

University of Nebraska at Kearney

OpenSPACES@UNK: Scholarship, Preservation, and Creative Endeavors

History Theses, Dissertations, and Student Creative Activity

Department of History

8-2-2021

Fashion in Focus: Women and Textiles in Rural America, 1920-1959

Autumn Langemeier

University of Nebraska at Kearney, ruc41@hotmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://openspaces.unk.edu/hist-etd>



Part of the [History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Langemeier, Autumn, "Fashion in Focus: Women and Textiles in Rural America, 1920-1959" (2021). *History Theses, Dissertations, and Student Creative Activity*. 8.

<https://openspaces.unk.edu/hist-etd/8>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of History at OpenSPACES@UNK: Scholarship, Preservation, and Creative Endeavors. It has been accepted for inclusion in History Theses, Dissertations, and Student Creative Activity by an authorized administrator of OpenSPACES@UNK: Scholarship, Preservation, and Creative Endeavors. For more information, please contact weissell@unk.edu.

FRIENDS, BROTHERS, AND MURDERERS: GEORGIA'S PROPAGANDA WAR
DURING THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

A Thesis

Presented to the

Graduate Faculty of the History Department

and the

Faculty of the Graduate College

University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

University of Nebraska at Kearney

By

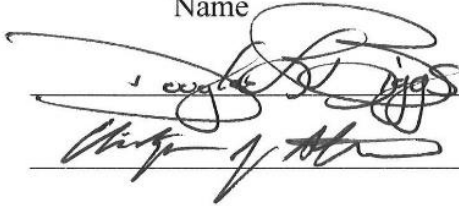

Daniel Zane Moore

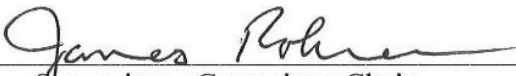
July 2021

THESIS ACCEPTANCE

Acceptance for the faculty of the Graduate College, University of Nebraska, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in History, University of Nebraska at Kearney.

Supervisory Committee

Name	Department
	History
	History


Supervisory Committee Chair
June 16, 2021
Date

Abstract

Native Americans featured prominently in the letters and military communications of revolutionary Georgians. Georgians called them friends and brothers during treaty talks, “savages” in appeals to the Continental Congress, and honorable and virtuous people when discussing the Natives’ philosophical nature. Each name represented a specific purpose as the Georgians sought to invoke Native Americans in propaganda for the Whigs’ own advantage during the Revolutionary War. The double-talk that spilled forth created a confusing world in which Native Americans played both friend of liberty and “butcher” of innocent women and children in the minds of Georgia Whigs. Throughout the turbulent war years, the role of the Native Americans’ physical presence in the conflict varied between neutrality and outright hostility toward the rebellious Georgians; however, they consistently appeared in appeals to Congress for aid and in propaganda meant to turn the backcountry into Whigs. The use of Native Americans as scapegoats became a political trope, which Georgia mastered to the point of turning employing fearmongering Indian fighters bent on using the war to claim more land on the Georgia frontier. How to deal with the Indians ultimately rent Georgia Whigs into two camps between those in favor of Indian neutrality and those in favor of an outright Indian war. This thesis will show how the use of Native American-centered propaganda not only shaped military movements but should be valued because of how it molded the outcome of the war in Georgia and created a volatile world of confusion for both Native Americans and Georgians as they vied for independence from Great Britain.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank several people that have aided me throughout my journey of researching and writing my master's thesis. First, I would like to thank Dr. James Rohrer for accepting me as his advisee. He has been an invaluable asset and mentor through the entire process, guiding me in my research and teaching me to be a better historian and writer. Next, I would like to thank my wife, Bethany Moore, who has always encouraged me in my academic endeavors and pushed me to be my best. She has provided the greatest encouragement throughout my entire master's program. I would also like to thank Dr. Douglas Biggs and Dr. Christopher Steinke for willing to be members of my thesis committee and taking the time to read and critique my work. Lastly, I want to thank my close friend, Jacob Whitmire, who has spent countless hours reading and discussing my thesis from its earliest conception as an idea all the way to its final product. Without him, this thesis would not be what it is now.

Clarification of Terms

Throughout this work, I will often refer to Muscogees. This name is the name chosen by the people more commonly known as the Creek nation. I chose to refer to them as Muscogees out of respect and deference to their own self-identification rather than the Euroamerican name given to them. You will notice, that several of the quotations will still use the name, “Creek.” This is because I chose not to alter the original naming and vocabulary of the historical contemporaries as terminology plays a significant role in the argument of this work. As you read this essay, please understand that the interchangeably used names, Muscogee and Creek, refer to the same Native American people.

Another point of clarification is my use of the term “frontier.” When referring to the frontier, I use it to represent a place, not the ideology of an empty wasteland devoid of civilization. Instead, I use it to represent the land where the American colonies met the Native Americans’ territory. While this might better be defined as a borderland, I believe the use of frontier is more easily recognized as the specific geographical location that this thesis discusses.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter 1 focuses on the state of affairs between the Georgia colonists and Native Americans immediately prior to and after the outbreak of the Revolutionary War. This relationship needs to be established to understand why the Whigs later used anti-Indian propaganda as a unifying factor in Georgia. It also proves necessary for comprehending why the Whig propaganda represented a fictitious belief created out of necessity rather than deep-seated racial biases held by the planter elites. Chapter 1 uses the journals of elite colonists, the arguments of backcountry settlers, and the travel journals of colonial explorers to document the 1770s concept of Native Americans held by Georgians toward the neighboring Muscogee and Cherokee nations. It ultimately shows that the backcountry settlers feared the Indians more than British tyranny while the coastal elites respected Native Americans as virtuous but uncivilized people. It also reveals the preexisting tensions between the lowcountry and the backcountry settlers as the elites viewed the frontier colonists as equally “savage” as Native Americans. This enables future discussion of why the Indian issue split Whig Georgia.

Chapter 2 discusses how the Whigs of Georgia sought to invoke Native Americans in propaganda to unify Georgia against a common foe. It analyzes how the split between the coastal elites and the backcountry settlers necessitated the creation of a common unifying factor. The Whigs in turn used anti-Indian propaganda to link the British and Native Americans in a fabricated plot to raid the Georgia frontier. This chapter calls upon the writings of Whig leaders and government records to show how they created an intentional propaganda campaign at the expense of the Native American

reputation. Moreover, this chapter contrasts the propaganda with Georgia's diplomatic writings to the various Indian peoples to show the dualism of their words. By comparing these different types of writings and their specific purposes, it reveals how invoking Native Americans in rhetoric shaped revolutionary Georgia's wartime strategy and helped unite the disparate political ideologies behind a common enemy propagated by false campaigns. This in turn leads into how the success of the propaganda inadvertently split Georgia again over the extent to which the Indians versus the British represented the main threat to Georgia's liberty.

Chapter 3 explores how the reaction of the backcountry Georgians to the anti-Native American propaganda created by the Whigs led to a fragmented state. The success of the early propaganda proved successful through the return of the backcountry to the Whig fold and their denouncement of the British, but it also reveals that the success of the propaganda went far beyond what the conservative Whigs intended. Using government records such as hearings and orders to officers, it becomes clear that the backcountry settlers became a nuisance to the Georgia war effort by disrupting relations with their Native American neighbors. The military and state leaders sought to establish a neutral understanding with the Muscogee Indians as the backcountry leaders fanned the flames of war, creating a division between the Whigs. This disunion persisted throughout the war, threatening the successes the Whig's Indian agents and military officers as they continued to face a two-front war between the Native Americans and the British. Examining the writings of Georgian military officers and government officials exposes

tensions that often hinged on the Indian issue. As a result, the war became a complicated mess of loyalties and inconsistent policies.

Table of Contents

Historiographical Essay	1
Chapter 1	
Settlers and Indians: The State of Native American Relations in Georgia.....	10
Chapter 2	
Lying Neighbors: How Whig Propaganda Created a Unifying Enemy.....	36
Chapter 3	
Overcorrection and Overreaction: How Whig Propaganda Split the State Over the Indian Issue	67
Conclusion: Elijah Clarke and the Backcountry Revolution	99

Historiographical Essay

The American Revolution represents one of the most significant and most discussed events in United States history, but after two and a half centuries of historiography on the subject, most histories continue to focus on the grand figures of the Founding Fathers and the character of American spirit throughout the war. Specifically, most historiography tends to discuss the northern and New England campaigns. The reality of the war, however, affected far more people than the White colonists north of Virginia. Recent historiography has begun to reveal the South's unique qualities during the war, but the major role of Native Americans in the war continues to need more research and attention. Despite the Indians drastically shaping the development of wartime strategies and allegiance in the southern campaigns, they persistently remain a peripheral idea to the American Revolution when in reality, they should be considered major players in the outcome of the war. In Georgia, its cultural background created a world in which Native American interactions shaped the very decision of loyalty and political intrigue, creating a distinctive wartime development.

The historiography of Native Americans in Revolutionary Georgia continues to center on their military involvement, primarily focusing on who the Muscogees supported and how much of a role they played in the war effort. This can be seen in Homer Bast's *Georgia Historical Quarterly* essay, "Creek Indian Affairs, 1775-1778" and James O'Donnell's *Southern Indians in the American Revolution*. Both historians highlight how the Americans and British fought a war of trade and words in order to gain the Muscogees' military support or neutrality during the early war years. While these works

accomplish a general analysis of the southern Native Americans' involvement in military actions, they often miss the nuance of the Muscogees' individual cultural practices and political decentralization into villages and clan-systems. As a result, the historians present a united Muscogee support for the British, which also lends to the continuing myth that years of peace existed when the Indians showed a lack of military involvement.¹

Following the historians who focused on a generally united Muscogee effort to support the British, a revisionist historiography arose in defense of the Whigs, arguing that the Whites intimidated Native Americans into submission during the American Revolution. Histories such as *Patriots and Indians: Shaping Identity in Eighteenth-Century South Carolina* by Jeff W. Dennis tend to focus on the dogma of Whigs controlling Native Americans through fear or "rum and good talks." Still, the shift in focus from pure military attention to political intrigue and negotiations marks a positive turn because this opens up the possibility of seeing the more complicated role of Native Americans in the southern theater. The historians' focus on trade talks and neutrality reveals a constant discussion that took place between the Indians and Whigs throughout the war, revealing a conflict motivated by goods more than combat. Despite this advancement, these historians still fail to appreciate the nature of the chess-match of words at play during this tumultuous period in Georgia history.²

¹ Homer Bast, "Creek Indian Affairs, 1775-1778," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 33, No. 1 (1949): 1-25. <http://www.jstor.com/stable/40577135>; James H. O'Donnell, *Southern Indians in the American Revolution* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1973).

