>

Fitch's actions as special Creek agent in times of peril had made him a logical choice for the post of sole commissioner. He had undertaken many arduous missions for the colony, one of which in particular paralleled that of Colonel Chicken to the Cherokees in its aim. However, his 1725 mission was a test not only of his diplomatic but of his survival skills. That year was crucial for South Carolina's Indian relationships. While the Cherokees were officially close allies and trading partners, that very fact hampered complete acceptance by the Creeks of the English colony's endeavors for peace. The massacre of the Creek envoys at Tugaloo during the Yamasee War and the subsequent treaty between the English and the Cherokees was proof to many Creeks that these Europeans could not be trusted. The French had failed to provide an adequate flow of goods

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Medlin, Quaker Families of South Carolina and Georgia (np: Benjamin Franklin Press, 1982), 96.

<sup>56</sup>UHJ, 5 April, 1734 and 30 May, 1734, RSUS Ala/2/1, 615 and Ala/2/1, 648.

<sup>57</sup>See below, 284-306.

during wartime but perhaps that failure ought not obscure their sincere regards for the Creeks -- and what about the Spanish? Some of the Lower Creeks in particular believed they should listen to their Yamasee kin's endorsement of Spanish good intentions. The death of Ouletta, the pro-English son of the leading Lower Creek chief, Brims, was first blamed on the English. "Emperor" Brims with his pro-Spanish son, Sepeycoffee, needed tough talks and threats of a trade embargo plus evidence of Spanish complicity in the incident before the situation calmed for a short while.<sup>58</sup>

The existence of the Anglo-Cherokee alliance therefore was the main stumbling block to any real discussions of friendship with the Creeks. It was the reason for the "tortuous diplomacy" of the period.<sup>59</sup> The problem by 1725 was how to resume friendship and trade with the Lower Creek faction that wanted trade without further alienating the Cherokees. Achieving this would be a major diplomatic coup. The Creeks were themselves divided. Some elements, such as the Alabamas, were "French Indians" who promoted the French alliance and tried to persuade their kinsmen to drop any pro-English overtures. The French Creeks regarded the establishment in their midst of Fort Toulouse, otherwise

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<sup>58</sup>Corkran, Creek Frontier, 66-78, for an outline of Creek diplomacy in the period.

<sup>59</sup>Crane, Southern Frontier, 263.

known as the Alabama Fort after 1717, as a token of good faith that the French would protect their trading interests and guarantee enough goods and weapons to maintain their way of life and to combat English attacks on their lives and trade.<sup>60</sup>

Fitch's journey to negotiate with the Creeks was a more dangerous mission than Chicken's with the Cherokees. His openly hostile audience believed they could fall back for goods, weapons, and other military support on the French or the Spanish. Fitch somehow had to convince them that this was not the case and that the Cherokee-Carolina alliance did not spell a plot to enslave and destroy the Muskhogean. Thus, his talks to the various leaders and towns centered on the theme of knowing which European power was truly their friend. He did not mince words and all but accused the French faction, including the Upper Creek chief known to the British traders as Gogel Eyes (Steyamasiechie of the Talapoosas), of "Rogus Action." He was not prepared to dismiss unfriendly incidents as merely the excesses of the "young people," realizing that even the chiefs "Imbrase every oppertunity you have of doing us all the prejudice you Can."<sup>61</sup> Both sides agreed that the central problem lay in

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<sup>60</sup>See above, 33.

<sup>61</sup>BPRO 11:266; "Fitch's Journal, 1725" in Mereness, Travels, 178-79.

Creek-Cherokee enmity. Actions against traders had occurred in the wake of Creek sorties against the Cherokees and could be blamed on the natural exuberance of the younger warriors while on the war path.<sup>62</sup> Creeks were reluctant to end the state of war with that traditional enemy "They haveing Latly Killed Several of the Leading Men of Our Nation; and till we have had Satisfaction We will heare of no Peace."<sup>63</sup> To complicate matters even further, Spanish envoys were at Coweta the same time as Fitch. Still, Fitch persuaded Brims to send a party against the Yamasees, even if he could not get an agreement about an alliance with the Cherokees.<sup>64</sup> He also managed to extract a promise of 120 skins from the Creeks as compensation for the goods and skins plundered on November 9, 1724 from Cherokee trader John Sharp's store at Tomatley. He had been visited by some Yamasees and perhaps some Creeks who literally took away everything he possessed, emptying his house and store and leaving him only "A pair of Breeches, & a pair of old Shoes, to Cover my Nakedness."<sup>65</sup> Hatton declared Sharp's home a total disaster for "I saw none worse than this that was not consumed by fire. The

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid., 180-81.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., 181, 182.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 194-95.

<sup>65</sup>Sharp to Governor, November 12, 1724, BPRO 11:266. For a list of the goods taken, a representative sample of a trader's wares in the nations, see Appendix II.

House was like a Cullendar [colander] so full of Shot holes & ye yard perfectly plowed up with bullets." Hatton castigated the Cherokees for not going to Sharp's assistance but was told that they were "all out hunting, & none but old men at home."<sup>66</sup> The Creek towns donating skins to Fitch as atonement for this incident insisted that they were not the responsible parties but wanted to bring the matter to an end as a sign of good faith.<sup>67</sup>

By November 1725, the Creek "King" of Oakfusky was prepared to consider a treaty with the Cherokees, "For we now find its the Chickesaws that Injur's us and not the Cherokeys." If the Cherokees would therefore undertake to expel the Chickasaws among them, peace talks could begin.<sup>68</sup> Later, the Creeks decided to go to war against the Chickasaws instead of the Cherokees, but Fitch managed to get the warriors to wait until they had more information about the precise role of the French-allied Choctaws in the hostilities. Before Fitch left Creek country in December 1725, he warned them of the likelihood of an attack by the Chickasaws, for he had received word from Chicken that the Chickasaws wanted retaliation for a tribesman killed by

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<sup>66</sup>Hatton's account, November 12, 1724, BPRO 11:272-76.

<sup>67</sup>"Fitch's Journal," 197.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., 198.

Creeks near Savano Town.<sup>69</sup> From August to December 1725, Fitch was in daily physical danger from Lower and Upper Creeks who were skeptical that peace with the Carolina traders and officials was to their benefit. Some towns were overtly hostile and in alliance with the French or Spanish. Others entertained Spanish envoys, Fitch's counterparts, who were trying to do for their masters what he was attempting to achieve for his.

The southernmost section of the frontier remained unstable, so Fitch was sent to talk to the Lower Creeks again in 1726. His mission was to make them respond to a Cherokee peace initiative. Chigelly for the Lower Creeks said that they were suspicious of the sincerity of the Cherokees, for they had not sent any presents along with talks "but this beloved man's words." Fitch tried to persuade them that the Cherokees were complying with the English king's wishes, and responded that he thought it "Strange that you should be so backward to make peace with the Cherokees when my King desires it of you, & that you could readily Consent to a peace with the Yamasees who are Enemie to him & you both." Chigelly responded that the current problem Creeks had with the Cherokees was that they were harboring their current enemies, the Chickasaws. Still, they would contemplate peace and, to show that Creeks

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<sup>69</sup>Ibid., 211-12.

knew how to conduct diplomacy, they sent the Cherokees a gift. This was a string of red and white beads, the red symbolizing that peace was not possible until the Chickasaws were expelled from their midst.<sup>70</sup> Preparations for a treaty and the reception of both parties in Charles Town were made and a date set for December, 1726.<sup>71</sup>

The commissioners and agents realized that the key to security and trade in the Indian nations lay in using Europeans who had ties within Indian society. Some were the vilified "old traders," but many others had begun their careers as agents of the government during the public phase of the trade, either as servants or packhorsemen or as soldiers in the frontier garrisons, and sought their fortunes within this new trading infrastructure.

With the increasing security of the frontier in the 1730s, some of these lesser traders felt free to act in any way they wished, ignoring the regulations and commands of the commissioners. Tobias Fitch's 1725 mission was both aided and hampered by the Creek traders. William Hodge, a packhorseman for the relatively prosperous John Cannaday (or Kennedy), became Fitch's interpreter in December 1725, but his previous "Linguister," John Molton "Came litle Better

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<sup>70</sup>UHJ, October 8, 1726, including Fitch's account of a September 23 meeting with leading headmen. CO/5 429 BMP D491 (microfilms), 36-45.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., November 24, 1726, 89.

then Drunk" and said that Fitch had stolen Hodge from him. When challenged by Fitch, he replied "Damn you and the Governmt both. The Worst that Can be don is to prevent my Comeing here Which is more that they Can doe for I Will Come," implying that the laws controlling trade in the nations were easy to circumvent.<sup>72</sup> Fitch had to hide his interpreter for safekeeping and was not able to talk formally to the Creeks for several days because he had no other way of communicating with the Indians.

Some of the new key personnel of the 1720s and 1730s and beyond were men who had been sent to the Carolina frontier as involuntary soldier-servants for their participation in the failed Jacobite Rebellion of 1715. At the end of their period of forced labor, many of the Scots decided to stay in the vicinity of the forts to which they had been assigned and became involved in this trade.<sup>73</sup> While their term of servitude had been set at seven years, most were freed after four if they had exhibited "valor, bravery and obedience."<sup>74</sup> Up to a point, Indian society

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<sup>72</sup>"Fitch's Journal, 1725" in Mereness, Travels, 207-08.

<sup>73</sup>Duncan, "Servitude and Slavery," 57-58, 61. Lists of "rebel prisoners" imported in 1716 from the Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, XXIX, No. 309, contain such surnames as McGillivray, McBeane, McQueen, Grant, and other names that became familiar in the Indian trade of the 1720s and later.

<sup>74</sup>Cited in Ibid., 61. See Cooper Statutes at Large 2: 682-83 for the original law.



resembled Scottish life in the Highlands, for it, too, was based on clan relationships and obligations. Indian life was certainly closer to the Celtic ways in the Highlands than the social and economic bonds of Charles Town which aped that of high English society.<sup>75</sup> Many of these ex-soldiers felt they possessed a better chance of success by carving an existence in the backwoods than in the more "civilized" lowlands of any country.

### III

Although the commissioners and their specially appointed agents had managed to hold the Cherokees to their alliance, creating a genuine and lasting peace between them and a majority of the Creeks seemed an impossible goal. The bitter memory of the Tugaloo massacre of Creek envoys by the Cherokees would not be soon forgotten and since the Cherokees were allies of the British, the Creeks were suspicious of Carolina's peace overtures. The continued presence of the Yamasees under Spanish protection near St. Augustine aggravated the situation both diplomatically and

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<sup>75</sup>See Cashin, Lachlan McGillivray, chap. 2, although the Scottish clans were more patriarchal than those of the American scene -- or even other Celtic areas such as Wales. See Dafydd Jenkins and Morfydd E. Owen, The Welsh Law of Women (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1980), esp. 69-88.

through their raids on Carolina trading posts and outlying plantations. The Yamasees continually urged their Lower Creek kin to break with the English and to ally themselves with the Spanish. The years 1726 and 1727 were a turning point that led to the Carolina decision to exterminate the Yamasees and to free the lower areas of the colony from the constant fear of their raids.

This decision came none too soon for many traders -- and too late for others. The incident that hardened the attitude of Charles Town administrators was the "murder" of a well-respected master trader, Matthew Smallwood, in 1727. The name Smallwood was familiar to many Carolinians since the establishment of the colony. An ancestor of that name had arrived as an indentured servant in 1670 but was a landowner by his death in 1692.<sup>76</sup> Matthew Smallwood had been in the trade since at least 1709. Throughout the 1720s, his advice was sought by officials about the Indians of this border area with Spain.<sup>77</sup> He had aided Captain -- later Colonel -- John Musgrove with his 1717 Creek talks at Savano Town.<sup>78</sup> Smallwood himself became a captain in the

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<sup>76</sup>Aaron M. Schatzman, Servants into Planters: The Origin of an American Image, Land Acquisition and Status Mobility in Seventeenth-Century South Carolina (New York: Garland Publications, Inc., 1989), 81, 123. Also Baldwin, First Settlers, 216.

<sup>77</sup>McDowell, JCIT, 5; CJ, RSUS A1a/1/1, 70, 76, 101.

<sup>78</sup>JCHA, May 31, 1717, RSUS A1b/2/1, 296.

militia and was in demand as a Chickasaw interpreter.<sup>79</sup> In the aftermath of the 1715 war, he, along with John Woodward, another noted name in this area, acted as executors for many of those who had died intestate, including traders Joseph Crosly, William Breat (also Britt, Brett), and William Banester.<sup>80</sup>

The events surrounding Smallwood's death in July 1727 were reported in detail in a letter to London from acting governor Arthur Middleton. As background, Middleton outlined the continuing saga of Yamasee "Mischief," explaining that their small raiding parties into South Carolina, especially the area around Pon Pon, were often "headed by two three or more Spaniards & sometimes joined wth Negroes." Among the victims since 1726 were planters Richard Lawson and his wife, John Edwards, William Lavy, and John Sparks. The scope of the Smallwood episode, however, set a new standard for infamy, and the colony reacted accordingly. Captain Smallwood had been on his way to his "Tradeing House" at the forks of the Altamaha "near his Majestys Garrison" when the incident occurred. He was in his "Perriaugua," the standard boat of the coastal trade and its major navigable rivers, along with his servants John

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<sup>79</sup>Ibid., February 1723, Alb/2/3, 213.

<sup>80</sup>SC-Ar, Charles Town Wills and Miscellaneous Documents (1711-17), 125-28.

Annesley, Charles and Albert Smith, and John Hutchinson.<sup>81</sup> These five men were attacked by thirty or so Yamasees and were "murdered and Scalped," and all their goods, worth £300 or more, were carried away. But this was not the end of the incident. The raiders had clearly known whom they had attacked, for they then proceeded to Smallwood's store and took three thousand deer skins from it, along with many trading goods. Three of Smallwood's servants who were unfortunate enough to be there at the time, were taken to St. Augustine along with the goods. These were brothers John and William Gray and "one Beans." They remained there as prisoners for several months.<sup>82</sup> That this had occurred so near Fort King George added to the insult, for the raid proved that the fort's presence had failed to protect neighboring citizens from harm.

According to the eyewitness testimony of Smallwood's slave, "Indian Jack," the Lower Creeks were responsible for this affront to the colony.<sup>83</sup> The Commons House of Assembly then decided to send traders Johnny Musgrove and

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<sup>81</sup>Larry E. Ivers, "Scouting the Inland Passage 1685-1737" SCHM 73 (1972): 120, 123, gives both visual and verbal descriptions of piraguas.

<sup>82</sup>Letter of Middleton to London, dated 13 July, 1728, BPRO 13:61-70.