² Jeff W. Dennis, *Patriots and Indians: Shaping Identity in Eighteenth-Century South Carolina* (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 2017).

Recently, the historiography of Native American involvement in the American Revolution in the South has begun to look more at the actions and motivations of the Indians themselves. The emergence of ethnohistorians such as Kevin Kokomoor, Kathleen DuVal, and Joshua Haynes provide a divergent perspective from the military and political historians. They present an independent and strong-willed Muscogee confederacy initiating its own self-serving military plans that often confound both Americans and British alike. These histories also shed light on controversial subjects such as the amount of Indian involvement by separating British campaigns from raids initiated by individual headmen. These historians provide a better understanding of how Muscogee culture and desires shaped their role in the war, freeing them from being designated as British pawns. Although, these histories liberated the southern Indians from White-centric historiography, they do not address the full scope of American and British involvement.³

Fortunately, a large pool of resources on the Muscogee people and their history exists, which provides deeper insight into their own view of the frontier and the war. A few of the more helpful works include, David Corkran's *The Creek Frontier*, Robbie Ethridge's *Creek Country*, and Joshua Pikers's *Okfuskee*. These histories delve into

<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1385536&site=eds-live>.

³ Kevin Kokomoor, “‘Burning & Destroying All Before Them:’ Creeks and Seminoles on Georgia’s Revolutionary Frontier,” *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 98, no. 4 (2014): 300-40. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44735557>; Kathleen DuVal, *Independence Lost: Lives on the Edge of the American Revolution* (New York: Random House, 2015); Joshua S. Haynes, *Patrolling the Border: Theft and Violence on the Creek-Georgia Frontier, 1770-1796* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2018).

Muscogee self-determination and explain how they dealt with the Euroamericans encroachment. This is important for researching the American Revolution because it becomes too easy to simply accept the American and British accounts that relegate Native Americans as either murderers or pawns of empire. In reality, Native Americans performed their own role, playing the parts of enemy, ally, and business partner however it suited themselves. These histories make it clear that the Muscogee asserted their own goals throughout history, not only during the American Revolution, but in daily interactions across decades. The Muscogee sought their own aims, and worked to turn their relations with the Euroamericans to their own benefit. Another major aspect of these works comes from their development of Muscogee culture and politics, an irreplaceable understanding when analyzing Indian relations in Revolutionary Georgia. Ultimately, these historians make it clear that Muscogee society operated on a township level, placing the decision-making process on local leaders and resulting in individualized motives that sometimes contradicted other Muscogee towns. As a result, Muscogee actions often flummoxed both the Americans and British during the war.⁴

Backcountry Georgia also fails to get the historiographical attention it deserves. Most historians tend to focus on individual backcountry leaders when discussing the region. Primary examples include, Edward J. Cashin's "'The Famous Colonel Wells:'

⁴ David H. Corkran, *The Creek Frontier, 1540-1873* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967); Robbie Franklyn Ethridge, *Creek Country: The Creek Indians and Their World* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003). <http://search.ebscohost.com.proxygsu-emm1.galileo.usg.edu>; Joshua Aaron Piker, *Okfuskee* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004). <http://search.ebscohost.com.unk.idm.oclc.org>.

Factionalism in Revolutionary Georgia” and Robert Scott Davis’ “A Frontier for Pioneer Revolutionaries: John Dooly and the Beginnings of Popular Democracy in Original Wilkes County.” These histories lend a view into the bloodiest and most active region of Georgia during the war, but they still focus too heavily on the role of political intrigue as the backcountry settlers worked to create a more democratic Georgia. As a result, most of backcountry historiography remains mired in the battle between radical and conservative Whigism in terms of policy and personal quarrels. This leaves the need to explore the backcountry on its own terms. On the other hand, the backcountry of other regions gains the attention of many historians focusing on the American Revolution. Histories such as *Elusive Empires: Constructing Colonialism in the Ohio Valley, 1673-1800* by Eric Hinderaker, *At the Edge of Empire: The Backcountry in British North America* by Eric Hinderaker and Peter C. Mancall, and *Forced Founders: Indians Debtors, Slaves, and the Making of the American Revolution in Virginia* by Woody Holton all provide closer investigations into the roles of backcountry interactions between settlers and Natives. Significantly, these works contend that the Revolution had already begun in the backcountry prior to the shots at Lexington, contending that the backcountry conflict absorbed the Revolutionary War for its own aims.⁵

⁵ Edward J. Cashin, “‘The Famous Colonel Wells:’ Factionalism in Revolutionary Georgia,” *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 58 (1974): 137-56. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40579633>; Robert Scott Davis, “A Frontier for Pioneer Revolutionaries: John Dooly and the Beginnings of Popular Democracy in Original Wilkes County,” *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 90, No. 3 (2006): 315-49. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40584931>; Eric Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires: Constructing Colonialism in the Ohio Valley, 1673-1800* (Cambridge University Press, 1997); Eric Hinderaker and Peter C. Mancall, *At the Edge of Empire: The Backcountry in British North America* (Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 2003); Woody

By examining works outside of Georgia historiography, one also gains a better appreciation for Indian-Colonial interactions before and during the American Revolution. This provides invaluable insight into the similarities and uniqueness of Georgia's experience. Some of the most helpful sources for this come from Peter Silvers' *Our Savage Neighbors: How Indian War Transformed Early America*, Colin Calloway's *The American Revolution in Indian Country*, and Alan Taylor's *The Divided Ground*. Each of these works provide glimpses into different regions of North American colonial interactions with Native Americans and focuses on various aspects of the colonial-Indigenous relationship. From violence to geopolitical intrigue, using these works from outside Georgia helps connect the grand scope of Revolutionary history to ethnohistoriography. Such insight reveals trends that benefit the overall historiographical understanding of the Native Americans' role not only in Georgia but across the colonies.⁶

Any study of the American Revolution in Georgia, and more specifically, any study on the role of Native Americans in Georgia would not be complete without referencing the immense works of Edward J. Cashin. Cashin dedicated his historical career to researching colonial and Revolutionary Georgia, providing a seemingly endless supply of journal articles and monographs on the groups and individuals that shaped the

Holton, *Forced Founders: Indians Debtors, Slaves, and the Making of the American Revolution in Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999).

⁶ Peter Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors: How Indian War Transformed Early America* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2008); Colin G. Calloway, *The American Revolution in Indian Country: Crisis and Diversity in Native American Communities* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Alan Taylor, *The Divided Ground: Indians, Settlers, and the Northern Borderland of the American Revolution*. New York: Vintage Books, 2006).

Georgia experience. Cashin ultimately defies categorization in Revolutionary Georgia historiography because he looked into every aspect, writing on backcountry leaders, individual Native American peoples, Loyalists, and even a traveling botanist. Despite, providing such a wealth of information on the topic of Revolutionary Georgia, Cashin never pulled the information together into a coherent work on the Georgia experience. The best place to look for a general history on Georgia during the Revolution comes from Kenneth Coleman's 1958 work, *The American Revolution in Georgia*. Writing nearly half a century ago, Coleman produces a detailed account of the war in its entirety, including a surprisingly balanced description of the role of Georgia's Native American neighbors. Together, these historians build a substantial and reliable source of historiography on the subject.⁷

After years of historical debate and multiple forms of revisionism, there remains largely two groups of historians on the topic of Native Americans in Revolutionary Georgia: those who believe the Americans controlled Native Americans and those who argue Native Americans controlled the war through their raids. The former seek to show how the new United States controlled Indian affairs and undercut British authority over the frontier. On the other hand, the latter historians, who argue that the Indians greatly impacted the warfare in Georgia, try to prove beyond reality the actual military participation of Native Americans. In so doing, the two groups leave a historiographical gap that needs to be explored. Neither side provides a truly clear approach to the conflict

⁷ Kenneth Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1958).

in Georgia, leaving open the need to address how the Indians impacted the war in ways other than combat, and how cultural interaction shaped the war itself. The historians who believe Georgia and South Carolina simply intimidated their Indian neighbors through rum, negotiations, and threats show the narrowmindedness of decades past that somehow continues to make its way into twenty-first century historiography. While the Native American revisionists do provide a more accurate representation of the war for the Indigenous people, they fail to grasp the full value of Native Americans and their role in developing Georgia's culture and motivations in the war, which far surpassed all military participation.

In short, the historiography of Indigenous involvement in Georgia during the American Revolution requires further attention. Too many historians still rely on ethnocentric ideas. Moreover, there remains the need to expand attention beyond military involvement. The Indians surrounding Georgia, particularly, the Muscogee, had a much larger impact through culture, fear, and political intrigue. This element further demands more consideration to be given to the backcountry settlers, a group of Georgians typically consigned to local histories or biographical works. Without understanding the interplay between the Georgians and Indians on the frontier, one cannot comprehend the Revolution in Georgia. Thus, the historians who solely focus on the presence or absence of Indian warriors in the war miss the larger impact of Native peoples on the strategies and rhetoric of the war. This thesis will contribute to historiography by approaching the Revolution in Georgia from the perspective of Indian relations. By focusing on how Indian affairs impacted the words and actions taken by Georgia Whigs, one better realizes

the true bearing of Native Americans on the war in Georgia beyond simply participating in battles but also in shaping internal conflict between classes and political rivals.