<sup>83</sup>JCHA, August 2 and 3, 1727, RSUS Alb/3/1, 555, 563. He received £10 worth of clothing as a reward for his testimony.

James Welch, both with Indian blood, to talk to the Creeks. The House also advised the Cherokees to suspend peace talks with the Creeks until this incident had been resolved. People living in the south of the colony increased their demands for a garrison at Port Royal and, if necessary, for the mobilization of a force of Chickasaws and two hundred whites "to revenge Compleatly the murders."<sup>84</sup> This was to begin at Savano Town, still the center of the Indian Trade, and its traders, their packhorsemen and other servants were expected to enlist. By August 25, the Beaufort fort was authorized, with four additional men allocated for each of the scout boats that patrolled the southern waterways.<sup>85</sup> This was in response to rumors that the Spanish were outfitting "seven or eight pettiaugers" to attack Port Royal, presumably to unleash the Yamasees and other Indians upon the area.<sup>86</sup>

By January 1728 the colony's mood had shifted from defense to offense. Plans for an expedition against St. Augustine itself were finalized. An act was passed to mobilize one hundred whites immediately and three hundred more men if necessary. Colonel Charlesworth Glover was

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<sup>84</sup>Ibid., 555-59.

<sup>85</sup>Ivers, "Inland Passage," 128; JCHA, RSUS A1b/3/1, 572-73.

<sup>86</sup>Ibid.

enlisted as a special envoy to talk with the Creeks. He was to ensure their cooperation or at least their neutrality, for a general war might be "Fatall to such a Stragling Province."<sup>87</sup> His journal reflected his diligence in visiting the Lower Creek towns from December 1727 through March 1728. He reported that the Lower Creeks were divided, with the Cowetas leading the less numerous pro-Spanish section. On January 16, he held talks at Coweta with the Long Warrior and other Lower Creek leaders. Glover showed that he could use harsh words, stating that "My King knows that some of your People with the Yamasees killed Mr. Smallwood and the People with him, and by that they have brought their blood upon your Towns, which can never be wip'd off but by the blood of some of my King's Enemys."<sup>88</sup> The Long Warrior of Coweta said that he had obtained a scalp that he claimed belonged to the leader of the gang that went against Smallwood, but had not brought it because it was still "Green not yet Dry'd." Another chief from the Okfuskeys, however, claimed that it had not been taken by the Cowetas as revenge for the killings, but that the perpetrator had been killed by four men of his town for an unspecified reason.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>87</sup>Ibid., January 31, 1728, Ala/3/2, 4.

<sup>88</sup>BPRO 13:83, 85-91.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid., 94-97.

In the end, it was not the threat of arms but of a trade boycott that finally swayed many of the Creeks to stay in the English interest and to ignore Yamasee pleas for aid. In Glover's words, "as long as the Yamasees and Creeks go to the Spaniards we can have no Trade with you or your People for they cut off[f] our Perriaugoes, Plunder our Goods, kill our People." To end this state of affairs, the Creeks at the Coweta meeting needed to "either get the Tallipooses and your own people to cut off the Yamasees or you must move down lower with your People where we can Trade with safety." Glover mentioned the hardships that the trading "Beloved Men" encountered in trading with the Creeks, facing attacks on their goods and persons. He also attempted to explain why trading goods in Creek country were more costly than in Cherokee country. Creek traders faced more risks, and if the Creeks refused to pay the scheduled prices, the traders in turn were unable to pay their own debts to their merchants, and thus sometimes, like "the man with one eye," were forced to flee to the French.<sup>90</sup> No-one won in this kind of situation.

Glover's letter of March 1728 reflected the divided nature of Creek society. Glover had worked hard to influence Lower Creek chief Chigelly to stay in the British

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<sup>90</sup>Ibid., 100-08. The one-eyed Carolina trader may have been Sawney Long.

sphere, telling him of the handsome sum the Spanish had placed on his head. Chigelly, Brims' brother and possible successor, had "promised to be "entirely in the English Interest, . . . but Powder and Bullets is all their Cry." Glover concluded that "old Brims is the Man that has all the Power, and his heart is for the Spaniards," for Brims had returned from a trip to St. Augustine laden with gifts. He was now inclined towards making peace with the Yamasees and the Spanish.<sup>91</sup> Glover's plan to entice him away from the Spanish involved luring him with "a bag of Molasses, and a little chocolate and Sugar," plus a gown and cap, "a small bag of Rum a Silk Swash [sash], all will not cost a great deal and it will win the old mans heart."<sup>92</sup> This approach continued in an April message which outlined a plan for keeping the Indians tractable while saving European lives. Glover proposed that a "Cag of Rum" be used to ransom Spaniards taken by the Indians, to which the Creeks responded that it was "more than the Spaniards" offered for dead Carolinians.<sup>93</sup>

Glover's conclusion of the best way of gaining and keeping Creek "loyalty" is most revealing: it could not be maintained by force. He knew that "it is the Trade must

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<sup>91</sup>CJ, CO 5/ 429 BMP D491, 13.

<sup>92</sup>BPRO 13:118-19,

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., 168.



Govern these People" and told the Lower Creek headmen at Coweta to "consider your own Interest, Shew me one of your Women or Children cloathed by the French or Spanyards and I'll shew you 500 cloathed by the English."<sup>94</sup> An army might be needed to destroy openly hostile factions from time to time but ultimately, trade was the decisive weapon in this war.

Merchants in Charles Town, however, as well as the traders themselves, were a major stumbling block to Creek confidence in English good intentions. Some merchants had always disregarded colonial and imperial orders against trading with the Spanish and the French. Chigelly was truly confused when he returned from an ambush that seized a party of seven Spaniards and three Yamasees. Seven guns seized by him turned out to be English trading guns taken by an English sloop to St. Augustine and sold there from English ships against all regulations. Charles Town merchants as well as traders in the nation needed closer supervision. Glover was to entreat for a small, very closely controlled trade. He believed that only William Tenant and Thomas Wigan could be trusted among all the Lower Creek traders.<sup>95</sup>

What finally stabilized the southern frontier was "Colo. Palmers success," a raid that removed the disruptive

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<sup>94</sup>Ibid., 120, 130.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid., 116.

Yamasee faction that periodically stirred its Lower Creek kin to violence against the Carolinians.<sup>96</sup> South Carolina's victory here was the true end of the Yamasee War. Ultimately, this military success proved that South Carolina was capable of defending its inhabitants and allies and their economic interests more effectively than Spain could protect its allied Indians' existence.

#### IV

John Palmer's motley band of traders, their servants, and Indian allies of many different tribal origins, brought about a turning point in Britain's favor in frontier relationships, although it did not succeed in all its aims. The Spanish remained a force behind the coquina walls of the fortress of San Marcos at St. Augustine; however, they had shown their inability to protect their outlying mission and other Indian settlements against raiders. The Yamasee towns in the vicinity never recovered from this blow.<sup>97</sup>

As early as August 24, 1727, acting governor Middleton had asked the Commons House of Assembly to do something

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<sup>96</sup>Ibid., 168.

<sup>97</sup>Hann, "St. Augustine's Yamasee War," 180-200. While Hann does not dwell on the impact of Palmer's raid, he used Spanish listings of settlements of 1717, 1726, and 1728 to show a massive depletion of population and number of villages.

about the "deplorable Condition & circumstances of our fellow Subjects on the Southen frontier of this . . . Province." Several planters had been murdered the previous year.<sup>98</sup> On August 30, the House committee on Indian affairs submitted its report on how best to react. It suggested using traders James Welch and Johnny Musgrove to form an expedition of about twenty whites and more Indians, mostly Chickasaws who had settled near Fort Moore and depended more on South Carolina's goodwill than did other nations. It further proposed that a much larger force of 280 whites and Indian allies be mobilized as a land expedition to intimidate the Lower Creeks by marching through their towns on the way against the real enemies: the Spanish and Yamasees. This force, divided into three divisions, could deliver a death blow to the enemy in their home territory.<sup>99</sup>

When the Commons House met six months later in February 1728, the force had still not assembled. Middleton's speech of February 1 mentioned the difficulty of enlisting whites in particular. A House committee on Indian affairs echoed that, even suggesting that the only way to do so was to draw lots among the militia.<sup>100</sup> Financial incentives were

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<sup>98</sup>JCHA, August 24, 1727, RSUS A1b/3/1, 566-67.

<sup>99</sup>Ibid., August 30, 1727, 585-86.

<sup>100</sup>Ibid., A1b/4/1, 349, 370.

needed. The committee proposed that "it would be a very great Encouragemt. if a proper sume was allowed for scalps."<sup>101</sup> What was finally passed was not as bloodthirsty: South Carolina would award £20 for every "Sculp with the Ears of an Enemy Indian and Thirty Pounds for every Enemy Indian they shall bring in Alive."<sup>102</sup>

The raid finally occurred but, unfortunately, no contemporary account of it has survived. All that is known is that the raid was considered a great success. The commander was Colonel John Palmer, a man long involved in the defense of the southern border. Before the Yamasee War, he had controlled the scout boats in the area and had, as a "young Stripling" with just sixteen others, won a notable victory against the Yamasees.<sup>103</sup> The House expressed its wish on April 5 to delay disbanding Palmer's forces, fearing the success "must have greatly exasperated a people who are in their own nation bloody and revengeful, and are powerfully abetted against us by the French and Spaniards as our latest advices inform." Many feared that "fresh outrages" would occur unless some of Palmer's men were retained to patrol the border. Middleton, however, saw the

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<sup>101</sup>Ibid., 371.

<sup>102</sup>UHJ, February 29, 1728, Council Journal Number 4, SC-Ar, 142.

<sup>103</sup>Ivers, "Inland Passage," 117, 124; Boston News Letter, June 13, 1715, from Carroll, Collections 2:572.

event in a global diplomatic context. The expedition had been successful against the problem Indians. It was not possible to attack a European power with whom England was no longer at war. The "two Crowns of Great Brittain and Spain" hoped they had attained a "profound peace" and nothing was to endanger this equilibrium.<sup>104</sup> In terms of European diplomacy, the Anglo-Spanish war of 1727-1729 was over, and Walpole's return to power meant a resumption of his peace policy. Attention then shifted at the colonial political level to reopening trade with the various Creek factions, and to methods of regulating the traders. It was even suggested that a "warr with the Chactaws would be a good Diversion to the Creeks."<sup>105</sup>

From this time on, more attention was paid to events farther west on the southern frontier. Despite expressions of fear of Spain and its Indian allies, the reality was an increased awareness of the dangers posed by Britain's nominal ally, France, whose colonial aspirations promoted an increasing British fear of its growing presence in the interior of the continent.

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<sup>104</sup>JCHA, August 5 and 6, 1728, RSUS Alb/4/1, 480-83. No contemporary account of the raid itself seems to have survived.

<sup>105</sup>Ibid., 485.

## VI

Another event that promised a securer southern frontier than ever before was one without any roots in backwoods history. It was the unheralded arrival of a Scottish baronet, Sir Alexander Cuming. Through the sheer force of his self-assured personality, he was able to bewitch the Cherokees into swearing everlasting loyalty to their father, the great King George across the water. The arrogance of this man both disarmed the Indians he met and terrified the traders who acted as guides and interpreters on his self-appointed mission. If the leading traders had not decided to support his venture and to praise him to the Cherokees, however, it could not have succeeded.

Sir Alexander did not visit Indian country as an official envoy of the British government, although many contemporaries and later chroniclers believed that he had. Hoping to gain a fortune from overseas investments, Cuming had sailed to South Carolina in the fall of 1729 and immediately involved himself in many shady financial deals. He later accomplished his Cherokee coup and returned to England before his shaky financing in the colony came to light.<sup>106</sup> Perhaps he undertook his arduous journey to the

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<sup>106</sup>For an account of his life, see "Journal of Sir Alexander Cuming," in Williams, Early Tennessee Travels, 115-21.

Cherokees to evade Charles Town creditors and to establish a reputation in a different field of endeavor. Despite his continuing interest and repute as an expert in Cherokee affairs, he was to die in debtor's prison in Britain.

Cuming did not lack bravado. He arrived in Cherokee country at a time when there were serious doubts about that tribe's reliability. When he stayed with master trader Joseph Barker, he heard the latest rumors about the possibility that the Lower Creeks would lure the Cherokees into the French camp. Barker complained that the Keowee Indians were "unruly," so Cuming, according to his version of events, "went into their Townhouse, arm'd with three Cases of Pistols, a Gun, and his Sword; where the head Men of the Town, in the midst of 300, own'd Obedience to [King George] on their Knees."<sup>107</sup> Cuming further demanded an April 3 meeting with all the headmen of the Cherokee nation, and in his travels towards Nequasse, the site of this grand council, reported the willingness of the natives to defer to him, even to making him a "present of their Crown."<sup>108</sup> That ceremony was a personal triumph as he persuaded the probably bemused "emperor" Moytoy of Tellico and other head warriors to "acknowledge themselves dutiful Subjects and Sons to King George." The "crown" of possum hair, as well

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<sup>107</sup>Williams, "Journal of Sir Alexander Cuming," 125.

<sup>108</sup>Ibid.

as other ceremonial tributes of scalps and eagle's tails, were presented to him the next day with promises that "when he left them they would regard him as present in the Person of Moytoy." Cuming reported that "the Eye Witnesses themselves declared they would not have believed such a Thing possible, if they had not seen it."<sup>109</sup>

Luckily, Cuming's own account is not the only one to have survived of this bizarre affair. One of the traders present throughout most of the incidents wrote his impressions many years later.<sup>110</sup> Ludovic Grant, a leading trader based in the Cherokee towns of Great Tellico and later Hiwassee, conveyed the impact of the larger-than-life baronet on traders and native Americans alike. At Keowee, where Joseph Barker had warned that the Indians "was not then in the best disposition," Grant recounted how Sir Alexander broke with Cherokee custom by taking weapons into the council house. When a trader pointed out this breach in etiquette, "He answered with a Wild look, that his intention was if any of the Indians had refused the King's health to have taken a brand out of the fire that Burns in the middle of the room and have set fire to the house. That he would have guarded the door himself and put to death every one

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<sup>109</sup>Ibid., 126-27.

<sup>110</sup>"Historical Relation of Facts Delivered by Ludovick Grant, Indian Trader, to His Excellency the Governor of South Carolina" SCHM 10 (1909): 54-68.



that endeavored to make their Escape." Not surprisingly, most traders' reaction to this "strange speech" was to leave the area as quickly as possible.<sup>111</sup> Grant, however, remained with him as guide and interpreter and accompanied him to the planned great meeting at Nequasse. Cuming greeted native Americans everywhere he went by shaking their hands, "as is their Custom." He was clearly interested in Indian ways and the details of their ceremonies. Grant's explanation of the significance of the "crown" was not Cuming's. It was really a "cap" worn by "a head beloved man, of which there are a great many in this nation." The Indian word for these dignitaries was "Ouka" which "we translate . . . King."<sup>112</sup> Cuming, however, had chosen to understand that he was presented with an overwhelming symbol of tribal authority by the leading chief, Moytoy. Without any legal authority, Cuming then appointed Moytoy "their head, by the unanimous Consent of the whole People."<sup>113</sup>

Cuming eventually persuaded some leading Cherokees to visit to England with him. Moytoy opted out, perhaps diplomatically, on the grounds that his "Wife was dangerously ill." The chiefs picked for this trip eventually met King George with great pomp and ceremony on

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<sup>111</sup>Ibid., 56.

<sup>112</sup>Ibid., 57.

<sup>113</sup>Williams, "Journal of Sir Alexander Cuming," 126.

June 22, 1730.<sup>114</sup> The final draft of a treaty was completed by the Indians and the Board of Trade's Alured Popple on September 9, 1730. It was a basic trading agreement which stated that the Cherokees were the English king's "Children," that they would not trade with other European nations, and would return runaway black slaves to the colonial authorities. It did not mention any cessions of lands.<sup>115</sup> Grant knew that those who went to England "had no Commission of authority . . . to give away any of their land, and I know they had no power or right in themselves to do it."<sup>116</sup>

Trade and an amicable atmosphere in which it could prosper were the main British and Cherokee motivation for the 1730 treaty. Sir Alexander Cuming was the unlikely catalyst that had brought this about, but only with the aid of the leading traders among the Cherokees such as Grant, and the interpreting skills of Eleazer Wigan, Joseph Barker, and many others.

By the beginning of the 1730s, therefore, traders and merchants believed the future held prospects for peace and thus for increasing trade and profits. Trade regulations

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<sup>114</sup>Ibid., 128-29.

<sup>115</sup>Ibid., 138-43, for the treaty and Cherokee response to it.

<sup>116</sup>Grant, "Historical Relation," 57.

were enforced better than ever before by a sole commissioner. The Yamasees no longer destabilized the southern frontier. Suspending trade with the Lower Creeks had made that tribe reconsider the advantages of a trading alliance with the Carolinians, and the Cherokees had entered into a special bond with the English through the machinations of Sir Alexander Cuming.

The formation of the new colony of Georgia in the old debatable lands of Guale was the culmination of all these optimistic tendencies. During its first few years, Georgia had the support and best wishes of most Carolinians. It did not take long, however, for Georgia to become a competitor for the Indian trade's profits. As early as 1735 many Charles Town traders and their merchants were hostile to the new colony's Indian trade policies, which demanded that many long-standing Carolinian traders had to trade with Georgia licenses, or not at all. South Carolina and Georgia's relationship deteriorated rapidly as the latter colony took a harsh line in attempting to divert the profits of the long-established Indian trade of Charles Town and its former Indian clients to Savannah. This dispute saw some traders defecting to the new colony, many of them settling at the new town of Augusta on the Savannah River, a site that soon eclipsed the old trading center, New Windsor.

## CHAPTER 7

### Expansion and challenges: 1734 -- 1755

The creation of the colony of Georgia was hailed as a blessing by most Carolinians in 1733: they finally had a buffer state between themselves and the Spanish.<sup>1</sup> This enthusiasm soon waned and the Indian trade was the primary cause. The growing instability of relations with the Cherokees was another major theme of this period's Indian relations, one revealed by increasing skirmishes which culminated in open war in 1759. Hostile incidents occurred before the Cherokees who had gone to London with Sir Alexander Cuming in 1730 to confirm a treaty had returned to their towns. Even relations with old enemies changed and deteriorated. To the old dreads of Spain's might and the incursions of its Indian allies were added new fears of an increasing French sphere of influence to the west and north. Fears of encirclement and of loss of key trading partners to the French were justified. Trade and peaceful relationships with interior tribes, such as the Choctaws and Chickasaws, therefore became more important in terms of global diplomacy

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<sup>1</sup>Sirmans, South Carolina, 187, expressed the belief that South Carolina's Indian traders had been the only group against the Georgia project.

than ever before.

The year 1734 was a key year on the southern frontier and reflected many of these trends. While problems with the Cherokees warranted an embargo of trade for most of that year, many other incidents were a direct result of the establishment of Georgia. South Carolina's Indian commissioner, Tobias Fitch, resigned in 1734 after he had unsuccessfully challenged the authority of a Georgia agent to the Creeks, Patrick MacKay. MacKay asserted Georgia's right to license all traders within its boundaries and sphere of influence. Georgia's Indian Trade Act of 1735, although based on a South Carolina act, was a direct challenge to the established trade practices and profits of the latter colony.<sup>2</sup> To confuse an already complicated political landscape in the far west, a delegation of Choctaws, influenced by a leading warrior, Red Shoes (Shulush Homa of the Choctaw town of Couechitto), made its way to the English colonies. This was a breakthrough in trading relationships because it indicated a willingness by a faction of influential Choctaws to break with their traditional ally and trading partner, France. Red Shoes and his supporters were even prepared to consider peace with their ancient enemy, the Chickasaws, in order to enter into

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<sup>2</sup>Kenneth Coleman, Colonial Georgia: A History (1976; reprint, Millwood, NY: KTO Press, 1989), 80.

a mutually profitable relationship with English traders.

Relationships between the two British colonies became strained to the point that both appealed to the Board of Trade and the Privy Council in 1738 for a judgment on areas of authority and spheres of influence. Despite the official verdicts of the royal instructions of 1738, they were never resolved in a way that brought the trade in either colony under efficient management.

## I

Georgia began its existence with the good will and financial support of many prominent South Carolinians, especially Governor Robert Johnson, some leading "older" families such as the Woodwards, and many leading merchants including Paul Jenys and the Eveleighs.<sup>3</sup> The St. Julian family in particular aided in a practical fashion, especially merchant Peter, and James with his Indian trade connections and surveying skills. Many Carolinians lent slaves to help clear the ground for the planned city of

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<sup>3</sup>See Phinzy Spalding, "South Carolina and Georgia: The Early Days," SCHM 69 (1968): 83-96, for the most complete account of this initial welcome and the subsequent deterioration of the relationship.

Savannah.<sup>4</sup> When the first prospective colonists led by General James Oglethorpe arrived at Charles Town aboard the Anne on January 13, 1733, they were "extreamly well received by his Excellency" and the population of the city in general.<sup>5</sup>

As early as March 1733, Oglethorpe, still in Charles Town, knew that the Indian trade "in our province" was worth at least £2,000 Sterling per annum.<sup>6</sup> Despite his desire to profit from the trade, he clung to the prohibitions against black slaves and rum. These by themselves almost inevitably led to opposition from South Carolina's merchants, even without the problems arising from Oglethorpe's attempt to seize control of the southern Indian trade. Ironically, in light of later problems, much of Carolina's financial support of the new colony came from a duty of three pence per gallon on rum imported into Charles Town.<sup>7</sup>

Much of the goodwill the new colony encountered from the local Yamacraw Indians was derived from the presence of Mary Musgrove, later Mathews, who had both Creek and English

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<sup>4</sup>Colonial Records of Georgia [CRG] 20:1-2, 10. Samuel Woodward assisted with his "servants," as did William Bull. Spalding, "South Carolina and Georgia," 89.

<sup>5</sup>South-Carolina Gazette, [SCG], January 20, 1733.

<sup>6</sup>Oglethorpe to Trustees, May 14, 1733. CRG 20:21.

<sup>7</sup>This was enacted in December 1733. Spalding, "South Carolina and Georgia," 91; Cooper, Statutes at Large 3:362-64.

blood. Governor Robert Johnson had asked her husband, Johnny Musgrove, a licensed South Carolina trader, to aid Oglethorpe's venture. Mary formed and maintained a close friendship with Oglethorpe, placing her linguistic and diplomatic skills and connections at his disposal.<sup>8</sup> She and Johnny influenced the Yamacraws under chief Tomochichi to welcome and aid the colonists. In return for their good will, the Musgroves were secure in their lucrative trading ventures -- initially at Yamacraw Bluff just above the site of Savannah -- as long as Oglethorpe was in Georgia. When Oglethorpe returned to England in 1734 with Tomochichi, his wife, and six other Indians, Johnny Musgrove accompanied them as official interpreter. Perhaps Mary made the general aware of the profits of the trade and of the need for a peaceful, open atmosphere that accommodated the Indian love of ceremony in order for a well-regulated trade to survive.

Oglethorpe soon fancied himself an expert in Indian affairs. With the Musgroves' help, he had befriended the Yamacraws and by May 1733 had used the tribe's connections to invite many Lower Creek chiefs to Savannah.<sup>9</sup> Fifty-five

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<sup>8</sup>For example, Mary Musgrove to Oglethorpe. July 17, 1734, CRG 20:63-4. She was acting as a go-between for Thomas Jones, informing the General of the former's influence with his Choctaw kin.

<sup>9</sup>Phinizy Spalding, Oglethorpe in America (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), 94, makes a case that Oglethorpe himself was from the outset effective in dealing with the Indians.



chiefs and Oglethorpe signed a treaty on May 21, 1733, ceding lands that the Creeks did not currently use and establishing a schedule of prices for trading goods.<sup>10</sup> When the General left for England with the delegation of Creeks in 1734, he took a version of a trading act (based on South Carolina's 1731 act), with him and this became law in April 1735.

Oglethorpe's handling of the dispute that arose between the two colonies over the administration of the Indian trade and in his choice of officials to supervise the traders soon led to a breach with the older colony. As early as May 1734, South Carolina's officials needed advice from the Commons House of Assembly about handling the clash of authorities in Indian country.<sup>11</sup> Governor Johnson wished to work closely with Oglethorpe and had told Indian commissioner Tobias Fitch, whom he referred to as a "Wrong thinking Man," to "acquaint the Traders to the Creeks that they should assist Mr. Mackey, and Obey the Orders he should give them."<sup>12</sup> Patrick MacKay had been placed in charge of Creek Indian affairs and of a troop of rangers by Oglethorpe

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<sup>10</sup>Common Council ratification of treaty, October 18, 1733, CRG 32:71-74.

<sup>11</sup>JCHA, May 28 1734, RSUS, A1b/4/3/ 193.

<sup>12</sup>Johnson to Oglethorpe, January 28, 1735. CRG 20:203-04. MacKay's name was also spelled "Mckay," "Mackey," and "McKey."

shortly before his return to England. Initially, many in both colonies supported MacKay's main charge, establishing a fort in Upper Creek country, with money and enthusiasm. When the proposed fort failed to materialize, the older colony's merchants, administrators, and Indian clients came to suspect that the true aim of Georgia's officials was monopolizing the trade instead of maintaining peace and prosperity.

By 1734, MacKay, representing Georgia among the Creeks, and Roger Lacy, its agent among the Cherokees, began warning traders that if they refused to obtain Georgia licenses their goods were liable to confiscation. They then carried out that threat. MacKay in particular believed that there were too many traders among the Creeks. That situation had led to fierce competition between traders who reduced exchange rates of goods to skins to such levels that the Indian hunters did not need to exert themselves to obtain the European goods they coveted. To correct this market imbalance, MacKay withheld licenses from many old established traders. In one instance, MacKay informed a "Mr. Jones" in writing in May 1735 that the "very great disorder" the trade was in resulted from the "Numbers Licensed to Trade, and which as Governed could not afford a Living for some Traders, which was the Reason I have regulated the Trade a little and Reduced the Numbers."

Jones was therefore "to withdraw yourself & Effects with all convenient Diligence from this Nation."<sup>13</sup> By such actions, MacKay laid himself open to charges of favoritism and even of creating a personal monopoly which excluded many old-established traders whose loyalty remained with South Carolina. By this time, Governor Robert Johnson had died, and Lieutenant-Governor Thomas Broughton, Johnson's son-in-law and a former participant in the trade himself, fully supported the Carolina merchants and traders. Broughton contended that more and not fewer traders were needed among the Indians, in order to counteract the increasing numbers of French troops in the Alabama fort and in Creek country in general. MacKay was weakening "our hands and Interest among the Indians [which] can surely be done only with Intention to Injure and betray" the King's interest and the trade by "molesting and hindering [traders] from carrying on a Trade with a free People."<sup>14</sup> MacKay's dismissal did not end this dispute, for his successor, Roger Tanner, continued these policies, disrupting the patterns of trade and diplomacy established over the half-century or so of South Carolina's Indian trade.

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<sup>13</sup>MacKay to Jones, 28 May, 1735, BPRO 17:408. This was probably Thomas Jones, the half-Creek trader and son of Colonel John Jones a leading figure in South Carolina's early years. See above, fn 8.

<sup>14</sup>Broughton to the Board of Trade, October [no day] 1735, BPRO 17:398.

The questions posed by the new colony created a crisis of identity for individual traders and merchants. Traders who had lived in certain Creek towns for a decade or more suddenly found that their South Carolina licenses were not valid in the eyes of Georgia's officials and that they were not among the few favored with a Georgia license. One trader was told that he could no longer trade among the Creeks or the Chickasaws but that he was free to trade with the more distant Choctaws. He and his partner did so despite the hazard of that journey, for returning to Charles Town with unsold goods would have "been one thousand Pounds Loss to them at least."<sup>15</sup>

The traders were in a state of total confusion. Any license that they had legally paid for in one colony was not recognized by the agents of the other colony. Patrick MacKay soon began arresting non-compliant traders, breaking into their stores in the nations to destroy their goods. Large sums were lost when trader goods went up in smoke. William Williams, a trader licensed by South Carolina for three towns among the Upper Creeks, was one of those who suffered this fate. His store at one place was "broke up and burnt . . . wherin he lost above One Thousand Skins

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 17:424. Although the amount of money was in South Carolina currency, it still reflected the vast sums invested in the Indian trade.

worth of Goods."<sup>16</sup> Having few options, many traders in Creek and Cherokee country in villages close to Georgia decided to go along with MacKay's demands.

In contrast to these strong-arm tactics, the proposed creation of the new town of Augusta, 250 miles up the Savannah River from the sea, was a lure that made many throw their lot in with Georgia. The town was planned "for the convenience principally of the Indian Traders," and as a new center for the Indian trade, lying as it did on the main Creek and Cherokee paths. Augusta was to attract many who had settled on the South Carolina side of the Savannah River at New Windsor under the earlier much-needed protection of Fort Moore. That settlement in turn had replaced the original inland center of the Indian trade -- Savano Town. Augusta was planned with forty large house lots and common lands; as early as June 1736, seven leading traders had petitioned for lots.<sup>17</sup> By 1739, "a pretty little town" was established there, with "large Warehouses of goods, and a great trade . . . with the Indian nation."<sup>18</sup> A Swiss immigrant in 1753 said that the return trip to and from

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<sup>16</sup>Broughton, Oct 1735 letter and enclosures to London, BPRO 17:422.