Chapter 1

Settlers and Indians: The State of Native American Relations in Georgia

Class relations and Indian affairs shaped the development of Colonial North America from its inception and beyond the colonies' war for independence. From this world, the frontier became a place of mixing cultures that created a drive for social progress and economic advancement. The western land drew settlers, traders, and businessmen into a world where Indian relations shaped colonial development. Dating back to Bacon's Rebellion, lower-class farmers argued that the planter elite and their aristocratic governments treated Native Americans better than the lower sorts. Bacon and his fellow backcountry settlers felt that the government betrayed them, failing to give poor farmers land or protection from Indian raids. This anti-Indian sentiment mingled with class-conflict became a trope repeated by backsettlers throughout colonial history and came to a head during the American Revolution. On the eve of the War of Independence, the colonies experienced rebellions that sparked from farmers taking Indian relations into their own hands. Much like Bacon's Rebellion, the Paxton Boys of Pennsylvania and North Carolina's Regulator movement revealed the swelling tensions between elite and poor farmers at the hand of clashing views on how to live alongside their Indigenous neighbors. As these conflicts began, another Indian war erupted in Virginia when its citizens preyed on the fears of colonists for personal gain and political aspirations by spreading propaganda that Indians planned a war against the frontier. This escalated hostilities into what became known as Dunmore's War. Thus, even before the first shots erupted at Lexington, war and class-based revolutions existed on the frontier in

an effort by the lower sorts to wrest control of the Indian lands for their own aspirations of what North America meant for them.¹

Georgia's Native American neighbors consisted of two main peoples, the Muscogee and the Cherokee. Of these two Indigenous groups, the Muscogee constituted the most significant influencer in Georgia's daily lives. Existing as a diverse and expansive group of people, they covered most of modern Georgia, Alabama, and parts of South Carolina and Florida. They were further divided into two groups, the Upper Muscogee and the Lower Muscogee. The Seminoles also acted as an offshoot of the Muscogee Confederacy and maintained sociopolitical ties to their northern kinsmen. The Lower Muscogee towns followed the Chattahoochee and Flint Rivers. The Upper Muscogee followed the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers, and the Seminoles inhabited Florida. In such a sprawling people, the role of government became largely decentralized, but they remained united through their "intricate clan system." American Indian historian Kathleen DuVal explains that the Muscogee nation held little sway over the individual towns, which maintained a level of autonomy in their domestic matters. This allowed towns to make their own decisions on diplomacy and when to go to war. While the Americans and British often referred to one leader as the headman or king of the Muscogee, this practice mostly represented a Euroamerican invention to make dealing with such a large people easier. In reality, Muscogee government broke down into much smaller and more local denominations on the town level. In this way, the southern Indians separated themselves from the Ohio Valley groups, who began to centralize around more

¹ Hindereaker and Mancall, *At the Edge of Empire*, 53, 136-37, and 158.

nationalist leaders on the eve of the Revolution, resulting in highly polarized pro- and anti-British sects. The Muscogees' decentralization opened the opportunity for competition for Native support by both the Whigs and British.²

Even before the American Revolution, Native Americans evoked different responses from Georgians. Colonists on the Atlantic coast held different attitudes than those in the backcountry; the closer Georgians lived to Indians, the more animosity they harbored. Obvious exceptions existed. Indian traders such as George Galphin and Lachlan McGillivray understood Native American culture through familial and economic relationships, making the Indians family even as the backcountry continued to distrust and fear the Natives. For lowcountry Georgians, Indians represented a necessary aspect of the economy. As the Revolutionary War loomed, these contradictory viewpoints impacted more than Native American relations, directly influencing the political alignment of Georgia's backcountry farmers and became the catalyst for what developed Georgia's attempt to unite the people against Great Britain. Previous historiography focuses on divisions among the Whig and Loyalist backcountry or the fight to push the British out of St. Augustine. When the Indians do get mentioned, historians portray a singular fight against the British and their Indian allies, but the true nature of the Native American relationship with Georgia represented a far more complicated setting that shaped the development of the Georgia theater of war.

² DuVal, *Independence Lost*, 26; Edward J. Cashin, *William Bartram and the American Revolution on the Southern Frontier* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2000), 50; Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires*, 183 and 189.

When the war began, the British had reason to doubt the security of their Muscogee alliance. Typically, Native American peoples made alliance with the British only when it benefitted their people, and the events of the 1773 Ceded Lands deal dramatically strained British-Muscogee relations in the years leading up to war. At this meeting, around three hundred Muscogees and one hundred Cherokees gathered to discuss the prospect of selling lands between the current Georgia boundary and the Oconee River. The Muscogee only begrudgingly participated at the behest of their Indian agent friend, John Stuart, and the encouragement of Indian traders, such as George Galphin. To the Muscogee, the conference became a devious scheme as the Cherokees intended to sell land that the Muscogee claimed as their own in exchange for extinguishing debts owed to Indian traders. The land deal ended with a tense but compliant signing of a treaty granting Georgia the Ceded Lands, a resounding victory for colonial Georgia. This land became a promising point for Georgia because the Proclamation Line of 1763 restricted access to the territory west of the Appalachian Mountains, preventing further expansion in other colonies. The Ceded Lands purchase made Georgia one of the few colonies boasting new territory for settlers able to purchase land. Buyers and squatters poured in from across the British empire. Despite the new citizens and income, the trade deal cost Governor Wright his relationship with many Muscogees. At the meeting, the Muscogee initially resisted the transaction, and their young warriors wanted to fight to keep the land. Only the older chiefs and gifts from traders convinced the warriors to accept the purchase. Still, conflict erupted as prominent

Muscogee headmen began leading raids against the Georgians in an effort to intimidate the new settlers off of the Muscogees' traditional hunting lands.³

The threat of Muscogee raids proved too much for Governor Wright to ignore following the infamous Creek Murders. On Christmas day, 1773, six Lower Muscogee hunters raided the settlement of William White, killing him and his family. Shortly thereafter, a group of around twenty Muscogees attacked another home, slaying five Whites and two Blacks. Governor Wright responded by sending the Georgia militia. The task proved too much for the soldiers as the Muscogee routed them, spreading panic throughout the backcountry and causing many to flee the region. Rather than run, the squatters, who already had experience with fighting the Indians, chose to remain, leaving an even more volatile situation.⁴

Following the failure of the militia, Governor Wright unleashed a weapon the Muscogee respected more than militiamen, trade restrictions. Wright called upon the surrounding royal governors, and together they enacted a complete embargo on trade with the Muscogee. The ban isolated the Muscogee economically from British goods and made them more vulnerable to enemy American Indians. Due to previous hostilities with the Spanish in New Orleans and an ongoing war with their long-time rivals, the Choctaw, the Muscogee felt pressured to find a source for iron tools, muskets, and ammunition.

³ DuVal, *Independence Lost*, 12; William Bartram, *The Travels of William Bartram*, Mark Van Doren ed. (New York: Facsimile Library, Inc., 1940), 53-4; Cashin, *Bartram*, 53.

⁴ Kelsey Griffin, "Murder and Mayhem: How the Creek Murders Affected British Policy on Indian Affairs in Georgia during the American Revolution," *Journal of Backcountry Studies* 4 (Fall 2009): 1-4. <http://libjournal.uncg.edu/jbc/article/view/17/7>.

Still, Muscogees felt reluctant to immediately return to the British for aid. The young warriors and several prominent headmen remained incensed by the recent Ceded Lands deal, and some Muscogee began to seek an alternative supplier.⁵

Enter Jonathan Bryan, Georgia planter elite, entrepreneur, and Whig activist. Being among the original planters to move to Georgia from South Carolina, he became one of Georgia's wealthiest and most influential leaders. Bryan recognized the commercial opportunity created by Governor Wright's embargo upon Indian trade, and he acted swiftly. As the political temperature in Georgia continued to rise, he wanted a safe haven for the Whigs in the event royal Georgia became dangerous. Thus, he began concocting a scheme to purchase land in the heart of Muscogee and Seminole territory. He illegally led a delegation to the Muscogee headmen and initiated negotiations for nearly four million acres of land that he intended to lease from the Muscogee in return for military goods. He argued the Whigs of Georgia could have their own sanctuary away from the control of the royal government, and Muscogees gained an alternate supplier of powder and guns. This would in turn enable Muscogees to continue to push against the frontier and subvert the trade embargo Wright and the British governors had installed.⁶

Bryan spent the next months visiting the Upper and Lower Muscogees and the Seminoles, collecting signatures from the headmen to finalize the lease agreement so he could begin settling his new refuge with Whigs, family, and Black slaves. Unfortunately, the task of acquiring signatures lasted too long and took a toll on Bryan's health. He

⁵ Alan Galloway, *The Formation of a Planter Elite: Jonathan Bryan and the Southern Colonial Frontier* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1989), 147-51.

⁶ Galloway, *The Formation of a Planter Elite*, 147-51.

returned home, leaving a delegation to negotiate the final signature he needed in Seminole territory. Before he could acquire the last signature, war broke out. The British and Minutemen skirmished at Lexington and Concord and Bryan's time ran out. Both Wright and the Georgia Whigs moved quickly to establish political and military control, and Bryan's Muscogee adventure crumbled. Some historians, including Edward Cashin, debate the reality of the Muscogees' willingness to participate in Bryan's plan, but the scheme actually fits into a larger trend taking place across North America during this time. In *The Divided Ground*, Alan Taylor explains that Native Americans, such as the Mohawks, began leasing land to settlers after the colonists became stingy with gifts following the French and Indian War. He contends that Indian men used the settler system to produce agricultural products they could barter for rather than stooping to the womanly task of tilling soil. Thus, the concept of leasing land to colonists became a common endeavor among Indians. This means Bryan's attempt to enter into a mutually satisfactory lease agreement actually follows the theme of a newly common practice being performed by Indians in other regions of North America.⁷

One wonders what might have happened had Bryan been able to complete the land deal before war erupted. Would more Muscogees have fought alongside their new benefactor and lessee? Would the Whigs have been destroyed by their Muscogee lessors after a backdoor deal with the British? Or would the British have maintained control of Savannah as the Whigs fled to their new home in Muscogee territory? One will never know the answers to those questions, but what this story reveals is that Muscogees were

⁷ Alan Taylor, *The Divided Ground*, 37-8.

willing to look for assistance and make deals with men other than the British Indian agents. Muscogees responded in anger when the British undercut them in the Ceded Lands purchase. They sought American aid in creating a way around the British embargo, giving them a glimpse into what the Americans called absolute power and tyranny. It also showed that those among the elite Georgia Whigs viewed Muscogees as potential business partners and viable neighbors, not “savages” worthy only of destruction and hatred. These lessons matter most for the story of how the Whig’s anti-Indian propaganda became the greatest weapon of the Revolutionary War in Georgia.

Georgians and Indians held a complicated relationship that shaped the war itself. Interaction proved common as the state’s very prosperity rested upon relationships with the Indians. The City of Augusta served as a major fur trading hub that bound the groups economically, and the fur trade reinforced the colonies’ economy, accounting for nearly thirty-four percent of the colonies’ exports to Great Britain in the early 1770s. Georgia’s closest native allies, the Chickasaws, became known as the “guardians of the valley” between Savannah and South Carolina and maintained a lasting relationship with the Georgians along the Savannah River. The very land that attracted immigrants to the frontier extended upon Indian territory. Simply put, colonial Georgia existed through Indian interaction. In fact, the Indian fur trade proved to be such a vital piece of the Georgia economy that the Whig leaders opposed the Continental Association’s requirement of non-exportation of goods against Britain because this necessitated halting the fur trade. Georgians feared Muscogees would then trade directly with the British, cutting Georgia out. While other colonies, like Virginia, viewed non-exportation as an

economic advantage to help raise prices on cash crops such as tobacco, the Georgians saw their exportation of animal skins as too vital to give up. They needed to continue their relationship with the Indians because they feared the economic loss as well as further angering their powerful neighbors.⁸

One of the best examples of a colonist's first impressions of Georgia's Indigenous neighbors comes from the personal writings of William Bartram, the son of the famed botanist-explorer John Bartram. Following in his father's footsteps, William took on the duty of exploring and documenting the flora and fauna of Georgia and Florida on the eve of the Revolution. Hailing from Pennsylvania, he held little experience with the Muscogee nation or the Seminole people, but he set out with an open mind and a determination to learn. Bartram documented his travels and discoveries in intricate detail, providing invaluable accounts of his interactions with Indians. The first Native American he met surprised Bartram, saying,

White man, thou art my enemy, and thou and thy brethren may have killed min [sic]; yet it may not be so, and even were that the case, thou art now alone, and in my power. Live; the Great Spirit forbids me to touch thy life; go thy to thy brethren, tell them thou sawest an Indian in the forests, who knew how to be human and compassionate.