<sup>17</sup>Egmont, Journal of the Trustees, 168. These were Samuel Brown, George Currie, Cornelius Dougharty, Gregory Haines, Lachlan McBain, Kennedy O'Brien, and Joseph Pavey.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid. See also Braund, "Mutual Convenience, Mutual Dependence," 36-37.

Charles Town by boat took "only" five weeks and that most of the 2,000 horse-loads of goods for the Indian trade still went through that city, not Savannah, which would have taken three weeks for a one-way journey.<sup>19</sup>

The pressures to stay "loyal" to South Carolina prevented wholesale defections, for Charles Town remained the leading center for the trade throughout this period. Most traders, whether based there or in Georgia, received their goods on credit from Charles Town merchants. Charles Town was regarded by most traders and Indians as "the Ancient place of Trade."<sup>20</sup> Traders in both colonies were, and remained, part of an established network of trade and credit based on South Carolina.

When forced to choose between Georgia or South Carolina, most traders felt caught between a rock and a hard place. Individual traders who responded to MacKay and other Georgia officials found that they were liable to prosecution from South Carolina. Cherokee traders Joseph Barker and Jacob Morris, for instance, were summoned to appear before South Carolina's Council in 1736 to account for their lapse in taking out licenses in Savannah and to "make a Proper

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<sup>19</sup>Walter L. Robbins, trans., "John Tobler's Description of South Carolina, 1753," SCHM 71 (1970): 149.

<sup>20</sup>Memorial of Commons House of Assembly to Broughton and Jenys, July 4, 1735, BPRO 17:416.

Submission."<sup>21</sup> A few others, however, wholeheartedly welcomed the breach and embraced Georgia's case, seeing it as an opportunity to avoid the often massive debts they had amassed and owed to Carolina merchants. Both colonies could legitimately accuse the other of shielding debtors and criminals, as well as of trying to monopolize the trade.

By June 12, 1735, South Carolina Council member and merchant John Fenwicke wrote to MacKay about his actions among the Creek traders, stating that Fenwicke would be "Exceedingly Surprized at those proceedings if they were really proved to be true." He was convinced that the home government wished to preserve "a free Trade among their Indians as Usual." Like most Carolinians, Fenwicke had understood Oglethorpe as agreeing that "no Lycenced trader from this Governmt Conforming to our Law for regulating the Indian Trade, Should be Interrupted by any officer belonging to Georgia."<sup>22</sup> Similar views were restated in stronger terms by Lieutenant-Governor Broughton in a letter protesting MacKay's "Arbitrary and Violent manner" and his confiscations for which he had "no Authority." Broughton believed MacKay had done so to "reap the benefitt of that trade, with the Creek or Chekasaw Indians." In a

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<sup>21</sup>UHJ March 23, 1736, RSUS Ala/2/2, 206-13. This record erroneously gives Morris's name as "Joseph."

<sup>22</sup>Fenwicke to MacKay, June 12, 1735. CRG 20:483.

postscript, Broughton reminded MacKay of the thousands of pounds South Carolina had contributed towards erecting the long-awaited fort among the Upper Creeks, without expecting that "his Majtys Subjects therein should be Excluded & debared from trading among those Indians as Usual."<sup>23</sup>

A July 4, 1735, petition by leading merchants in the Commons House to Speaker Paul Jenys, other members of the House, and Broughton made it clear that even if the Indians traded with were indeed within the "Bounds of the Georgia Charter," that still did not justify the new colony's attempt to monopolize the trade. The situation was a reprise of a similar problem between South Carolina and Virginia during the reign of Queen Anne when Carolinians had seized goods belonging to Virginians trading within the limits of Carolina's charter. The imperial verdict at that time was that all the Queen's "loving Subjects had an equal Right to Trade to and from all her Dominions as well by Land as by Sea without Interruption and thereupon the Traders from Virginia have carried on and Continued the Trade to and amongst the Indians belonging to this Government ever since without the least Molestation." Since the current petitioners were South Carolina merchants, they were concerned with recovering outstanding debts from their employees and minor partners in the nations. While waiting

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<sup>23</sup>Broughton to MacKay, July 4, 1735. CRG 20:484-85.



for a verdict on these larger issues, they asked for measures that would help to keep the South Carolina end of the trade attractive to traders in the nations by lifting the duty on skins and furs and "the whole Impositions on Indian Trading Licences in order to preserve and Continue [the trade] upon the same footing with His Majesty's Colonies of Virginia and Georgia." Anything less was a danger to the export of over 70,000 deer skins per annum to Britain. It would also hurt the trade in woolen and "Cutlery Ware and diverse other British Comoditys which are Consumed in that Trade."<sup>24</sup>

By June 1736, a special session of the Commons House of Assembly protested Georgia's actions.<sup>25</sup> Six months later, both Houses were finally working on a bill "for taking off Certain Dutys and Impositions on the Indian Trade and for Indempnifying the Indian Traders for Certain Fines, Realtys, and Forfeitures."<sup>26</sup> Two thousand pounds sterling was appropriated to compensate traders for losses inflicted by Georgia, although it was later annulled by the Crown.<sup>27</sup> A

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<sup>24</sup>Petition of members of the House involved in the Indian trade to Broughton, Jenys, and other Members of the CHA, July 4, 1735, BPRO 17:412-21.

<sup>25</sup>For the grounds of South Carolina's opposition to Georgia's actions, see UHJ, June 23, 1736, RSUS A1a/2/2, 289-292.

<sup>26</sup>UHJ, December 14, 16, 1736, RSUS A1a/2/2, 347, 354

<sup>27</sup>Egmont, Journal of the Trustees, 25 June, 1736, 172.

meeting between colonial envoys at the new post of Augusta agreed to let London officials decide the issue.<sup>28</sup> By this time, Georgia had lost one of its friends with the death of Governor Johnson; Broughton wholeheartedly supported the long-established Carolina merchants and traders until his own death in November 1737. Tension between the colonies moderated with the resolution of the administrative issue by London aided in the immediate future by the fact that the acting governor from 1737 to 1743 was William Bull, Senior, a personal friend and admirer of Oglethorpe, and by the imminence of war with Spain.

Georgia's position was laid out in a January 1737 petition to the king which depicted the Carolinians as opposing a royal act. The Trustees stated that several South Carolina traders, especially "Thomas Wright a Transported Convict," were employed "to animate the Indians . . . by a great many villainous Reports and Suggestions" against Georgia, and that Wright had even destroyed a house that was clearly within the new colony's boundaries.<sup>29</sup>

Another issue surfacing in the dispute was Georgia's claim to the right of controlling trade on the Savannah River. South Carolinians were arrested not only for

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<sup>28</sup>Coleman, Colonial Georgia, 81.

<sup>29</sup>Trustee Representation to the King, January 19, 1737, CRG 32:218-19. Wright was cleared of these charges by a committee of the Board of Trade in 1737 BPRO 18:297.

attempting to sell rum to Georgians, but for having rum on board vessels bound for the Indians up the farthest reaches of the river's tributaries. Indian traders and their merchants insisted that the alcohol was of no concern to Georgia because its destination was not within that colony. The right to free navigation on the Savannah and whether Carolinians could legally transport rum across areas within the "bounds" of Georgia on their way to areas within South Carolina's original charter, were issues that had to be resolved in London.<sup>30</sup>

In July 1738, after nearly four years of bickering, royal instructions were finally issued stating that neither colony could interfere with traders licensed by the other. The Board of Trade's committee report had really sided with South Carolina's case, for it stressed the "Trade with these Indians should be Free to all His Majesty's Subjects," and that both the trade and relations with the Indians were of "great Consequence to all," especially in the face of mounting French competition. Traders from Georgia should take out licenses there, and those from Charles Town in South Carolina. The report suggested that the north branch of the Savannah River "ought to be free," and accepted the necessity of trading rum with the Indians, for "if We do not

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<sup>30</sup>See JCHA 1736-39, 73-74.

supply them with Rum, they will get it from the French."<sup>31</sup> Despite this verdict, Indian country remained unstable, with neither colony fully able to control the excesses of the traders. Future incidents resulting from trader misconduct were blamed by each colony on the lack of control exerted by the other colony. "This Important Affair" was over, but neither side was prepared to act together unless facing a major common threat.

The effects of MacKay's and Lacy's actions on individual traders have survived in a series of affidavits sworn before South Carolina's authorities.<sup>32</sup> The depositions of July 1735 show a progression by Georgia's agents in their efforts to control the trade, culminating in orders for some traders to leave the nations. Many obeyed, as did Jeremiah Knott, who left after trading legally in the Creek nation for over seven years without incident.<sup>33</sup> Another deponent, William Edwards, a servant to a respected Creek master-trader, was put in chains by Georgia officials and was prepared for a public and ceremonial whipping. In

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<sup>31</sup>Board of Trade committee to the Privy Council, September 14, 1737, BPRO 18:289-97.

<sup>32</sup>See CRG 20:486-89 for those of Jeremiah Knott and George Cussins [Coussins]; JCHA 1736-39, 113-21, 602-37; CJ, 4 July, 1735, 3 SC-Ar Photostat #1 for Knott, William McMullins, John Cado[w]nhead and Johns.

<sup>33</sup>While obeying MacKay's directive to leave, Knott's canoe overturned with its load of goods worth two hundred weight of deer skins. JCHA 1736-39, 117-18.

this instance, two Indians prevented this affront to their friend by seizing the whips, and Edwards was released. The One-handed King in particular had put his arms around Edwards and averred that MacKay and his men would have to whip him, along with Edwards. He was horrified by these actions and said "he had never seen such doings by the white People before."<sup>34</sup> How did the Indians perceive such incidents? The One-handed King's remarks imply total confusion. The arrival of white men in their nations had changed their lives. Moreover, they had to deal with many different and warring European nations, but when white men who spoke mostly the same language and professed allegiance to the same King began to quarrel and give him conflicting directions, this was too confusing. In this kind of situation, all a chief could do was look at events from the perspective of his village. Who was most likely to aid his people in the future in the light of who had up to then shown the most concern. In this case, the Carolinians had the track record, in the shape of Edwards who was a known and respected element in his dealings with the local Indians, even if he was an unknown within the European social structure.

While Georgia's agents insisted that the Indians were

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<sup>34</sup>Edwards was Alexander Wood's servant. Ibid., 114, 120-21.

happy with increasing attempts to regulate the trade, South Carolina armed herself for the official struggle with numerous journals from her traders who insisted that the natives were prepared to fight to retain their old friends. John Gardiner, a Cherokee trader, was aided by Indians when Georgia's agent, Roger Lacy, and his entourage reached Great Tellico in 1735. The Cherokees asked Gardiner whether Lacy intended to seize all their traders' goods and evict them; if so, they were prepared to fight to protect them. Gardiner dissuaded them from violence. For his troubles, he was forced to leave and his goods were seized by Lacy.<sup>35</sup> Major Hugh Butler was sent as the new South Carolina agent to the Cherokees in October 1737 and reported that his presence had stopped Lacy from seizing and destroying more goods belonging to South Carolina's traders.<sup>36</sup>

The journal of Thomas Johns, one of the Lower Creek traders, was sent to the Assembly as an example of "what dissatisfaction and Confusion the Creeks and Indian Traders are in" as a result of the incidents.<sup>37</sup> When the youthful John Tanner, MacKay's successor, seized Johns' goods, the Creeks held a council of war and resolved to "go in a Body"

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<sup>35</sup>JCHA 1736-39, 134-37.

<sup>36</sup>He also reported that Moytoy and other Cherokees were planning to visit Charles Town. UHJ, October 6-8, 1737, Ala/2/2, 500-07.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., December 1, 1736, 321.

to take Johns' belongings from Tanner. According to the trader, it was only a speech by Johns' partner counselling restraint that prevented bloodshed. Johns mentioned that the Creeks "make great Complaints that they are debarred Rum and Free Trade" and that they were heeding renewed Spanish overtures to them because trade with St. Augustine seemed the only way of acquiring rum. The Creeks were also mystified and insulted by Tanner's presence, for he "was a Child" and not a person of authority as the Carolina agents had always been.<sup>38</sup> Native American society always placed credence on age and the wisdom associated with those who had lived a long and prosperous life, so that thrusting an untried, green youngster implied Georgia's unspoken contempt of their society. Any polity that took them seriously would send an experienced diplomat as a go-between as South Carolina had always done.

When Hobohatchey, an Abikha chief, visited Broughton in Charles Town in July 1736, he stressed the long-held connection between his Upper Creek people and the Carolinians. He "did not know the meaning of the Talk I heard about the people of Georgia" and so had refused to visit Savannah for "my feet dont know that Path, and I was resolved to come to see you my old friend." He praised the trader who had lived in his town "a Long time . . . and has

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<sup>38</sup>JCHA 1736-39, 140.

been very good to my People." Hobohatchey hoped that the trader could remain there "and carry all sorts of goods and Rum as usual for I cannot live without some Rum." He was also disturbed that their long-promised fort had still not been built and was adamant that MacKay should not be in charge of it. He promised to prevent Georgia's officials from seizing trader goods in his village, and declared that he would continue to trade as always only with the Carolinians.<sup>39</sup> On his way home from Charles Town, Hobohatchey praised the Carolinians to the other Upper Creek villages, and the Georgia agent prudently stayed away from his towns.<sup>40</sup> Hobohatchey was not alone in his views, and within the year, more Creek delegations wound their way down to Charles Town.<sup>41</sup>

As the intercolonial dispute escalated, even the original catalyst, Patrick MacKay, believed he had grounds for complaint. By late 1734, Carolinians did not treat him with the respect he thought he deserved. After his 1735 visit to Charles Town, he felt that no one there was prepared to support him; even Governor Johnston had

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<sup>39</sup>CJ, July 6, 1736. His name is spelled "Obihatchee" in this instance. SC-Ar Photostat # 1, 58-60; Corkran, Creek Frontier, 93. The trader's name was not given.

<sup>40</sup>JCHA 1736-39, his name is spelled "Opayhachey" in Johns' deposition, 140.

<sup>41</sup>For example, Ibid., 74-76, July 5, 1737.



"shifted" from the understanding they had earlier reached of giving him a letter to the Creek traders stressing that he was the official agent of both colonies. MacKay was pessimistic about his ability to achieve anything without such an endorsement, "for the traders only respect the Province that gives the license."

Carolina now finding that by all appearance they will lose the trade to the Creek Nation are becoming Indifferent how its regulated in the Natione, and by that means they grant licenses to every person that demands it, which may be attended with a dangerous consequence if not timely adverted to. For if too many traders are thron into the nation of necessity, the One will under Sell the other, and then they'le begin to Cheat, and play tricks with the Indians, and by this means ruine the trade; and may be Incense the Indians to a Rupture.<sup>42</sup>

He also linked much of the merchant and trader response to Georgia's ban on rum which he endorsed. The Indians, however, sought out traders who continued to exchange spirits for their skins, so strict enforcement of this law was essential. Traders ignored it despite the fact that most traders agreed that "rum is a pernicious thing to be carryed into the Natione," and that "discords" only occurred when Indians and traders were intoxicated.<sup>43</sup>

Oglethorpe also wanted to enforce Georgia's first two laws, although he realized that the prohibition against

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<sup>42</sup>MacKay to the Trustees, November 20, 1734, CRG 20:109.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

black slaves and rum "goes much against the Grain of the traders in these Comodityes."<sup>44</sup> He, too, stressed the connections between the Indian traders and the evils of drinking strong liquor. Savannah's "best Carpenter" had died of "a burning Feaver which on his Deathbed he confessed he contracted at the Indian Trading House: he drank there Rum Punch on the Wednesday, on Thursday was taken ill" and died a week later.<sup>45</sup> Many of Oglethorpe's supporters had doubts about the ban on rum, and as early as March 1735 were aware that the "prohibition on rum carrys more money out of the Collony & makes us depend more upon Carolina then any thing else."<sup>46</sup> Oglethorpe no doubt genuinely believed that the South Carolina licensed traders were mostly corrupt and self-seeking. Employing such types could not, therefore, guarantee the safety of the insecure borders of the infant colony.

Georgia's agents do not seem to have been much more personally honest and upstanding than the traders they castigated. MacKay's personal problems continued until he was so caught in the middle of the intercolonial dispute

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid.; Egmont, Journal of the Trustees, 83, mentions these were passed and ready for printing, 23 April, 1735.

<sup>45</sup>Oglethorpe to the Trustees, August 12, 1733. Ibid., 29.

<sup>46</sup>Patrick Houston to Peter Gordon, March 1, 1735. CRG 20:239.

that he was discharged, only to gain a reputation as a leading troublemaker in Georgia's political arena. He even "employ'd Negroes," and was later accused of being an "Arch Incendiary all along in private," according to the Trustees' representative, William Stephens.<sup>47</sup> MacKay was the scapegoat, and while his authority to act had initially been upheld by Oglethorpe, it was convenient to fire him to mollify strong opposition from Charles Town. Roger Lacy, Georgia's Cherokee agent and a London merchant before he emigrated, came to an untimely end in August 1738. His death was attributed to "frequent fainting fitts suppos'd to be Nervous, occasion'd by drinking too liberally."<sup>48</sup> He was also suspected of involvement in a cattle-stealing episode in Augusta and his widow was prosecuted for possessing some of the purloined meat.<sup>49</sup> Many individuals on all sides of the disputes suffered as politicians and administrators remote from immediate and personal danger, struggled to control trade and diplomacy on the southern

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<sup>47</sup>Extract from Thomas Causton's August 10, 1737 journal, Egmont, Journal of the Trustees, 319; Stephens to Trustees, January 1739, CRG 22 pt. 1: 367.

<sup>48</sup>Thomas Causton to Trustees, August 26, 1738, Ibid., 231.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., 231-32; William Stephens was more charitable, believing Lacy subject to "epileptick Fits," the fatal one brought on by his wife's "Loose Way of Living." William Stephens, A Journal of the Proceedings in Georgia 1737-1740 (1742; reprint, Ann Arbor, MI: UMI, 1966) 1: 253-54.

frontier.

It was an intrusive, diplomatic concern that forced Carolinians and Georgians to fight together with their allied Indians: the War of Jenkins' Ear between Britain and Spain erupted in 1739. This was not, however, a happy union. The 1740 joint expedition against St. Augustine, "That Den of Thieves and Ruffians! Recepticle of Debtors, Servants, and Slaves! Bane of Industry and Society!" was "a study in frustration" for all sides.<sup>50</sup> While Indian traders were in demand as frontier fighters and for the numbers of Indians they could entice to fight for the British, this campaign showed Oglethorpe's personal lack of understanding of Indian ways of warfare and mores.<sup>51</sup> Oglethorpe was accused of sacrificing many South Carolina lives through his actions -- or through his inaction-- as commander of the campaign. The skirmish at Fort Moosa particularly incensed Carolinians, for there they lost one of their greatest heroes, Colonel John Palmer, and most of the men under his command.<sup>52</sup> This was the only real engagement in the whole campaign. To Carolinians, it seemed

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<sup>50</sup>[nn] "Statements made in the Introduction to the Report on General Oglethorpe's Expedition to St. Augustine," in Carroll, Historical Collections 2:359.

<sup>51</sup>Among the Indian traders was Thomas Jones, part-Indian himself, who led and acted as "linguist" to the Creeks and Yuchis. JCHA 1741-42, 192.

<sup>52</sup>See above chap. 5.

as if all Oglethorpe did was look impressive leading a force with colors flying; however, when danger threatened, he left Carolinians and their Indian allies to their deaths. Oglethorpe's decision to lift the siege of St. Augustine after thirty-eight days without an attempt to engage the enemy was regarded as a "hasty and shameful flight" even by the relieved Spanish.<sup>53</sup>

It is hard not to sympathize with the indignation of the Carolinians. Oglethorpe maintained that his marches and delays were lures to entice Spanish sorties from their fortress. The Spanish did not respond to the bait except at Moosa where they annihilated the British force.<sup>54</sup> This battle, the only real armed confrontation, was fought on June 15, with about sixty-eight killed and thirty-four taken prisoner --- almost all of them Carolinians and Indians.<sup>55</sup> This humiliation led to the bitter denunciation of Oglethorpe by the South Carolina assembly.

Some English newspapers blamed the defeat on Indian defections, but those were the result of Oglethorpe's blunders and it was only through the tact and intervention

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<sup>53</sup>Governor Manuel de Montiano, cited in John Tate Lanning ed. The St. Augustine Expedition of 1740: A Report to the South Carolina General Assembly (Columbia: SC Archives Department, 1954), ix.

<sup>54</sup>Spalding, Oglethorpe in America, 111, cannot account for the absence of the general's "usually decisive manner."

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., 112.

of the trader-leaders that more did not leave. Oglethorpe failed to understand the nature of Indian warfare. When some Chickasaws brought him the head of a Spanish Indian they had killed, rejoicing and "singing the Death Whoop, according to their Custom," he turned on them. Instead of recognizing the honor behind the presentation and the importance of their gift, he called them "barbarous Dogs, and with much Anger bid them be gone."<sup>56</sup> It took three days for their friends to dissuade them from leaving at that time.<sup>57</sup> The Cherokee detachment also became "disgusted" with Oglethorpe who had chastised them for killing Spanish cattle for food. Their chief, Caesar, "said it was a strange Thing that they were permitted to kill the Spaniards but not their Beef, and threatened to carry all his Men Home."<sup>58</sup> After the forces retreated, Oglethorpe found Carolinians hesitant to rush to Georgia's aid when the Spanish invasion of that colony finally occurred in 1742. By that time, even Oglethorpe's friend, Lieutenant-Governor Bull was no longer sympathetic to him.<sup>59</sup> By 1743, the General himself and Georgia's Trustees believed it was time

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<sup>56</sup>JCHA 1741-42, 122.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., 123.

<sup>58</sup>Jonathan Bryan's deposition, March 1741, Ibid., 191.

<sup>59</sup>For this incident, see Spalding, Oglethorpe in America, chap. 9.

for him to leave the colony.

Oglethorpe's absence did not greatly change the patterns of life on the southern frontier. The only result of the dispute over administration of the Indian trade was that with two licensing bodies, it was harder for any colony's officials to exert control over the traders in the nations. Creeks, Chickasaws, Yuchis, and Cherokees resumed the old patterns of trade, with the familiar trader living for part of every year in their villages as before -- the event that shook their life was the wave of smallpox epidemics that reduced their populations by as much as one half.<sup>60</sup> Georgia's continuing presence and influence on the Indian trade, however, did keep up the vigorous British challenge to other European nations for control of the Indian trade. It also brought new individuals and companies into the nations' trade, often men prepared to risk their lives in opening or reopening trade with other nations farther west.

## II

Events farther afield monopolized the attention of some traders. MacKay's actions had forced many who had hoped to

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<sup>60</sup>John Duffy, Epidemics in Colonial America (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1953), 82-83.

continue their ways of life among the Creeks to seek their living from trade with the remoter tribes such as the Chickasaws and the Choctaws. This brought them more in conflict with the French than with the Spanish. There had always been fears of a growing French presence to the west and of a vast French empire that would stretch from Canada to Louisiana and confine British colonial development. By 1730, these worries were real. The brutal suppression of the Natchez revolt of 1729 by the French and their native allies, and the encouragement the French gave Choctaws to exterminate the remnants of the Natchez and those who harbored them, made the western sector of the southern frontier a dangerous -- if profitable -- place to peddle one's wares.

Carolínians had been trading with the Chickasaws long before the turn of the eighteenth century.<sup>61</sup> Part of that nation under their chief, the Squirrel King, had taken refuge in the fall of 1723 within Carolina near Savano Town under the protection of Fort Moore, at the place called "Breed Camp."<sup>62</sup> This flight was a direct response to the

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<sup>61</sup>See 211-12 on the earliest traders, Dodsworth, Wright, and Couture.

<sup>62</sup>"Squirrel King" or "fanimingo" was a title used in both Chickasaw and Choctaw society. In the South Carolina records, if not qualified, it referred to the leader who settled near Fort Moore. The Chickasaws were often called the "breeds," possibly because of the high proportion of alien blood in their veins. The move was a result of



harassment of the French and Choctaws.

Despite that state of war, many traders still ventured into traditional Chickasaw territory, attempting to trade with the French-affiliated Choctaws as well. The South Carolina authorities had always encouraged such initiatives; in January 1736, Choctaw traders were exempted from the regular £30 license fee.<sup>63</sup> These "far traders" were truly intrepid men. Among those active in the 1730s, John Campbell, according to another trader, was "indefatigable in serving his country, without regarding those dangers that would chill the blood of a great many others."<sup>64</sup> In January 1747, Campbell declared that he had been a Chickasaw trader and lived with that nation "about Twenty Years" and that he had "perfect Knowledge in the Chickesaw and Choctaw Tongues."<sup>65</sup> Campbell and his partner, Nicholas Chinnery, described themselves as "poor" in 1743 when petitioning the Commons House for payment for guns and ammunition that they had on their own volition given the Chickasaws to rebuff attacks by French-allied Indians.<sup>66</sup> On several occasions,

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increased war with the Choctaw and French. Woods, French-Indian Relations, 85.

<sup>63</sup>JCHA, January 17, 1736, Alb/5/1, 363.

<sup>64</sup>Adair, History of the Indians, 352.

<sup>65</sup>CJ, January 26, 1749, Campbell's petition, RSUS Elp/4/1, 55.

<sup>66</sup>JCHA 1743, 500.

he had to petition the governor for protection against his creditors so that he could go down to Charles Town to act as an interpreter for groups of visiting Chickasaws or Choctaws.<sup>67</sup>

Enterprising traders such as Campbell believed that the Choctaw trade could be seized from the French. Many Choctaw and other French tributary Indians were disheartened by the inability of the French to supply them with trading goods and the presents they had grown to expect.<sup>68</sup> Campbell had clearly traded with many groups of "far" Indians, as had many other traders far from Charles Town, regardless of their official European alignment.<sup>69</sup> No doubt some of his goods even found their way into the needy hands of the French garrisons themselves.

Edmond Atkin, a member of South Carolina's Council, believed that Campbell was the first to begin this trade and to go beyond informally exchanging goods to formulating a long-term peace. It is unclear who was behind the path-breaking visit of Choctaws to Georgia and South Carolina in

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<sup>67</sup>For example, McDowell, Indian Affairs, 1750-1754, 6.

<sup>68</sup>Usner, Indians, Settlers, and Slaves, 78, for the French inability to expand and make the most of their economic ties with the Indians.

<sup>69</sup>The Alabamas were experts at this. Officially pro-French, they constantly traded with the British traders. Patricia Galloway, "Choctaw Factionalism and Civil War, 1746-1750," Journal of Mississippi History 44 (1982): 302-03.

1734; it may have been Campbell. He had become friendly with Red Shoes, and the respect they had for each other had deepened as a result of an untoward incident. When visiting Red Shoes, "a party of corrupt savages," had attacked them. Campbell was wounded by a stray bullet while the chief's favorite Chickasaw wife was killed at the same time.<sup>70</sup> Campbell himself claimed that he had become known to Choctaws who visited Chickasaw country "to purchase such things as could not be had from the French." As a result, a caravan of six Englishmen and fourteen horseloads of goods descended on two Choctaw towns in 1737. Campbell was also the instigator of the 1738 treaty in Charles Town witnessed by Red Shoes, whom the Carolinians recognized as "King of the whole Nation," and eighty of his warriors.<sup>71</sup> This peace treaty laid the groundwork for the near-annihilation of the Chickasaws, fomented a full-scale civil war among the Choctaws, and shook the French belief in the allegiance of the Choctaws.

Despite all the Choctaw and trader deaths involved in

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<sup>70</sup>Adair, History of the Indians, 352; CJ, January 26, 1749, petition of Campbell, RSUS Elp/4/1, 56.

<sup>71</sup>Red Shoes was never recognized by the Choctaws themselves as their supreme chief; in fact, he was a lesser leader whose authority came from his prowess in war, not from hereditary status. Many warriors held the functional title "Red Shoe[s]" or "Red Sock," for certain villages. Hereditary leaders such as Alibamon Mingo had more authority over the whole nation. See Galloway, "Choctaw Factionalism," 293-94, 299n.

its birth, the 1738 treaty did not lead to the firm alliance, peace, and trade that the British sought because the French exerted themselves to block it. The French offered huge rewards for both British scalps and horses-tails, and three unnamed traders were soon killed as the Choctaws returned to the French fold.<sup>72</sup> Red Shoes was also not satisfied with the follow-up to promises made by Carolinians, and joined the campaign to remove them from the nation. By 1744, however, internal friction within the Choctaw villages and between leading French and Choctaw personalities paved the way for British overtures to succeed yet once more. The governor of Louisiana from 1743 to 1752, Phillippe de Vaudreuil, had not handled the situation as tactfully as he might have. He made no effort to reward Red Shoes for returning to the French by making him a medal chief -- a sign of French respect -- or by giving him additional presents.<sup>73</sup> The outbreak of war in Europe also compounded the difficulty of getting goods of all kinds safely across the Atlantic, and items for the French Indian trade became scarce.