Only later when Bartram arrived at a trading post, did he discover from a Muscogee headman that the Indian he encountered had sworn to kill the next White man he confronted. Still, this near-fatal incident only inspired Bartram, believing a natural virtue

⁸ Paul M. Pressly, *On the Rim of the Caribbean: Colonial Georgia and the British Atlantic World* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2013), 199; Edward Cashin, *Guardians of the Valley: Chickasaws in Colonial South Carolina and Georgia* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2009); Kokomoor, "Burning & Destroying," 308; Holton, *Forced Founders*, 107.

guided Indians' actions. Bartram continued his journey into East Florida, hoping to make contact with the Indian trading outpost that held his gear and trunks of tools that had been shipped ahead of him.⁹

Leaving Georgia, William Bartram headed into East Florida where he witnessed the intimate, yet complex, world of personal and political relationships between Lower Muscogee, Seminoles, and the American traders. Following altercations between Lower Muscogee and the White inhabitants, Bartram attended peace talks in St. Augustine. The Floridians blamed Muscogees for recent hostilities, but Bartram believed the Muscogee claim that the Seminoles actually initiated the fighting as a result of being cheated by the Indian traders. Bartram insinuated in his journal that the Seminoles likely had reason to strike out against the traders, who often swindled their Indian clients, but later learned the relationship could work both ways. He came across a situation so peculiar to him that he documented it for the sole purpose of remembering the curious event in which a White trader married a beautiful Seminole woman, who used her charm to distribute her husband's wealth to other Indians. Thus, the wife reversed the typical power scheme between White men and Indian women. Bartram contended, however, that the other Seminoles generally condemned her actions. Even though Bartram respected Seminoles, he still expected them to act in ways that English society deemed "civilized." For him, seeing a woman manipulate a man's wealth for the benefit of her own people existed outside acceptable customs.

⁹ Bartram, *Travels*, 45.

For Bartram, the morality he generally witnessed enabled him to reject the “common-phrase epithet” of “untutored savages.” Instead, he argued Native Americans represented a people “both well-tutored and civil.” Even the coastal elites saw the Indians as valuable economic assets. While traveling through East Florida, he came across an Indian employed as a hunter by a plantation owner. He mentioned this casually without any surprise by the relationship despite also acknowledging “disturbances...between the Lower Muscogee and the white inhabitants of East Florida.” While complicated and occasionally violent, the planters and Indian traders developed a working relationship with the Native peoples of the southeast. Bartram’s journal makes it clear that many White colonists found interacting with Indians to be a common and typically civil experience.¹⁰

The Revolution, however, began to disrupt this practice. When the Whig traders joined the war, their ability to participate in Indian-British trade became far more difficult. Moreover, many traders fled the region during the war, removing the men with which Muscogee hunters familiarly traded. Moreover, the rise of Alexander McGillivray as a headman, diminished the role of trade between Whigs and Muscogees. He used his connections to the British fur trade through his father to place pressure on rival Muscogee headmen in an attempt to better unite Muscogees in a pro-British policy. In general, the war stagnated the fur trade, eventually leading to an economic crisis among Muscogees.

¹⁰ Bartram, *Travels*, 84, 86, and 110-11.

As a result, the Muscogeans transitioned from “commercial hunters to commercial farmers, ranchers, entrepreneurs, and landlords.”¹¹

During Bartram’s time in East Florida, he spent a stint with the Seminoles, forming a friendly relationship. The renowned headman, Cowkeeper, named him Puc Puggy, or Flower Hunter, on account of Bartram’s botanical mission. Bartram grew fond of the Natives he encountered and argued that the Indians did not require European civilization to teach them how to live, but that the Whites actually brought the immorality and vices of the Old World into the New World. During his stay with Cowkeeper, Bartram learned that peace talks progressed between Muscogeans and Georgians, ending James Wright’s embargo. He also learned that disputes between the Upper Muscogee and Whites occurred very seldom and elicited extreme caution, saying such troubles became highly “alarming to the white inhabitants.” Despite being an outsider to Georgia and the southern Indians, Bartram quickly began to understand the complicated but working relationship that maintained prosperity between Georgia and their Native neighbors. Violent disputes arose, but trade and aversion to conflict on both sides maintained a general peace between the two people.¹²

Even as many Whites viewed Indians as virtuous and productive people, they did not necessarily see Native Americans as equals or fully civilized cultures. The Enlightenment and its philosophers impacted more than the ideological origins of the American Revolution. It also shaped the way Euroamericans viewed the social world

¹¹ Ethridge, *Creek Country*, 11 and 20.

¹² Bartram, *Travels*, 163, 181, and 386.

around them. David Hume believed that refinement, not virtue, made a society civilized. This left the refined Anglo-Saxons on a level above their virtuous Indigenous neighbors. In fact, Hume argued that the ancients and Natives of America failed to reach the same level of social refinement as that of Europeans. Still, he maintained that all societies remained on the same path toward civilization and should be judged in the same light. For Hume and many Enlightened thinkers, even if the American Indians represented virtuous people, this did not place the Natives on the same level as Euroamericans. This Enlightenment ideal of refinement enabled the Georgians to judge the Indians against their lack of “civilization,” making it easier to invoke Native Americans in derogatory ways, such as calling them “savage.” The backcountry settlers latched onto this idea as they attempted to turn a War of Independence into a war of conquest for land they coveted.¹³

Personal relationships became a fixture of proper negotiations between Indians and Euroamericans during the colonial period. In fact, intermarriage proved almost essential to any trader seeking to break into the Indian fur trade. Both Cherokee and Muscogee people followed matrilineal systems, giving women a valuable role in the kinship-based society. If a White man married an Indian woman, the wife’s family then welcomed him into their clan, and he gained access to their trading routes and hunting grounds. The wealthy Indian trader George Galphin understood the value of such intimate relationships. He took on a Muscogee companion named Metawney and had

¹³ John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), xx-xxii.

several children with her that went on to become prominent friends of the Muscogee nation. He also had several children with his Black slaves and his Anglo-French wife, Rachel Dupre. He further populated his home at Silver Bluff with Irish and Anglo relatives, building a realm dedicated to family and the benefits derived from relations. Galphin represented anything but the typical conservative Christian colonist. Despite distancing himself from traditional colonial society, Galphin won the favor of Lower Muscogee with his honest trade practices and attention to building kinship networks.¹⁴

On the other hand, the backcountry settlers did not favor this method of forming relationships with their Indian neighbors. Rather than intermingle with Natives, they preferred to maintain barriers between White and Indian society. Throughout the war, the backcountry Whigs never truly trusted George Galphin despite his being appointed an Indian agent for the Southern District by the Continental Congress. Georgians of the frontier viewed him with distrust, noting his close relationship with Lower Muscogee. Certainly, his polygamy, sexual relations with Indians, and lack of “civilization” did not help his case in their eyes either. Settlers further blamed violence by Indians on the traders because trade routes brought the Indians through backcountry settlements. As a result, a clear rift between the backcountry and the Indian traders formed. The fracture also existed between the backcountry and the lowcountry elites, who often viewed the frontier settlers in a lesser light than even Native Americans.¹⁵

¹⁴ Cashin, *William Bartram*, 43-4; Bryan C. Rindfleisch, *George Galphin's Intimate Empire: The Creek Indians, Family, and Colonialism in Early America* (Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 2019), 24.

¹⁵ Haynes, *Patrolling the Border*, 69.

Backcountry settlers held a reputation for antagonizing Native Americans, and this reputation influenced the policy and opinions of the coastal elites. Soon after acquiring the Ceded Lands, Governor Wright sent instructions to his trusted agent, Edward Barnard, to form a frontier militia for two main purposes: to protect the settlers from Indians and to protect the Indians from the settlers. Tellingly, most of Wright's directive spends its time instructing Barnard to keep the White farmers in line, saying, "be very careful to prevent the White people stealing the Indian Horses...and to prevent any of the White people from going beyond the Line, or Hunting or Trespassing on the Land of the Indians." He goes on to implore Barnard to make sure that the settlers treat any Indians found on the Georgia side of the boundary well and not with violence. His next greatest concern stemmed from squatters on the land, illegal settlers, often referred to as Crackers, who held a particularly bad reputation among elite colonists. Wright commanded Barnard to enforce the Vagrant Law and push all squatters off the land they settled unless he found them to be productive people that agreed to pay for the land they occupied. Wright's letter reveals the understanding that the frontier farmers held a deeper distrust and malicious attitude toward Native Americans than that of the coastal Georgians. In the 1770s, violence between Lower Muscogees, primarily from Coweta, and the angry settlers escalated, and the settlers clamored for an Indian war in which they could assert their independence from both Muscogees and lowcountry elites. This very attitude continued to develop and reveal itself in the Revolution.¹⁶

¹⁶ James Wright to Edward Barnard, in Robert Scott Davis, Jr., ed., *The Wilkes County Papers, 1773-1833* (Easley, SC: Southern Historical Press, 1979), 38; Rindfleisch, *George Galphin's Intimate Empire*, 173-74.

Backcountry Indian haters gained a nasty reputation among Indian agents and elite society. Illegal immigrants, made up mostly of Scotch-Irish, constituted many of the settlements on the Ceded Lands. Galphin believed that the Scots and vagrants on the borderlands that incited conflict with the Natives acted worse than the Indians. He deplored their unwarranted hatred and wanton killing of Native Americans. For instance, during the surveying trip that followed the Ceded Lands conference, some of the Cherokees on the expedition stopped at the home of Hezekiah Collins to ask for food and water. Mrs. Collins welcomed them into her home, but when Hezekiah Collins found eating, he and his sons attacked the warriors, killing them for simply being Indians. Such brutality proved common among the squatters, but James Wright and John Stuart denounced such actions. Wright declared Collins a murderer. Even with the opposition of men like Galphin and Wright, the backcountry settlers' hostility remained stalwart leading into the Revolution, enabling it to become a tool of the Whigs.¹⁷

Georgians and South Carolinians recognized the tensions mounting with Native Americans, and they understood that the backcountry lay at the heart of the issue. Wills Hill, the Earl of Hillsborough, wrote to James Habersham in 1772 in the midst of the Ceded Lands clashes. He credited the slow progress of Georgia's advancements to the checks created "from the lawless Behaviour [sic] of the Back Settlers on the one hand and the Violences and Outrages of the Savages on the other." To the officials and businessmen of the colony, the violence represented an attack on Georgia's stability, and the backcountry settlers served as the primary perpetrators in the elites' minds. Hill's next

¹⁷ Cashin, *William Bartram*, 51-2 and 66-7.

statement to Habersham confirms the idea that the Indians' attacks resulted from the unruly conduct of the settlers. "Although the Steps you have taken upon occasion of the late Murder perpetrated by a Creek Indian upon one of the Settlers at Queensborough appear to have been very proper...I see no ground to expect a Cessation of these Outrages unless the Inhabitants are restrained." Hill places the blame not on the murder or the conduct of the government, but he points the finger at the revenge killings by the settlers. Unfortunately for the prosperity of colonial Georgia and for the stability of the fledgling independent state, the backcountry never learned to obey the government's plans for dealing with the Indigenous population, opting instead to take matters into their own hands.¹⁸

As the war with Britain drew nearer, so did the threat of conflict with the Muscogee Confederacy. Hostilities continued just as Wills Hill feared. The cycle of violence could not be broken by James Wright's nor John Stuart's intervention. Instead, war loomed large in 1774. Writing to Lachlan McIntosh, Seth Cuthbert hoped to gain wisdom and support from the elder planter. Cuthbert outlined his financial schemes and plans to become a Georgia planter himself, but he held reservations about the safety of the state. Discussing the position of Georgia, he said that Georgia became too associated with Boston, the Resolutions, and an Indian civil war. He continued to say that war with the Indians seemed imminent and that Muscogees would lead the war. For the backcountry, this became the primary concern on the eve of revolution, not independence

¹⁸ Wills Hill Marquis of Downshire to James Habersham, 1718-1793, 1 April 1772, *SNAD*. https://dlg.usg.edu/record/dlg_zlna_eoh001#item.

from Great Britain. As the war progressed, this never changed. While independence eventually became a goal of the backcountry settlers, it remained a periphery objective for those who viewed the Indians as their primary enemy.¹⁹

The outbreak of war only heightened the awareness of others to the backcountry's poor reputation and Indian hating. British Colonel George Hanger confirmed Galphin's feelings toward the backcountry settlers during his tours in both Georgia and South Carolina. When Hanger first arrived in Savannah, he witnessed the gathering of Native American warriors for the first time. As a body of six hundred Muscogee and Cherokee warriors trained, Hanger admired their martial ability and applauded them for abstaining from women. However, he also felt the need to secretly mock the gaudy attire of the headman, Mad Dog, which he found hysterically garish. Still, his admiration for the men marked a striking divergence from his opinion of the backcountry settlers. After encountering groups of South Carolina frontier families, Hanger claimed they acted "more savage than the Indians, and possess every one of the vices, but not one of the virtues." He clarified in his journal that he spoke directly on the state of the "back-woodsmen" and not the planters of South Carolina, who represented the best people in America. He concluded by describing the settlers as a "heathen race known by the name of Crackers." Hanger, who had far experience with the Indians and backcountry settlers than the lowcountry colonists, shared an almost identical perspective to the elite Georgia

¹⁹ Seth John Cuthbert to Lachlan McIntosh, 9 August 1774, *SNAD*.
https://dlg.usg.edu/record/dlg_zlna_krc073#item.

Whigs and the Indian traders, revealing how nearly universally the elites respected Native Americans but not the settlers.²⁰

Unlike the social elites and Indian traders, who recognized the Indian's natural virtues, the backcountry simply abhorred Native Americans, which can be expressly seen in the Revolutionary experience of Alexander Chesney, a farmer from the South Carolina backcountry. Alexander Chesney came to America with his family in October 1772 where they established a farm. His diary notes that his new home rested "about 12 miles from where [Grindall's shoal] empties itself into Broad-River 50 miles below where the Indian line crosses that river." Just after getting the family settled on the farm, he made a purpose of opposing the 1775 Whig resolutions, opting to remain loyal to the crown. Soon afterward, the South Carolina Loyalists stole ammunition housed in the town of Ninety-Six, resulting in the Whigs sending forces to round up known Loyalists. Chesney then began smuggling Tories out of South Carolina along the waterways to North Carolina, where a guide led them through the Cherokee and Muscogee territories to St. Augustine, East Florida. As a result of his actions, the Whigs sent Colonel Richardson, who captured Chesney and plundered his home. Richardson gave Chesney the option of facing a trial or joining the rebel militia as a private. Chesney chose the latter to save his family from further hardship, and from April 1776 to June 1777, he served the Whigs of

²⁰ George Hanger, *The Life, Adventures, and Opinions of Col George Hanger* (London: Wilson & Co. Oriental Press, 1801), 399-401 and 404-5.

South Carolina. Despite soldiering for over a year, he never accepted the Whig cause, even once attempting to desert to General Clinton's army.²¹

Notwithstanding Chesney's manifest disavowal of the Whigs, he and his captors held a common enemy, Native Americans. Alexander Chesney noted in his journal, "we then marched against the Indians, to which I had no objection, helped to destroy 32 of their towns under General Williamson with Col Sumpter." He later remarked on his regiment's travels through Georgia saying, "While at Fort Barrington we had several scrimishes [sic] with the Creek Indians, in which I was always a volunteer." Clearly, he held no qualms with fighting Native Americans and actually felt a duty to it. From his own admission, he held an even lower regard for the American Indians than he did the Whigs, who had captured him and ransacked his home. Evidently, his propensity for killing Natives impressed the Whig soldiers, and he gained a promotion to lieutenant. He then led an expeditionary force against the Muscogee Indians in Georgia under Captain McWhorter. So Chesney, a South Carolina Loyalist, patrolled against Muscogees on behalf of the Whigs all the way to the Altamaha River in Georgia. This placed him at the heart of the Indian crisis in the backcountry of Georgia during the American Revolution. For him, fighting the Indians, even for turncoats, made a worthy cause. His example shows how Indians evoked powerful emotions of scorn from the backcountry settlers, even among one who had only migrated from Ireland five years earlier.²²

²¹ Alexander Chesney, "The Journal of Alexander Chesney: A South Carolina Loyalist in the Revolution and After." E. Alfred Jones, ed., *The Ohio State University Bulletin* 26, no. 4 (1921): 2-6.

²² Chesney, "The Journal of Alexander Chesney," 7-9.

Interestingly, the staunch Loyalist, Alexander Chesney, never commented on the role of Thomas Brown, the renowned King's Ranger, who worked with Muscogee warriors to raid backcountry Georgia and aid in the capture of Augusta. One cannot help but wonder if Chesney condemned such actions. It appears that the Indians acted as a near-universal boogeyman to the backcountry, regardless of political affiliation. Chesney, however, held true to his devotion to the crown. After gaining freedom from the Whigs, he joined the Loyalist forces and continued to fight in Georgia. This time, he clashed against the famed Indian fighter, Elijah Clarke. Clarke hailed from Wilkes County, Georgia and established a formidable militia of backcountry settlers, who he took on raids against Muscogees and Tories of Georgia. Chesney annotated his cross-country pursuit of Clarke remarking, "I proceeded as far as Tyger-river and there learning that Clark [sic] was gone up the bushy fork of Seluda-river, I took six of the best mounted men and got on his track." Even though Chesney effectively returned in full to the British fold, abandoning his former practice of volunteering for attacks against the Cherokee and Muscogee, his willingness to fight Indians and his diary betray the deep hatred he quickly adopted in his short time living in the southeastern backcountry.²³

Chesney went on to continue to fight the Americans for several more years. Eventually captured and later exchanged, he witnessed the Whigs win their independence. The irony remains that fighting Native Americans, which initially gave him purpose in the employ of the Whig militia of South Carolina, eventually undermined his own aspirations of maintaining British America. The ability of the South Carolina and

²³ Chesney, "The Journal of Alexander Chesney," 15.

Georgia Whigs to demonize the Indians incited a far more unified and determined Georgia backcountry than any political ideology of tyranny, taxation, or representation. By creating an “other” that stretched across all political schisms between the British and Americans, the Georgia Whigs militarized the backcountry in a way that the *rage militaire* of 1776 failed to accomplish in the deep southern colonies.

In addition to simply understanding the Georgia-Indian relationship in terms of the Georgians’ bias, one must comprehend the build up to the war in the backcountry of Georgia. In his book, *William Bartram and the American Revolution on the Southern Frontier*, Edward Cashin makes a bold claim about the 1773 Augusta council at which Georgia acquired the Ceded Lands. Historians already recognize the significance of the event in terms of Indian relations in Georgia, but Cashin views it as even more of a watershed event, saying, “but this congress, in retrospect, was the most crucial in that it launched a chain reaction that led to the American Revolution in Georgia.” While on the surface this claim may seem a bit absurd, Cashin shows great insight into the true issue of the American Revolution in Georgia. Although Cashin never explicitly established the chain of events that he refers to, one can deduce his meaning by carefully examining the years leading up to the Revolution. The next major occurrence in Georgia happened during the survey of the newly purchased Ceded Lands. Colonel Barnard and a large envoy of Georgians, Muscogees, and Cherokees journeyed to the new boundaries to determine its markers. During this trip Hezekiah Collins enacted his act of homicide against the young Cherokee warriors, killing them in cold blood in his own home. Not only does this incident provide a glimpse into the ruthlessness of the frontier life, but it

also shows the savagery of the White settlers toward Indians. This murder came at a poor time since Georgia's relations with Muscogees had already begun to ebb as a result of the Ceded Lands agreement. Now the young Cherokee warriors turned their anger against Georgia, further distancing themselves from the counsel of their more conservative headmen, who cautioned against war.²⁴

Following the murder, the succeeding noteworthy episode to occur resulted from Muscogee reactions to the recent treaty, which the young warriors condemned. Muscogees grew increasingly frustrated with Georgia after the transaction because not only did they give up valuable hunting grounds, but now George Galphin and many of the Indian traders refused to release all of the goods promised as payment to Muscogee headmen. The traders' refusal stemmed from rumors of a general Muscogee uprising to come after the Green Corn Dance, an annual harvest celebration held by many southeastern Native American people. As a result of these events, Georgia went from a state of celebration over the recent purchase to a land of turmoil on the brink of a general Indian war with two different groups. Both James Wright and John Stuart only barely held off war due to their personal relationships with men such as Cherokee headman Attakullakulla and Muscogee headman Emistisiguo, who both worked to keep their respective people in line. Still, the situation looked dire on the Georgia frontier as raids increased.²⁵

²⁴ Cashin, *William Bartram*, 53 and 67.