By 1745, it seems that once again the initial overtures to reopening trading and diplomatic relationships between most Choctaw towns and the British came through native

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<sup>72</sup>Atkin Report, 6; Adair, History of the Indians, 335.

<sup>73</sup>Usner, Indians, Settlers, and Slaves, 91.

sources. A growing section of the Choctaw nation was discontented with the French government's failure to provide Louisiana with an adequate supply of the right kind and quality of goods.<sup>74</sup> This inability made many of the western Choctaw individuals and villages open to the peace overtures made through a Chickasaw chief called the Blind King. He sent a woman to the Choctaws to urge peace and the reopening of trade.<sup>75</sup> Two Choctaws then approached Lachlan McGillivray, who traded among the Upper Creeks and lived with his native wife and family among the Coosas.<sup>76</sup> McGillivray had visited some of the Choctaws in the fall of 1743, no doubt trading with anyone who cared to do so. By January 1745, these overtures led to another treaty between a portion of the Choctaw nation and the Carolinians. As usual, the Choctaws were not united in their response to British initiatives and some towns clung to their loyalty to the French. As was true of most Indian nations, "all the villages are so many little republics in which each one does

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<sup>74</sup>Adair, History of the Indians, 335, mentioned that the "French were usually short of goods;" Usner, Indians, Settlers, and Slaves, 78; Bienville to Maurepas, May 6, 1740, MPA-FD 1: 460, illustrates that colonial officials knew that "abundantly stocked" warehouses were the "only way to keep the nations on our side."

<sup>75</sup>Atkin Report, 100.

<sup>76</sup>Richard White, "Red Shoes: Warrior & Diplomat," in David G. Sweet & Gary B. Nash, eds. Struggle and Survival in Colonial America (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 62.

as he likes."<sup>77</sup>

The actual sequence of events leading to the revolt of most Choctaws towns against France, in which only four of their villages remained steadfastly Francophile, is unclear.<sup>78</sup> Edmond Atkin's 1750 attempt to fathom the incident concluded that it was John Campbell's work, for Campbell quickly sent two of his men to trade with the Choctaws as soon as overtures were made.<sup>79</sup> By November 1746, Red Shoes had contracted a formal peace with the Chickasaws, and the British trading machine seemed to have captured most of the trade of the inland tribes as far as the Mississippi.

Unfortunately, the situation returned to its normal unstable condition with the 1747 murder of Red Shoes by one of his own men for the reward placed on his head by the French. His brother, Imataha Pouscouche, known to the British as the Little King, tried to maintain the connections with Charles Town, which he had visited shortly

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<sup>77</sup>A French Jesuit missionary cited in Usner, Indians, Settlers, and Slaves, 88-89.

<sup>78</sup>For a discussion of these events, see Galloway, "Choctaw Factionalism," 289-327.

<sup>79</sup>A review of the sources makes it clear that Atkin deliberately downplayed both Adair's and McGillivrey's role in this affair, favoring Campbell's.

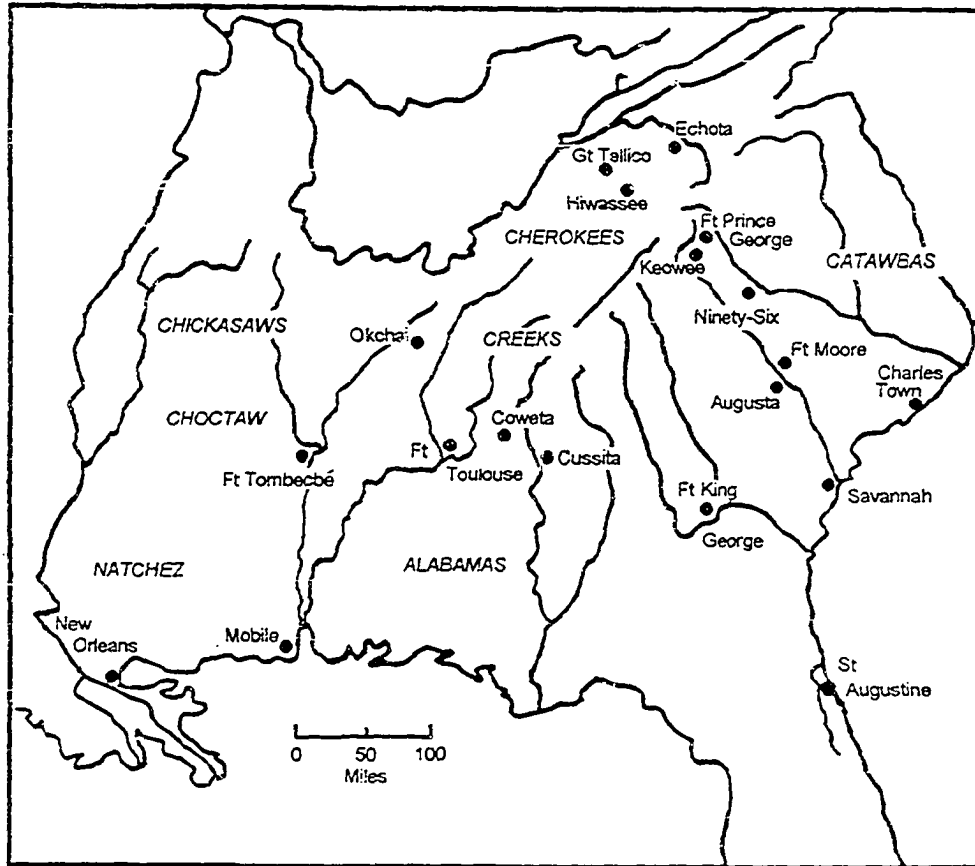
before Red Shoes's demise.<sup>80</sup> These events unleashed such a ferocious response from the French that the rebel Choctaws under the Little King desperately begged ammunition and weapons to face the French offensives that began in June 1747. This plea was well received by Glen. The Choctaws were authorized a huge shipment of much-needed goods.

The delayed delivery of these goods destroyed any chance of a durable Anglo-Choctaw relationship. The British failed to get essential items to the Choctaws in a timely fashion. The "Labyrinth of Subsequent Facts" was examined in detail by Atkin without uncovering why the first shipment of presents and goods took almost four months to reach the Choctaws, twice as long as usual.<sup>81</sup> When the caravan finally arrived, the most necessary items, including ammunition, had been left behind in Creek country. Atkin wrote his report before hearing about the slower and even more tangled history of the second load of goods and presents. The tale that unfolded revealed frontier uncertainties, rumors, and fears; the machinations of some Charles Town merchants and politicians -- including those of

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<sup>80</sup>He returned there, desperately demanding ammunition and other aid in December 1747 and in April 1748. British sources call him "Push-Kush."; SCG April 13, 1748; Charles McNaire in October 6, 1747 reported Red Shoes' death and stressed that the Little King was thus the "most leading man in this nation." CJ, November 11, 1747, RSUS E1p/3/4, 57.

<sup>81</sup>Atkin Report, 12.



Map 4: The Southeast in 1750



the relatively new governor, James Glen; poor record-keeping by merchants and storekeepers; genuine logistical problems with handling huge cargoes along wilderness trails, and a widespread disregard of promises made to Indian allies.

Among the cast of characters involved in this farce with its tragic consequences to both the Chickasaws and the Choctaws, were many new names on the frontier. One of the most erudite who wrote an account of these times that cast himself in a starring role, was James Adair: "I undertook to open a trade with the Choktah, and reconcile their old-standing enmity with the Chikkasah." Adair was a Catawba and Cherokee trader who had ventured into the Chickasaw trade. He explained why Red Shoes was so ready to embrace the British cause once more by 1744. The warrior's favorite wife had been violated by a Frenchman, an unforgivable insult to a Choctaw husband and chief. When Adair and two of his Chickasaw cronies heard of this, they set out deliberately to court Red Shoes with gifts.<sup>82</sup> Atkin did not subscribe to this version of the events. He believed that Adair was merely a recent and, in fact, an unlicensed trader. Adair could not therefore have had the influence to accomplish everything he claimed, even though he had clearly

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<sup>82</sup>Adair, History of the Indians, 335-40.

worked closely with John Campbell.<sup>83</sup> Adair believed he had earned the enmity of some traders and merchants by giving the Choctaws a reliable standard measure to use for buying cloth, by being too generous in presents and too fair in his prices. Others were not prepared to act as liberally, even if war was the result of their stinginess. As the Little King later explained to trader Charles McNaire, without the promise of a steady supply of goods and ammunition, he could not encourage his people to go to war against the French.<sup>84</sup> McNaire blamed the "Confusion" among the nation and their subsequent disillusion with South Carolina on Adair, for he had given them expectations that were impossible to fulfill.

Adair believed that he should have been compensated for his actions, but was foiled in this by the governor himself. James Glen had reneged on a promise to give Adair a chance to establish himself in trade with the Choctaw before it was opened to all. Adair complained that he "never received one farthing of the public money, for my very expensive, faithful, and difficult services."<sup>85</sup> Thus, one major theme of Adair's monumental history of the American Indians was

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<sup>83</sup>Adair's version may be close to the truth if he was indeed working closely with Campbell; Campbell later made it clear that he had asked Adair for aid. CJ, January 26, 1749, RSUS E1p/4/1, 55-56.

<sup>84</sup>Charles McNaire to the Governor, dated October 6, 1747, CJ, November 11, 1747, RSUS E1p/3/4, 57-61.

<sup>85</sup>Adair, History of the Indians, 367.

the duplicity of Governor Glen.

Investigating the fate of the second shipload of goods authorized to the Choctaws took up much of the Assembly and Council's time from 1747 to 1752.<sup>86</sup> Many of those involved were well-known frontier figures and merchants but there were also newer men. The contract for getting the goods to the Choctaws had been given to a figure who had no experience in Indian affairs and a newcomer to the colony, Charles McNaire. He was connected to the Roche family, "a Friend and Relation" of Matthew Roche, a "Mercht. of Credit and Reputation" who had long dabbled in the Indian trade, especially with the Chickasaws.<sup>87</sup> McNaire had apparently been a sea captain who had managed to lose all his investments. He was in Charles Town in 1747 with the wherewithal through his in-laws to finance the transportation of the Choctaw goods. He had no immediate commitments, so that Roche and other associates not only vouched for him, but stressed that he was the only person available to drop everything and hurry this vital shipment on its way. McNaire had packhorses at his immediate

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<sup>86</sup>See CJ, January 7, 1749, RSUS E1p/4/1, 13-16; January 12, 1749, Ibid., 24-26. Glen promised the Board of Trade a "strict enquiry" in October, 1748, BPRO 23:206; for Pettigrew's deposition, see McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-54., 15-16.

<sup>87</sup>Atkin Report, 9-10; CJ, October 1747, RSUS E1p/3/4, 79.

disposal for he had been preparing to venture into the Indian trade. Naturally, he had no command of any Indian languages nor connections among the tribes he would encounter, but Glen and the Council were persuaded that the Roche influence would be enough when coupled with a good interpreter and, according to Atkin, an unnamed partner who spoke Choctaw. McNaire was to employ some rather shady characters to deliver the goods, many of whom later gave conflicting accounts of what actually befell the goods on their tortuous route. These included John Pettigrew, John Vann, and Samuel Venning, who was later accused of perjury.<sup>88</sup> Glen said that he was mystified with the fate of the cargo, and the "strange fatality" that led to the delay in its delivery until July "tho they might have got there before Christmass."<sup>89</sup> No wonder that the Board of Trade was "surprised to hear that [Glen] was unacquainted with the Causes" of the delay. Glen came in for his share of blame as the Board "cannot but equally lament and blame the want of due Care both in the Conveyance of them and in the having intrusted them to improper and unsafe hands."<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>88</sup>Atkin Report, Pettigrew's name is spelled in many ways, including Petygrew, Petticrow, Peticroe.

<sup>89</sup>Glen to Board of Trade, October 10, 1748, BPRO 23:205.

<sup>90</sup>Board of Trade to Glen, December 20, 1748, BPRO 23:277.

James Adair accused Glen of being behind all the trouble. According to Adair, Glen had formed a secret company which he named the Sphinx to control the Choctaw trade for Glen's personal gain. This was the true reason Glen had reversed his earlier decision to give Adair and his associates a monopoly, or at least the first shot at the Choctaw trade. McNaire was one of the partners in this company, hence his attempts to blame James Adair for making the Choctaws unhappy with the few trade goods that they actually received and the rates established for them. McNaire had also accused Campbell of telling the Indians that goods sent there were all presents, and not for trade.<sup>91</sup>

By 1750, it was clear that the poorly-supplied rebel Choctaws were losing to the French and their allies. As early as October 1748, Louisiana officials wrote to Paris that "The entire caste of the rebel is almost destroyed" as more Choctaw villages surrendered to them. In this instance, "the English could not furnish their partisans with supplies as quickly as we."<sup>92</sup> By November 1750, most of the insurgent Choctaw villages had returned to the French fold. The last two pro-English villages held out as long as

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<sup>91</sup>CJ, November 11, November 22, 1747, RSUS E1p/3/4, 57-61, 81.

<sup>92</sup>Beauchamp to Maurepas, Mobile, October 24, 1748, MPA-FD 4:326-27.

they could, but the lack of ammunition was so severe that they had to resort to using trading beads and even bullets made of clay. According to a French official, the "partisans of the English were in such need of powder and bullets that they loaded their guns with small pebbles [and] walnut and oak knots that they dried over the fire."<sup>93</sup> They finally surrendered in 1752, their numbers depleted not only by war but also through epidemic diseases.<sup>94</sup> France had managed to retain its hold over the Indians of the Lower Mississippi valley despite the lowly place Louisiana held in the minds of government officials back in the homeland.<sup>95</sup> Louisiana's officials had to sell goods at a loss as a ploy to keep the Indians loyal.<sup>96</sup> While the Choctaws once more were regarded as loyal to the French, they returned to the situation where they would unofficially trade with anyone who had popular goods at a fair price.

Many traders and their servants had lost their livelihoods and some their lives in this conflict. Henry Elsley, one of McNaire's men, was killed near Fort Tombecbé

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<sup>93</sup>Atkin Report, 81-82, citing Pettigrew; Beauchamp to Maurepas, October 24, 1748, MPA-FD 4: 326; White, "Red Shoes," 66.