²⁵ Cashin, *William Bartram*, 54 and 74.

As tensions amplified, some Muscogees began to attack Whites on the Georgia Ceded Lands. Most of these settlers represented the squatters that Governor Wright hoped to evict, but he still feared leaving the situation unchecked as the issue escalated beyond negotiations. Several prominent Muscogee headmen began leading raids against the Georgia backcountry, and Wright turned once again to Colonel Barnard to handle the situation. He sent his small Georgia militia to put an end to the murders happening along the boundary line, but this task eclipsed the men sent to accomplish it. As soon as they met Muscogees in combat, the militiamen broke. They fled in terror for their homes, saying they needed to protect their families. The brief action left Georgia humiliated. Even the *Georgia Gazette* mocked the men for their cowardice. Despite the failure of Wright to end the raids, most Georgia colonists continued to trust him. After all, he had acquired the new lands, and according to him, George Galphin precipitated the Muscogees' displeasure by not properly paying them. Instead of turning against their royal governor, most backsettlers cowered behind him, praising his service and hoping he would save them from an Indian war.²⁶

If one looks at this chain of events on the surface, Cashin sounds like a madman, claiming that the purchase of the Ceded Lands led to the American Revolution in Georgia since it seems to have pushed the Georgians closer to their royal governor. While it remains difficult to determine precisely what he intended by this significant historiographical comment, the statement remains true. The conference in Georgia sparked two revolutions that became the main plots for the remainder of the war and the

²⁶ Cashin, *William Bartram*, 72-4

next century. The revolution in Georgia held two distinct aims besides freedom from Great Britain: a revolution of the “lower sort,” taking the land they desired away from the Indians and the elites; and a revolution of freedom not from British tyranny but from perceived Indian oppression. The latter of these two revolutions largely existed as a myth, but it became the rallying cry that transformed Georgia’s backcountry from politically lukewarm farmers to radical Whigs bent on overthrowing the coastal elites as well as the British and their Indians. Further, these events show how war had already begun to develop in the backcountry just as it had along the Ohio Valley and the frontier of the Carolinas.

As a result of these two conclusions, one cannot adequately examine the American Revolution in Georgia without taking into account the full impact of Native Americans on the war. Moreover, the oft-overlooked relationship between the backcountry and Native Americans should take an even more central role than historians typically give it. While historians have begun highlighting the intense warfare taking place between the backcountry Whigs and Loyalists, the Indians are frequently treated more as a nuisance that appears in the fold of a grander war than as central actors to the war itself. This misses the point entirely. The Indians represented the war for the backcountry settlers, and the Loyalists often existed as the nuisance. The order of this relationship is paramount because it completely shapes how one perceives the revolution of Georgia’s backcountry. When the war started, backcountry settlers barely felt the heavy hand of the British as Boston did. Instead, the colonists rallied behind their royal governor because he acquired new land from the Natives and they believed he posed their

best hope of defense against the intimidating Muscogee warriors. For the backcountry, freedom represented the liberty to take and inhabit the land of their Indigenous neighbors. When the war began, Georgian allegiance landed largely along lines of following the government that could best protect the settlers' lands.

Upon unraveling the complex relationships of the lowcountry elites, backcountry settlers, and Native Americans, one can see that not all Georgians viewed Indians as unrepentant murderers. Instead, the colonial elites, planters, educated professionals, and Indian traders regarded their neighbors as useful and virtuous people worthy of respect and occasionally intermingling. Moreover, these same men that respected the Indians also represented the majority of the Whig government and Continental Army in Georgia for most of the war. Thus, when one sees the letters written by lowcountry Whigs to the backcountry warning them of a plot by the British to send warriors against their homes, one should not conclude that these letters accurately reflect the viewpoint of the Whigs toward Native Americans. While they did disparage Native peoples, they believed that they held natural virtues as well. Rather, this should be seen for what it genuinely embodied, propaganda meant to unite a disenchanted backcountry with an ailing coastal Georgia.

Chapter 2

Lying Neighbors: How Whig Propaganda Created a Unifying Enemy

When war first broke out in the American Colonies, Georgia represented a divided territory. Many of the backcountry settlers remained loyal to the king while the coastal towns declared independence as Whigs. In an effort to sway the backcountry into rebellion, the Georgia Whigs declared the British intended to use Indians to raid the frontier settlements and force the colonists into submission. By calling upon the well-known fears of the farmers, the lowcountry Whigs hoped to create an enemy “other” to unite the state. Even as the Whigs spread the anti-Indian propaganda, they continued to seek neutrality with these same Native American neighbors, creating a complex and volatile situation. Fortunately for the Whigs, merely naming the Indians as British allies proved enough to create frontier Whigs, albeit for circumstances other than British political and economic tyranny.

In 1775, Georgia governor James Wright held one of the strongest relationships with his colony of any royal governor. Georgians loved him for his ability to acquire land and deal with Muscogees and Cherokees that surrounded their colony on the edge of British North America. When North Carolina governor William Tryon faced the grassroots Regulator Rebellion in 1770 over political dishonesty, James Wright avoided similar commoner uprisings in Georgia through agile political movements. Instead of resisting change, he granted the backcountry what they desired, giving them courts in Halifax and Augusta. His role in the 1773 Ceded Lands deal further endeared Wright with the backsettlers. He gave them local government and land when the rest of the

colonies faced the restrictive demands of the Proclamation Line of 1763, and he guaranteed protection from their Indigenous neighbors. Despite Wright's efforts, his and Great Britain's undoing in Georgia came about at the hands of propaganda circulated by the Whigs who sought to place themselves in the seat of government.¹

The need for the Whigs to initiate a propaganda scheme stemmed from Georgia's lack of unification against British taxes. Some Georgians felt they had no need for independence. Particularly, many of the backsettlers initially desired a continued British presence because it brought with it British regulars, which in turn meant protection against the Indians across the Altamaha River. Ever since the Ceded Lands debacle, Muscogees distrusted Georgia because they felt cheated by the new boundary line, causing young warriors to act out against frontier settlers. Intermittent Indian raids became a common occurrence, and backcountry Georgians clamored for a response to the attacks. All of this led to an increased reliance upon the British imperial system. In a world where the settler lived on an isolated farm away from towns, forts served as their only form of protection. The fear of raids heightened this awareness, leading a group of twenty-two settlers on the Georgia frontier to petition for the establishment of a block

¹ Abby Chandler, "'Unawed by the Laws of Their Country': Local and Imperial Legitimacy in North Carolina's Regulator Rebellion," *North Carolina Historical Review* 93, no. 2 (April 2016): 119–46. <https://unk.idm.oclc.org>; Robert C. Calhoon, Timothy M. Barnes, and Robert S. Davis, "The Man Who Would Have Been" in *Tory Insurgents: The Loyalist Perception and Other Essays*, revised and expanded ed. (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2010), 289.

house and fort for shelter against the Muscogees. Without British support, the settlers faced losing the soldiers that represented their only semblance of military fortification.²

When the Continental Army took responsibility for Georgia's defense, Lachlan McIntosh struggled to contain Muscogee raids. Settlers often fled in the face of raiding parties further revealing their lack of faith in the Whig government. In one instance, William Williamson and other backcountry families near Beard's Bluff retreated as their homes and farms burned, witnessing firsthand life without British regulars and Indian agents. As attacks increased, so did Georgian fear of Native Americans. Muscogee warriors became murderers and assassins in the eyes of settlers and officers on the frontier. Raids became marked as criminal activity regardless of its intention. Even the Whig leaders contributed to this fear. Lachlan McIntosh demanded that the Indian raiders who killed several light cavalymen be hunted down and brought to justice for the murder of Georgian soldiers, painting the Indians not as military combatants but frontier criminals. Without clear protection, the backcountry settlers felt exposed on the outskirts of White civilization.³

In addition to simply doubting the Whigs' ability to protect the backcountry, the settlers and the coastal Whigs differed in their political alignment as well. In 1774, John Dooly, the future Whig militia commander and Indian fighter, led a delegation of backcountry settlers to confront the coastal Whigs at Tondee's Tavern and to denounce

² John Wallace, et al, "Petition of the frontier inhabitants adjasent [sic] to Andrew Armor." *Southeastern Native American Documents, 1730-1842* (hereafter cited as SNAD). https://dlg.usg.edu/record/dlg_zlna_tcc796#item.

³ Kokomoor, "Burning & Destroying," 332 and 337.

their claims against Great Britain. In a show of support for James Wright, Dooly and his fellow frontiersmen contended that the issues in Boston, including excessive taxation, had nothing to do with Georgia. Moreover, the backcountrymen published their rejection of the Whigs' decision in the *Georgia Gazette*, specifically citing issues with the Indians as a reason to remain loyal. Two of the points in their published renunciation of the Whigs specifically cite Native Americans. The fourth point cited the need for British military aid in preparation of an impending Indian war. Their fifth point contended that the coastal Whigs ignored this matter because their own land holdings rested beyond the frontier and safe from Indian incursions. While these events failed to spark any true enmity between the coastal elites and the backcountry settlers, it marked the divergent aspirations of the two factions of Georgians. The Whigs hoped to create a self-governing independent state while the settlers desired more land and the continuation of military relief against Native Americans.⁴

Concern over raiding parties initially turned several frontier leaders against the Whig movement. Where lowcountry planters, such as Benjamin Andrew and Jonathan Bryan, denounced the respected governor for his stances on British taxes, the backcountry supported his pro-expansion policies like his upholding the frontier boundary along the Ogeechee River, securing lands for future settlers. After seeing their actions push potential allies to become Loyalists, the Whigs schemed to create a united anti-British Georgia. Connecting the British with the backcountry's most hated enemies

⁴ *Georgia Gazette*, 12 October 1774, in Robert S. Davis, Jr., ed., *Georgia Citizens and Soldiers of the American Revolution* (Greenville, SC: Southern Historical Press, Inc., 1979), 16; Robert Scott Davis, "A Frontier for Pioneer Revolutionaries," 324-25.

became the most obvious solution. The Whigs made this decision despite many lowcountry elites actually holding reasons to want peace with Native Americans. The fur trade buoyed Augusta and made the colony prosperous in exports. Georgia Indian traders maintained deep connections with Muscogees and Cherokee, and some prominent families intermingled with the Indians, creating dynastic lines in the Muscogee nation. For instance, the Indian trader and social elite, Lachlan McGillivray's son Alexander, had just begun his rise in the ranks of Muscogees toward becoming a warrior headman in his own right. Still, the need for an "other" to bring the backcountry settlers into the fold persisted. Thus, when South Carolina Whigs began a propaganda campaign against John Stuart, Georgia jumped on the opportunity.⁵

John Stuart served as the British Supervisor for Indian Affairs in the Southern District of North America, where he directed the southern colonies' interactions with Native Americans, doing his best to maintain civility and cooperation. After all, Britain meant for the colonies to operate as a source of wealth for the motherland, and the Indian fur trade proved to be a profitable market. Unlike some British officials, Stuart deeply cared for the colonies and their people. He previously witnessed firsthand the brutality of North American warfare during the French and Indian War in which he commanded a garrison of soldiers at Fort Loudon near the Cherokee-South Carolina border. He observed the back and forth of raids between Natives and colonists alike, and he personally became a victim of the cyclical warfare when his isolated position on the frontier became exposed. Cherokees surrounded his fort, forcing him to surrender. After

⁵ Cashin, *William Bartram*, 25.

negotiations, he secured passage for his soldiers, but as they marched from the fort, Cherokee warriors set upon them, killing over thirty soldiers and capturing the rest, including Stuart.⁶

Thus, John Stuart became intimately aware of the authority that Native Americans held on the frontier and the damage that frontier warfare created for soldiers, civilians, and Indians alike. Stuart's fate, however, changed when Attakullakulla, an old friend and Cherokee headman, rescued Stuart by purchasing his freedom and setting him free. Learning from his wartime experiences, Stuart went on to perform his duty as Indian Affairs Superintendent with a healthy respect and concern for both the Indigenous and colonial populations. Despite his constant service for Georgia in aiding the fur trade and the acquisition of Indian land, Stuart gained the exceptional ire of Georgians. While Whig Georgians viewed Governor Wright as an enemy, they did not thoroughly dislike or hate him, but Stuart experienced a different fate. Because of his continued service as the Indian Agent for the British forces, this provided the Whigs with an important opportunity to associate him with Indian marauders.⁷

Rumors spread as Whigs from South Carolina and Georgia claimed that John Stuart plotted with the British to unleash the Indians on the frontier in an effort to force the colonies back in line. This story ultimately began an all-out campaign to associate the British with Indian raids. After continued assaults on his character by the Whigs in 1775, John Stuart ardently protested that he always worked toward the interests of the people in

⁶ Cashin, *William Bartram*, 18.

⁷ Cashin, *William Bartram*, 18.

the king's provinces, striving to prevent violence. He further took credit for the "long uninterrupted tranquility which [their] frontiers have enjoyed." In reality, a British cabal to turn Indians against innocent frontier settlers did not exist. Throughout the war, Stuart repeatedly argued against such tactics even when other British officers did propose such actions; however, Stuart failed to adequately substantiate his innocence.⁸

The Whigs, looking for a scapegoat, used the ambiguous rhetoric of his mail to make him public enemy number one in Georgia. One of the Whigs to review Stuart's letters, Joseph Habersham of Savannah, wrote to Philotheos Chifelle, a local leader in Georgia, to explain how the Whigs interpreted Stuart's evidence, saying,

so far, every thing appeared to me plausible; but unluckily for M. Stuart, he produces a number of his letters...In one of which he writes thus [to Alexander Cameron, his representative to the Muscogee]... 'use your influence to dispose those people [Muscogee], to act in defence [sic] of his Majesty and Government, if found necessary.'

Despite the Whigs' doubt that Stuart actually plotted to use the Indians against the backcountry, they still saw their opportunity to use his correspondence against him, and they presented the evidence as proof that the British stooped to unleashing warriors on women and children along the frontier. In Habersham's letter, he urged Chifelle that the information of Stuart's alleged designs should "be made known to the good people of your province, as well as our own." At this point, the Whigs initiated their scheme to

⁸ John Stuart to William Henry Drayton, et al, 18 July 1775, in in John Drayton, *Memoirs of the American Revolution: From Its commencement to the Year 1776*, Vol. 1 (Bedford, MA: Applewood Books, 1821), 293.
https://www.google.com/books/edition/Memoirs_of_the_American_Revolution/L1CEdG_zLtYC?hl=en&gbpv=1.

convince the Georgians that the British intended to send Native Americans against the backcountry.⁹

The idea of a British-Indian alliance to attack the backcountry preyed upon the worst fears of the settlers, Indian raiders being supported by the British. The mere idea of a Muscogee warrior struck terror into the hearts of most backsettlers. William Bartram acknowledges in his travels that Muscogee warriors maintained a dominating presence in the minds of colonists. Standing a full size larger than Europeans and distinguishing themselves with their masculine bodies, these warriors gave an air of bravery and authority that easily elicited an overawing presence. Governor Patrick Tonyn of East Florida wrote to General Clinton, claiming that ‘the Americans are a thousand times more in dread of the Savages than of any European Troops.’ Thus, the Whigs intentionally united the British with the greatest terrors known to the backcountry settlers, creating an “other” that pushed these skittish settlers firmly into the Whig camp. Governor Wright and the British agents could no longer be looked to as the defenders of the backcountry because they allegedly urged the destruction of settlers at the hand of Native Americans.¹⁰

In order to understand the deceit of the accusations the Georgia Whigs made, one must also hear the arguments of the British and the Loyalists. When conflicts between the Americans and British first broke out in Massachusetts, the political climate in Georgia

⁹ Joseph Habersham to Philotheos Chiffelle, 16 June 1775, in Drayton, *Memoirs of the American Revolution*, 289-90.

¹⁰ Bartram, *Travels*, 380-81; Tonyn to Clinton, 8 June 1776, in Cashin, *William Bartram*, 231.

had only begun to escalate. Still, the British generals wanted a contingency plan, and General Thomas Gage wrote to Indian Affairs Superintendent John Stuart in 1775 to discuss the potential role of their Native American allies in subduing Georgia. Stuart responded with why the British must be careful when attempting to enlist Indian allies. First, he explained to the general that he had already begun cultivating relationships with the Cherokee while his brother worked with Muscogees. Stuart understood the necessity of these talks because Cherokees required cajoling due to recent conflicts with the southern colonies. The Muscogee relationship necessitated help because they felt spurned by Governor Wright's taking their territory in the Ceded Lands agreement and then imposing an embargo to force them into submission.

Next, Stuart addressed another issue regarding the Muscogee. The British previously precipitated a war between the Muscogee and their long-time rivals, the Choctaw, in order to keep Muscogees reliant upon British goods. Stuart now thought the conflict should be settled, so the Muscogees' attention would not be divided. The third idea in Stuart's letter requires the most attention. He warned General Gage against sending warriors upon Georgia's frontier because this might encourage the indiscriminate killing of backsettlers. This, he argued, would only result in turning the entire backcountry against Britain. Stuart knew that backcountry sentiments remained divided over the issue of rebellion. This led Stuart to urge Gage to only use Native Americans in cooperative military endeavors with British forces, which he believed would prevent the British from being associated with Indian raids. He wanted to avoid the responsibility of

causing Indian warriors to fight civilians, a move that could only disenchant Loyalists in the backcountry.¹¹

John Stuart's letter shows several key insights into the British approach to the war as it pertained to Native Americans. Stuart appreciated the backcountry's precarious position and that he knew things could turn the settlers hostile faster than any political argument: Indian raids. His letter implies that it was only acceptable to use Indians as auxiliaries to British activities. In fact, this tactic proved commonplace throughout American warfare and colonial trade. Indian guides aided the British forces in the French and Indian War. Georgian Indian traders married Muscogee women, and as Bartram's own travel journal proves, Indians themselves even occasionally married White women and established themselves in the backcountry as guides or ferrymen to aid settlers in navigating the forests of Georgia. Seeing Native warriors act in conjunction with the military and daily activities represented a familiar aspect of life, but the colonists detested Indian horse raids and violent incidents along the frontier settlements. Stuart's intimate knowledge of the Indians and their relationship with the southern colonists allowed him insight into how the colonists viewed Indian involvement, and he offered Gage sound advice, but the Whigs twisted the suggestion of using Indians in any form as proof that the British intended to send warriors against their families.

¹¹ John Stuart to General Thomas Gage, 3 October 1775, in Peter Force, ed., *American Archives: Fourth Series Containing a Documentary History of the English Colonies in North America, From the King's Message to Parliament of March 7, 1774, to the Declaration of Independence by the United States. Fourth Series* (hereafter cited as AA), vol. 4 (Washington, D.C.: M. St. Clair Clarke and Peter Force, 1843), 317. <https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=IEwMAQAAMAAJ&pg=GBS>.

In October 1775, the lieutenant governor of East Florida John Moultrie wrote to General Grant to discuss the current situation of the southern colonies as Georgia began to participate in forms of rebellion. Moultrie admitted that he believed the “southern people are madder than the northern, though I believe not such great rogues; they have got to the highest pitch of raving madness.” He described how they disrupted Indian affairs by stealing British powder supplies intended for Indians and then attempted to negotiate their own alliances with the Natives, which Grant had predicted was their intent. Moultrie further acknowledged that the Loyalists of Georgia and South Carolina dwelled in the backcountry, which Dr. Thomas Taylor of the backcountry corroborated in his December 1775 letter that stated, “in this province two out of three are friends to government.” Moultrie warned Grant that sending the Indians against the frontier would only serve to hinder British interests and might aid the rebels rather than hurt them. Moultrie ultimately uncovered the double game the Whigs played, acknowledging that the Whigs both sought Indian alliances and hoped to isolate the backcountry from the British using Native Americans.¹²

At this point in the Revolution in Georgia, John Stuart had already fled Charlestown for the safety of Savannah, and then escaped Georgia Whigs after being further accused of plotting to incite the Indians against the backcountry settlers. Also, the Whigs began plotting two different courses of action with Muscogees. First, they wanted

¹² John Moultrie to General Grant, 4 October 1775, AA, 336; Thomas Taylor to Mr. Morrison, 16 December 1775, in Thomas Taylor, “A Georgia Loyalist’s Perspective on the American Revolution: The Letters of Dr. Thomas Taylor” (hereafter cited as “GLPAR”), Robert S. Davis, Jr., ed., *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 81, no. 1 (1997), 125. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40583546>.

to use the threat of Indians against the British. By accusing the British Indian Affairs superintendent of fomenting Indian raids, they set the remaining Loyalist settlers of the backcountry on high alert. Any action by the Indians would only prove the Whig propaganda true. Second, the Whigs raided the East Florida powder stores to prevent the British from supplying expected gifts to the Indians, effectively disrupting the Indian's trade relationship with the British. They then turned around and sought alliances with Native Americans, occasionally offering the stolen powder. In this way, the Whigs created a devious plot to bind the British in their use of the Indians while using Indian propaganda to create a united Georgia with the potential of a neutral Muscogee nation.