<sup>94</sup>Louboey to Maurepas, February 16, 1748, MPA-FD 4: 313, reporting that between 1000 and 1200 Choctaws had recently died of "measles, mixed with smallpox."

<sup>95</sup>Usner, Indians, Settlers, and Slaves, 94-97.

<sup>96</sup>CJ, November 22, 1747, RSUS E1p/3/4, 80.

late in 1747.<sup>97</sup> David Curnell died before Pettigrew arrived with the first load of goods and his head was taken "to the French" for a reward.<sup>98</sup> Three other British traders' heads were taken to the French in April 1750 along with 130 "rebel" Choctaw scalps.<sup>99</sup> The real instigator of these events, John Campbell, also lost his life. He had written a letter to Glen from Breed Camp in September 1750 with the news of the death of a Chickasaw trader, John Legrove, by some Choctaws. By March 1751, Glen received a letter relaying the news that Campbell, too, had been killed towards the end of November.<sup>100</sup> Unofficial trade resumed between individual traders and the farther tribes, but the official British line was to consolidate relations with the closer tribes, such as the Cherokees and Creeks, and to exert energies towards resisting French attempts to encroach upon those areas.<sup>101</sup> Governor Glen spent much time and energy on this.

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<sup>97</sup>CJ, November 22, 1747, RSUS E1p/3/4, 80.

<sup>98</sup>Atkin Report, 86.

<sup>99</sup>Usner, Indians, Settlers, and Slaves, 94.

<sup>100</sup>McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-54, 6, 7.

<sup>101</sup>A 1751 report by John Buckles, Vaughan and Co. showed that the Choctaws were trading through the Chickasaws despite Campbell's death. Ibid., 36-38.

## III

Governor James Glen had arrived in South Carolina in December 1743 and soon became interested in Indian affairs, an area which was administratively his and the Council's prerogative. Glen recognized that the Indian trade was still one of the most lucrative industries in the colony, profitably engaging local merchants in the transatlantic trade. While Glen referred to it as a "valuable Branch of our Trade," he also realized that the safety of the colony still depended on peaceful relationships with the Indians.<sup>102</sup> He had a personal interest, too, for he was a person with a love of ceremony and the dramatic, as well as being a shrewd businessman always on the lookout for ways to make extra money for himself. He was clearly successful, for he retired from his post in 1756 having amassed a "considerable fortune."<sup>103</sup>

Glen decided to become the leading expert and authority on the Indian nations of southern North America, taking up the role deserted by James Oglethorpe when he left Georgia for the last time in 1743. These two men were similar in

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<sup>102</sup>Glen to Board of Trade, February 3, 1748, BPRO 23:73.

<sup>103</sup>Mary F. Carter, "James Glen, Governor of Colonial South Carolina: A Study in British Administrative Policies," Ph.D. Diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1951, 2.



many ways: both were committed to extending the benefits of friendship, commerce, and peace to the inland nations; both were short-tempered; both had strong personal concepts of right and wrong; and both lacked a sense of humor -- a necessary ingredient when dealing with differences between cultures. Glen was interested in opening trade with the formerly staunch French allies such as the Choctaws but he had to concentrate most of his energies on the closer, more familiar tribes because the 1740s and 1750s were a time of renewed Creek-Cherokee tension.<sup>104</sup>

Like most administrators before him, Glen attempted to control the old hatred that still flowed between the Creeks and the Cherokees. As early as April 1745 he could congratulate himself, for the Cherokees were on their way to Charles Town in large numbers under "Emperor" Moytoy of Tellico to conclude the long-hoped-for treaty with the Creeks. This was accomplished amidst much ceremony and hand-shaking at the "desire of the English." One promise by the Cherokees was to halt the passage of "northern Indians" through their territory on the way to "annoy" the Creeks or Catawbias, a move that would clearly make the frontier

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<sup>104</sup>For the briefest and clearest account of the events of the Creek-Cherokee war, see Corkran, Carolina Indian Frontier, 35-46.

quieter.<sup>105</sup> Glen pledged that the traders sent to them would be "such as love your Nation, men of honesty & probity who will not overreach & impose upon You, & if any shall do it, upon your Application to me, I will send others in their room." Glen himself would be personally responsible for guaranteeing the fairness of the trade, but he expected them in return not to overindulge in rum or to become saddled with debts.<sup>106</sup> Unfortunately, the Cherokees were not united. The Overhill Cherokees remained Francophile and resented Moytoy's presumption of contracting a treaty on behalf of the whole nation. The Overhills were not prepared to alienate the Iroquois.

Glen devoted much time to treating with Indians at Charles Town, but he also held conferences closer to Indian country. The natives themselves had mixed feelings about visiting Charles Town: the ceremonies and gifts presented were attractive, but they realized that they chanced contracting fatal diseases there. The devastating epidemics of smallpox that afflicted the nations, especially after the Indians who had taken part in the St. Augustine siege of 1740 returned home, had drastically reduced their population. Noting this relation between contact and

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<sup>105</sup>CJ, April 29, 30, May 2, 4, 1745, RSUS E1p/3/1, 195, 203, 212.

<sup>106</sup>Ibid., May 22, 1745, 265-67.

disease, many Indians demanded that officials visit them and distribute gifts in their nations.<sup>107</sup> Glen himself was prepared to accommodate them but received a mixed reaction from his council and the Assembly. Visiting Indian country was expensive, and South Carolina and Georgia's authorities were always looking for ways to minimize the costs of entertaining Indians and presenting them with the gifts they regarded as their annual perquisite for buying British.

Glen's first major foray into Indian country, accompanied by many Indian traders, occurred in May 1746. Glen met with leading Catawbas, Creeks, and Cherokee at the Congarees, at the strangely-named Ninety-Six, and at New Windsor. These locations were at the edge of white settlement, on the Cherokee and Creek paths where traders and Indians had often halted on their way to Charles Town.<sup>108</sup> The meetings were formal and impressive but since the Creek and Cherokee nations contained many factions and points of view, it was unreasonable to expect these talks to bind all members of those nations in a lasting peace.

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<sup>107</sup>Lists of expenses resulting from Indian visits to Charles Town frequently contained doctors' bill, for example Dr. Nicholas Lynch received £7 for "Physick and bleeding" Indians in 1735. JCHA, February 5, 1735, RSUS Alb/5/1, 61; a carpenter in 1750 received £11 for making coffins for Indians JCHA 1749-50, February 9, 1750, 402.

<sup>108</sup>David P. George, Jr., "Ninety-Six Decoded: Origins of the Community's Name," SCHM 92 (1991): 69-84; see map 4.

Another Charles Town attempt at a treaty in October 1749 also failed for the same reasons. A treaty between these two nations that promised peace occurred late in 1753, but the Seven Years' War unraveled most alliances that were in place at that time.

Georgia's trade with the Creeks was increasingly drawn into the hands of the storekeepers at Augusta, where one company in particular maintained a virtual monopoly of the trade. The personnel involved in the business, informally called the Augusta Company, changed over time. Initially, the organizing genius was Kennedy O'Brien, who was content with setting up a business, then retiring to Savannah.<sup>109</sup> Soon a new, younger group took control under Patrick Brown.<sup>110</sup> He had first established himself at New Windsor, before moving to Augusta. Initially, the firm was organized as Rae, Brown and Co., but as informal companies were founded for every individual venture into Indian country, the names of the companies and the partners changed continuously. Lachlan McGillivray was also enticed to remove there from his Creek home, no doubt by his successful

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<sup>109</sup>Braund, Deerskin & Duffels, 42-50.

<sup>110</sup>Merrell, Indians' New World, 136; James Merrell, "Their Very Bones Shall Fight": The Catawba-Iroquois Wars" in Daniel K. Richter and Merrell, Beyond the Covenant Chain: The Iroquois and Their Neighbors in Indian North America, 1600-1800: 115-34.

kinsman, Archibald McGillivray.<sup>111</sup> Georgia's leading Creek traders and especially the leaders of the Augusta Company, usually worked closely with South Carolina's traders and officials, realizing that safety and profits depended on mutual cooperation.<sup>112</sup>

Problems between Indian groups, traders, settlers, and soldiers continued despite informal and formal meetings and contacts. Daniel Pepper, the commander at Fort Moore, related that the nearby "Breed Indians" "insulted" the town of Augusta by firing at it while "pretending to be drunk." The local Creeks created yet another problem, for they insisted -- actually quite legally -- that the town was on Indian land and had not been ceded to the English. They threatened that "the houses [the settlers] have built will soon be theirs."<sup>113</sup>

Officials at frontier forts, such as Pepper at Fort Moore, were one of the main conduits by which news travelled from Indian country to the lowlands. They relayed both messages received from visiting natives along with letters and verbal gossip from traders. Rumors could originate from

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<sup>111</sup>Braund, "Mutual Convenience -- Mutual Dependence," 38-45.

<sup>112</sup>George Galphin and Lachlan McGillivray frequently corresponded with Glen, for example, passing information about Creek leader Malatchi's views in August 1753. McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-54, 378-79.

<sup>113</sup>Ibid., May 7, 1745, 245.

many sources; in March 1743 three Cherokees and a Natchez Indian said that the Cherokees and the Nottoways were united in wishing to destroy the Catawba nation.<sup>114</sup> The French were the instigators of this unstable state of affairs, according to the Squirrel King. In January 1746, Lachlan McGillivray reported via merchant Samuel Eveleigh that the Creeks had received a "false Report" that the Cherokees were on the verge of war with them.<sup>115</sup> Such rumors were everyday occurrences in Indian country and it took a keen mind to separate fact from fiction. Glen might blame most of the misconduct of the Indian trade on "low Indian Traders & Pack-Horse-Men who frequently impose upon this Government by Lying Letters, & false Reports," but he, too, relied heavily on the information he received from them.<sup>116</sup>

One reason why rumors were rife was that violent incidents were a regular part of life. The April 1748 abduction and subsequent killing of trader George Haig exemplified the uncertain nature of life in the backwoods. Haig was well respected, a justice of the peace for Berkeley County, a deputy surveyor for the colony, and a landowner in

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<sup>114</sup>"Nuntaways" was one form of "Nottoway," or Northern Indian, generic terms widely used in the Carolinas for the Iroquois. Ibid.; May 30, 1745, 293-95; see below fn 119.

<sup>115</sup>CJ, January 25, 1746, RSUS E1p/3/2, 32.

<sup>116</sup>Glen to Board of Trade, February 3, 1748, BPRO 23:73.

Saxe Gotha township. He had often acted as South Carolina's agent to the Catawbas and as their interpreter when they visited Charles Town.<sup>117</sup> Haig and his wife, Elizabeth, had settled "at the Congarees," that is, at the confluence of the Congaree and the Broad River, close to the site of the later city of Columbia.

In March 1748, Haig and two servants, one a youth learning the trade, were unfortunate enough to encounter a band of Iroquoian-speakers who had crossed Cherokee land on their way to harass their ancient enemies, the Catawbas. According to servant William Wrightknowen's affidavit, fifteen of these "French Indians" had attacked Haig's party at daybreak on March 17, 1748. Haig initially hoped they would merely seize his horses and goods, but the intruders killed the horses, then bound Haig and young William Brown with "Slave Strings." They released Wrightknowen to take the news to Elizabeth Haig. He reached Saxe Gotha, about forty miles from the site of the abduction, the next day.<sup>118</sup> Some of the local settlers and Indian trader Enoc Anderson tried to pursue them but without success. They followed tracks and reported seeing a large band of about thirty hostile Indians across a river. The pursuers knew

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<sup>117</sup>See Meriwether, Expansion of South Carolina, 58; JCHA 1746, 132; BPRO 21:286.

<sup>118</sup>CJ, Wrightknowen's affidavit, March 29, 1748, RSUS Elp/3/4, 183-84.

they had been seen and decided it would be wise to leave quickly.<sup>119</sup> From that day on, despite Elizabeth Haig's many appeals to a sympathetic Glen to get a speedy pursuit underway, it was almost impossible to receive concrete information about the fate of Haig and Brown.

The best source of information, the Cherokees, were reluctant to act against the Northern Indians. The Cherokee traders, especially those based in the increasingly hostile town of Keowee, wrote to Glen about their efforts to acquire information about Haig and Brown. By April 10, they reported a tantalizing development. Haig's coat had turned up there, and the Old Warrior (Skiagunsta) confirmed to master-trader James Beamer that Haig and Brown had been taken by the "Nottawayas," "a dreadful People."<sup>120</sup> Six of those Nottoways were actually at Keowee at the time, but the others had remained at a camp to guard their prisoners. The Keowee traders tried to make the Cherokees use their

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<sup>119</sup>Ibid., 185-87. They left one horse with the bells that traders used to find their horses if they roamed in the forests. They hoped the sounds would make the Indians believe for some time that they were still there and not hurry to pursue them.

<sup>120</sup>Letter from Andrew Duchee, Keowee, Ibid., 210. The "Northern Indians," "Nottawaigas," and various variations upon this theme were possibly Iroquoian Indians, not necessarily "Nottaways" at all. The term was much used and these poorly-defined Indians became convenient scapegoats for Cherokees and others to use to account for any strange incidents that occurred between whites and roving Indian bands.



influence to get Haig released but without success, warning them that a trade embargo was the only course of action left, for which the whole nation would suffer. The traders hoped that Glen would follow through on his threat, but felt that all traders would be unsafe in Indian country unless Glen could send at least one hundred men to guard them and their trade. In the meanwhile, the traders refused to sell ammunition to the Cherokees.<sup>121</sup>

Elizabeth Haig kept up her letter-writing campaign, also demanding that the trade be stopped for a year to force the Cherokees to use their influence on the visiting Indians to release their prisoners. According to trader John Evans, the kidnapers were Senecas, who travelled complete with crucifixes and French guns.<sup>122</sup> Glen decided to place an embargo of trade against the Cherokees, and in June 1748 wrote to leading Cherokee traders James Maxwell, Stephen Crell, and Robert Gowdie announcing this.<sup>123</sup> Another letter was sent to William Stephens in Georgia, for a South Carolina boycott alone was not enough: it had to be universal among the British colonies. Stephens agreed half-heartedly, for he wondered if it was really necessary to take such a drastic step. He believed that many traders and

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<sup>121</sup>Ibid., 210-15.

<sup>122</sup>Letter of Evans, April 18, 1748. Ibid., 232.

<sup>123</sup>Glen letter, 4 June, 1748. Ibid., 289.

merchants in both colonies and Virginia would lose money as a result and it might lead to the "Total Ruin of many."<sup>124</sup>

Despite all this activity, no real news of Haig was received for close to a year when Pennsylvania's Indian agent, Conrad Weiser, sent his report. He had managed to track down William Brown on the Ohio River and had him released from his captors; however, Weiser relayed the news that Haig had been "barbarously murdered" by the Senecas. Brown, characterized by Weiser as "stupid," had described the scene.<sup>125</sup> Because Haig had failed to walk quickly enough to satisfy his captors, and because he had "high words" with them, "finding himself in such a miserable Condition [he] provoked them to kill him."<sup>126</sup> Weiser said that he would try to get satisfaction for the deed but was not optimistic. Thus, by September 1749, the official verdict was that "it was now past doubt that Mr. Haig was Dead."<sup>127</sup>

The fact that Haig was such a solid citizen somehow made his abduction worse; this was a random act of violence

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<sup>124</sup>Ibid., 289, 343.

<sup>125</sup>The half-Indian Brown's inability to express himself to the German Weiser after the stress of his experiences may have led to that description.

<sup>126</sup>Conrad Weiser's Report, November 1748, CJ, March 18, 1749, RSUS E1p/4/1, 235-36.

<sup>127</sup>CJ, September 4, 1749, RSUS E1p/4/1, 592. For the inventory of his goods, see above 105.

that could happen to anyone. It was not revenge for any doubtful practices inflicted by resentful Indian clients. The incident clouded relations between the southern colonies and the Cherokees. Glen and his officials realized that while many of the Overhill Cherokees applauded Haig's murder, a few had attempted to save him. Chief Yellow Bird was authorized extra presents in September 1749, for he, almost alone among the influential Cherokees, had tried to organize a search for Haig and Brown.<sup>128</sup> A flurry of talks between the governor and traders, and between parties of Cherokees and Glen, continued through the early 1750s, as Charles Town officials tried to come up with a practical punishment for the crime. Glen was still writing to Governor George Clinton of New York for aid in getting satisfaction for Haig's murder as late as May 1751.<sup>129</sup> The dilemma was clear to all: Cherokees had to take responsibility for their "insolence" and refusal to help the British punish those guilty of a crime against them. Forcing the issue, however, might add to Cherokee resentment and push more villages closer towards a French alliance.

Incidents continued, perpetuating the fear and uncertainty of trader and settler life. James Beamer, fellow traders Samuel Benn, Robert Gowdie, and others fled

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<sup>128</sup>CJ, August 10, 1749, RSUS E1p/4/1, 625.

<sup>129</sup>McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-54, 84-86.

again from their Lower Cherokee towns in 1751, fearing for their lives as a result of "very bad Talks."<sup>130</sup> More seriously in the eyes of many colonial officials, these incidents were not just trade-related. They increasingly threatened the lives of white settlers, their servants, and slaves in the backcountry. One tragic tale was that of Mary Cloud, or Gould, whose husband Isaac had retired from the Indian trade and settled as a planter on the Little Saluda River in Saxe Gotha township. Some Savannah Indians had visited their home in May 1751 and had been hospitably entertained. After eating and smoking with Isaac, they all retired for the night. As the family lay asleep, the visitors shot Isaac to death, clubbed Mary with a "Tamhook," and killed her two small children. Somehow Mary survived after laying "among my Dead two Days," after which she managed to struggle onto a horse and ride to a neighbor's house.<sup>131</sup> By January 1752, she, too, had died and the Assembly voted to pay the costs of her medical treatment and her funeral charges.<sup>132</sup>

As the wave of settlement reached farther inland, peaceful relations and coexistence with all Indians, allies or not, became increasingly difficult but all the more

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<sup>130</sup>Ibid., 80

<sup>131</sup>Affidavit of Mary Gould, 8 May, 1751, Ibid., 126-27.

<sup>132</sup>January 9, 1752, JCHA 1751-52, 36, 58, 87

necessary. British colonial governments were forced to spend much time on Indian diplomacy and in formulating effective ways of ensuring peace. Glen's meeting at Saluda Old Town in May 1755 resulted in a secession of lands around Ninety-Six and Saluda to the colony as Cherokee leaders Old Hop and the Little Carpenter faced the reality of their position: the Cherokees no longer had the power or numbers to use lands that close to the settlers. Indian-white relations entered a new phase when protection of the Indian trade and courting the tribes to that end were no longer the dominant concerns.<sup>133</sup> Encouraging and shielding frontier settlers who had little interest in the Indian trade was the new focus, and, increasingly, British authorities realized that protecting both Indian and settler rights had to be accomplished on a wider, intercolonial level. Frontier incidents, as the Haig murder showed, could no longer be handled successfully by an individual colony.

#### IV

It is fitting that when Governor Glen was recalled, he was far from Charles Town on his way to Cherokee country to start building the long-demanded fort among the Overhill

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<sup>133</sup>There is a parallel here with White, Middle Ground, x-xi.

Cherokees. The Cherokees, Carolinians, Georgians, and Virginians all hoped it would protect the Cherokees from the French, protect the Catawbas and Creeks from the incursions of their Iroquoian enemies, and protect British traders licensed from all colonies. Glen's thirteen years as governor had been controversial ones, especially regarding his handling of Indian affairs. He had a running battle with the Commons House over the huge costs involved in controlling the trade and over what most members regarded as his refusal to keep them informed about developments on the frontier. He had disagreed with the governors of Virginia, North Carolina, and New York over the handling of Indian diplomacy and trade.<sup>134</sup> He believed that failure to keep tribes loyal to the British was primarily a result of the machinations of the French, but was exacerbated by the duplicity and greed of petty British traders. On the other hand, he owed most of his own understanding of native Americans to the correspondence and discussions he had with the participants in the trade.

By the time William Henry Lyttelton became governor of South Carolina in 1756, the nature of the Indian trade was irreversibly changing. British-Indian diplomacy was reorganized that same year, becoming centralized with the establishment of two superintendencies, one for the northern

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<sup>134</sup>See Carter, "Governor James Glen."

colonies and one for the southern area. It was fitting that the first superintendent for the southern department was Edmond Atkin, a South Carolina council member since 1738 who had always been interested in the trade and its handling. Atkin had written a lengthy report in 1755 advocating centralization, in part to give the Board of Trade more control over all levels of trade.<sup>135</sup> Unfortunately, Atkin, despite his thoughtful grasp of the dangers and conduct of the trade and Indian relations, did not shine in this role. The first salvos of the Seven Years' War occurred on the southern Indian frontier in 1754 and Atkin was unable to work closely with the Army's personnel, especially with the Earl of Loudoun who was to supervise Atkin's appointment, actions, and financial demands.<sup>136</sup> Their clash of personalities and lack of understanding for each other's role and aspirations rendered Atkin powerless.

Many changes also occurred in the first half of the 1750s in the internal administration of other North American colonies: the Trustees gave up their control of Georgia and it became a royal colony in 1752.<sup>137</sup> French Louisiana also

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<sup>135</sup>See Wilbur R. Jacobs, ed. The Appalachian Indian Frontier: The Edmond Atkin Report and Plan of 1755 (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1954).

<sup>136</sup>Ibid., xxii, xxx.

<sup>137</sup>The first royal governor, John Reynolds, arrived in October 1754. Coleman, Colonial Georgia, 174-79.

received a new governor in 1752 when Vaudreuil was replaced by Louis Billonart de Kerlérec.<sup>138</sup> The outbreak of war destroyed any semblance of diplomatic stability. Demands resulting from the Seven Years' War emphasized the deep-seated difficulties between the British colonies and the Cherokees and set the stage for the Cherokee War that erupted in 1759. The defeat of France in the Seven Years' War removed the French presence that had given native Americans an alternative source of goods. The withdrawal of the Spanish from Florida in 1763 posed a similar problem for the Lower Creeks. For the British, the removal of European competition reduced the diplomatic and strategic importance of the major inland tribes. Indian problems were no longer confined to controlling trading practices, but demanded a more active role by the British colonial authorities whose new focus was protecting the rights of settlers.<sup>139</sup> The change from valued potential allies to stumbling blocks was disastrous to the Indians whose culture had become dependent on European goods. The once-courted Indian nations were regarded increasingly as barriers to western settlement and

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<sup>138</sup>Kerlérec was the last French governor of Louisiana.

<sup>139</sup>When the imperial government tried to limit settlement to reduce the friction that accompanied settlers through the Proclamation Line of 1763, protests showed that Indian trade and native rights were no longer of vital concern to most colonies.



not as treasured consumers of British goods or valuable allies and pawns in the complex game of frontier diplomacy.

## CONCLUSION

During the first eighty years of English colonial administration in the Southeast, the Indian trade experienced boom-town prominence, continual crises, increasing regulation, and economic decline. The nature and status of those involved in the trade changed. Some of those who entered the trade early and survived the Yamasee War with their lives and reputations intact did well, whatever their social origins. Some who came later with but little money or knowledge gained from acting as civil servants during the government monopoly of the trade or from being placed as bound soldiers at a frontier fort, also progressed from the lowest ranks of the trade. With time, however, as Indians became regarded primarily as barriers to the expansion of settlers, the trade lost its diplomatic and political importance and came increasingly under attack from the Commons House of Assembly, administrators in the colonies and in London, and other colonists.

The Indian trade therefore became a less attractive profession for enterprising young capitalists at a time when the reputation of the participants remained under

attack. It was an insecure existence at best, and reports of violence directed towards both traders and frontier settlers from roving enemy Indians and from the increasingly disgruntled, albeit nominally allied Cherokees escalated. It was only a great optimist who would venture into the trade by the 1750s without influential contacts, for there were by that time plenty of other, less life-threatening occupations.

Only those with ties to master traders, leading storekeepers, or merchants that gave them privileged access to the higher ranks of the trading network could hope to prosper by the mid-eighteenth century. The Creek trade in particular was firmly in the grasp of the Augusta Company and its employees. Traders who entered the profession in the 1740s, such as Cherokee trader Robert Gowdie, had to be content with settling at locations where they could still pursue a trade with Indians, but their business was increasingly geared to the needs of the advancing waves of white settlers.<sup>1</sup>

Naturally, with the great numbers of participants in the trade, there were traders who were justly castigated as "monsters in human form, the very scum and out casts of the

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<sup>1</sup>Gowdie settled at Ninety-Six, and the location of his store is on the grounds of the National Park there which features a Revolutionary War fort. He died in 1776, leaving an estate worth over £6,000, including slaves.

earth, . . . always more prone to savage barbarity than the savages themselves."<sup>2</sup> Others, however, showed great skill in dealing with the realities of the frontier and truly deserved the title of "forest diplomats."<sup>3</sup> By the 1750s, many traders believed that there were other whites at the bottom of the "Mischief" that occurred in the nations. That was "no Wonder, when every Horse Stealer can screen himself here from Justice." Something had to be done to regulate the trade, and master traders such as Cherokee trader Anthony Deane deplored the condition of "this decaying Branch of Trade." All that was needed was "proper Officers" and control. Then "the Country would be eased of some Taxes about it, the Merchants would get their Debts, the poor Trader Subsistance and the Indians would be satisfied."<sup>4</sup>

This desired situation never arose. By 1763, the personnel involved in the trade and its organization were vastly different from the intricate system that had evolved by the mid-1730s. The trends manifest by 1750 of merchants financing storekeepers who themselves hired employees accelerated and it became rarer to find resident traders

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<sup>2</sup>Romans, Natural History of Florida, 1775, 60.

<sup>3</sup>John Pitts Corry, "Indian Affairs in Georgia 1732-1756," Ph.D. Diss, University of Pennsylvania, 1936, 33.

<sup>4</sup>McDowell, Indian Affairs 1750-1754, 73.

who lived for a considerable part of every year in the Indian villages. Trader gossip was no longer regarded as a source of vital diplomatic information with the waning of French and Spanish influence in North America and the resultant devaluation of native friendship. The tribes themselves were declining in numbers, weakened by diseases many of which had been contracted from traders or through conferences at Charles Town or Savannah. They retreated farther into the interior, leaving behind them cheap land for the frontier farmer. The Cherokee War, following so closely after the Seven Years' War, accelerated these trends and underlined the dangers faced by individuals who entered Indian country for any reason. The prospect of making a treasure in the trade seemed increasingly remote while the dangers of shedding one's blood in the pursuit of the profession increased.

## Appendix I

### Sole Commissioners of the Indian Trade, 1724-1756

1724	James Moore. Jr.
1724-1727	Colonel George Chicken
1727-1733	Colonel John Herbert
1733-1734	Tobias Fitch
1734-1736	William Drake
1736-1747	Childermas Croft
1748-1751	Major William Pinckney
1751-1752	None -- trade controlled by the governor, council, and committee
1752-1756	Major William Pinckney

APPENDIX II

Invoice of the goods and skins taken from John Sharp's  
store by the Creek Indians in November 1724.

2 Peices of Strouds and a Remnant of Ditto 16 Yards  
8 peices of Plains & half thicks 1 Remnant Ditto about 12  
1/2 yards  
117 l of Gun Powder & 110 l of bullets  
4 hatchets, 1 broad Ax & 2 hand Saws  
4 peices of Callicoe & 4 peices of Caddis  
6 Indian Callicoe jackets & Petic coats  
2 peices of Super fine Garlix for my own ware  
2 Suits of fine Strip'd holland jackets & Breeches  
a broad Cloth Coat & 7 pair of worsted Stockings  
9 fine Silk hardkercheifs 6 of which new  
2 Super fine blankets & 6 pounds of Small beads  
3 Coarse trading Blankets, 2 Saddles, Holsters & Pistolls &  
3 bridles A Gun & two trading Pistolls  
2 Pewter dishes 6 Plates, & a dozen of New Spoons  
5 Large & Small kettles, & 3 frying Pans, 2 pounds of Mixt  
Paint  
3 pair of Shoes, 2 of which new 1 Beaver hatt & 2 New  
Worsted Caps  
2 Trunks midling one New  
  
1100 weight of heavy drest Deere Skins branded as P Margent  
& 260 light Skins, & 8 Beavor. A Slave Woman & 2  
Children all my Sadlery tackle & blankets Cont. 29 in  
Number

From BPRO 11:268-69.

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VITA

Eirlys Mair Barker

Born in Aberystwyth, Wales, on February 9, 1948. She received her B.A. Honors Degree in History from the University College of Wales, Cardiff in 1969 and a Postgraduate Certificate in Education with distinction from the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth in 1970. She taught at high school level in Wales and then in West Germany.

In 1984, she completed all requirements for an M.A. in American History at the University of South Florida, Tampa. Her thesis was entitled "Seasons of Pestilence: Tampa, Florida, and Yellow Fever 1824-1905."

She entered the College of William and Mary in Virginia in Fall 1986 as a graduate assistant in the Department of History. Since Fall 1988 she has taught American history at Thomas Nelson Community College in Hampton, Virginia, where she is currently an associate professor.