This is not to say that what the Whigs accomplished came about easily or even always successfully. The records of the South Carolina Provincial Congress held in November 1775 betrays how tight of a rope the Whigs truly tip-toed. They admitted that if the British and Indians simultaneously attacked Georgia and South Carolina, neither state could withstand such a military effort. They also acknowledged that both Georgia and South Carolina Indian traders warned that a general Indian war loomed if the states did not provide enough gifts to the Native nations. Thus, the southern colonies sat in a very perilous position, and the efforts of the Whigs to both incite hostility toward the Indians while also seeking neutrality showed how desperate Georgia truly became. They flirted with destruction either way. A war with Muscogees would doom the state, but they also feared that the backcountry might remain loyal to the crown if the settlers persisted in their indifference toward the Whig cause. For them, the Indians filled both roles as neutral allies and common foe as Georgia maintained relations with some Muscogee

headmen while their backcountry settlers also fought Muscogees. However, this thin balance came close to toppling several times, creating a political climate that eventually split the Georgia Whigs into two factions.¹³

In spite of the danger, Georgia Whigs occasionally played the British and the Indians off one another. The key to their success rested in dividing Muscogee villages' loyalty to the British and in uniting the Georgians against both. When Georgia rebels began commandeering boats loaded with gunpowder intended for Native Americans, Georgia both supplied their ailing militia and disrupted the ability of the British to woo the Indians. These actions further flustered John Stuart and led him to complain to Major Small that communication became too dangerous and difficult, ultimately forcing the British to push the trading center for Muscogees from Georgia to East Florida. George Galphin also aided the Whigs in confusing the relationship between Muscogees and the British. During the 1776 Augusta conference, Muscogees asked him why the Americans placed forts beyond the 1773 boundary. Galphin explained that Georgians erected the forts to protect against British duplicity. This marked a sly attempt to confuse Indian loyalty and cover Georgia's own treachery. Galphin, a man trusted by Muscogees to determine matters in their villages, lied to protect Georgia from war with the Indians even as the Whigs incited the Natives in propaganda to rally Georgians against Great Britain.¹⁴

Despite Galphin's assurances, the forts represented a physical manifestation of the Whig propaganda to assuage the settlers to their cause. These small bastions of military

¹³ South Carolina Congress, "A Declaration," AA, 59

¹⁴ John Stuart to Major Small, 2 October 1775, AA, 317; Haynes, *Patrolling the Border*, 70.

presence in the frontier attempted to protect the settlers from their primary fear, the marauding Indian, not the British soldier. While the forts did aid in keeping watch for the British, they could not effectively defend against British forces. In fact, when the British did arrive, John McIntosh valiantly challenged British Colonel Fuser, telling him to “come and take [his fort],” but he quickly surrendered. In reality, the frontier palisades posed only minor obstacles to British armies and reveal the falsehood behind Galphin’s claim. One British soldier explained that Georgia frontier forts offered little resistance because Georgia built their stockades to stop Indians, not armies. Georgian William Tennet confirms this argument, saying that the forts existed to make the settlers feel secure when Indians arrived. Galphin intentionally concealed Georgia’s efforts in order to reassure Muscogees in the hopes of preserving the state’s tenuous relationship with their strongest Indigenous neighbor.¹⁵

Still, if the backcountry Whigs wholeheartedly believed Muscogees intended to kill their families and ally themselves with the might of the British and Loyalist forces to overwhelm the struggling Whig militia, then why did this never come to fruition? In fact, Muscogees constantly flummoxed British officers by not appearing for battle when called upon or by only bringing a handful of warriors when British officers expected hundreds or thousands of armed Muscogee men. Several arguments exist as to why Muscogees

¹⁵ John McIntosh to Colonel Fuser, 25 November 1778, in George White, ed. *Historical Collections of Georgia: Containing the Most Interesting Facts, Traditions, Biographical Sketches, Anecdotes, Etc.* (hereafter cited as HCG) 3rd ed. (New York: Pudney & Russell Publishers, 1855), 526. <https://archive.org/details/historicalcolle00duttgoog>; Robert S. Davis, Jr., ed., *Georgia Citizens and Soldiers of the American Revolution* (Greenville, SC: Southern Historical Press, Inc., 1979), 158.

failed to take on a more active military role in the war. Older scholarship, such as the work by James O'Donnell, a historian on American Indian involvement in the southern theater, at least partially believe the myth that Georgia provided enough rum to bribe them and keep them too drunk to coordinate a successful military plan. This opinion seems to be more of a classic White argument over the fallibility of Native Americans to the evils of drunkenness. While giving Native Americans rum certainly played a role in the neutrality policy that Indian agents like George Galphin sought to sustain, it failed to stagnate Indian military activity. Instead, it served as a bartering tool, not a method of intoxicating their enemy into a neutral stupor. On the other hand, if one analyzes the accounts of multiple contemporary witnesses, Native Americans showed restraint in the face of alcohol when necessary, just like their White counterparts. William Bartram described a scene of a band of Muscogee warriors who discovered traders bringing about eighty kegs of liquor into their territory for trade. The warriors destroyed the kegs and spilled the alcohol in an attempt to prevent the spread of the harm it creates. On another occasion, Bartram encountered a war band of Lower Muscogee and Seminoles on their way to fight the Choctaws. Indian traders gifted them liquor, but the headmen present kept the warriors from partaking of the alcohol until after they arrived at their destination, making Bartram remark at the self-control exhibited by the warriors. Even though they did allow the warriors to join in binge drinking with Bartram's company, the headmen and lead warriors abstained from the revelry. In light of such testimonies, it proves unlikely that the Indians failed to join the war as a result of habitual intoxication.¹⁶

¹⁶ Bartram, *Travels*, 214-15 and 386-87.

On the other hand, historians, such as Jeff Dennis, believe South Carolina's success in demolishing the Cherokees intimidated Muscogees into neutrality. This argument shows a lack of attention to the actual Muscogee Confederacy and their actions. The reality of the Muscogees' inability to fully commit to the British cause stems from their organization, not their fear. Muscogee diversity and varied goals encouraged headmen to seek the best interests of their individual towns, often creating competing motives between different villages. This becomes particularly evidenced by Jonathan Bryan's own adventure through Muscogee territory to obtain the rights to the land he wished to lease. He sought to acquire four million acres of Muscogee land, but he could not simply approach the Muscogee "king" and acquire his blessing. Instead, he had to travel from the Upper Muscogee to the Seminoles, getting permission from the headmen of the towns. This shows not only that a major decision required the support of most of the Muscogees' leadership, but it also included the Seminoles. Thus, for Muscogees to become fully invested in the Revolutionary War on the side of the British Army, the British would need to convince far more than John Stuart's personal connections.¹⁷

While Stuart had an agent, David Taitt, living among Muscogees, who befriended one of the main warrior headmen, Emistisiguo, this did not enable Taitt to rally the entire Muscogee nation to the aid of the British. He could only conceivably gain the promise from a handful of headmen and their warriors. This greatly diminished the potential size of any Muscogee "army" that the British could deploy upon the backcountry or in tandem with the Loyalists. John Stuart and David Taitt understood this concept, but the British

¹⁷ DuVal, *Independence Lost*, 26.

generals deployed to North America from Great Britain sometimes failed to comprehend why they could not call upon the entire Muscogee nation if Muscogees acted as allies. This issue became even more pressing because Muscogee military aid required compensation, an expensive practice. For instance, in 1775, John Stuart kept a force of forty to fifty warriors in St. Augustine for the winter, but for such aid, the Indians required that Stuart compensate them for the losses in game they incurred since they could not hunt while stationed with the British. In one of the largest shows of military support by Muscogees, headman and son of Indian trader Lachlan McGillivray, Alexander McGillivray rallied nearly two thousand warriors to come to Pensacola's aid when the Spanish planned to invade in 1781. After Muscogees arrived, the Spanish backed off, but British General Campbell did not want to pay so many warriors for an extended period. When the reimbursement stopped, Muscogees filtered back home, and they did not return again when the Spanish finally arrived. As can be seen from these examples, Muscogee allegiances proved costly and unpredictable, making it difficult to even deploy Muscogees willing to fight for the British.¹⁸

A quick glance at the main Muscogee headmen and towns during the Revolutionary War only further confirms the complicated and decentralized state of the Muscogee Confederacy in terms of Euroamerican relations. Coweta served as the traditional seat of the nation, but the leadership of Coweta lost its prowess and centrality over the years, resulting in the current headman, Sempoyaffe, who held little direct

¹⁸ Frederick George Mulcaster to General Grant, 3 October 1775, AA, 332-33; O'Donnell, *Southern Indians*, 98-9.

control over the Muscogee nation. His warriors became uncontrollable, which likely led to the increased issues between Muscogees and the backcountry settlers. Escochabey subverted John Stuart and traded with the Spanish in Havana, giving Muscogees an illegal market to circumvent the British. Ahaya the Cowkeeper kept better relations with the British and ignored the Spanish, becoming the principal Seminole headman. The Upper Towns now held the most prestige and influence in the confederacy. Emistisiguo of Little Tallassee held a strong relationship with the British, and Stuart most appreciated him because he aided in Muscogee acceptance of the 1763 land cessions. Emistisiguo remained loyal to the British because he believed Muscogees needed the empire's trade goods to compete with Euroamericans and rival Indians. On the other hand, the Wolf of Okchoy detested the British as a result of James Moore's enslavement of "hundreds of Mucogugles." He even disappeared on a private mission to the Cherokees which Stuart feared might be an attempt to create an anti-British confederacy. The Okfuskee headman, Handsome Fellow, proved unpredictable to the British because he typically kept to his relationship with Indian trader Richard Rae of Augusta, who served as a Whig Indian agent. These examples show that Muscogees' reliance on personal relationships often frustrated the efforts of the British and even the Americans to secure peace or military agreements, but it also gave the advantage to the Georgians who only needed to secure enough support from headmen to disrupt the ability of the British to be able to unite Muscogees against Georgia.¹⁹

¹⁹ Cashin, *Bartram*, 50-1

This very disunity ultimately gave the Georgia Whigs their primary advantage when they began speaking of the Indians in contradictory forms. Even though the Whigs struggled to maintain a decent military force to defend their frontier or Savannah, they wielded a mighty weapon, Native American propaganda. The Georgia government knew it could not withstand the full force of Muscogees at their backs while the King's Rangers and British regulars snipped at their toes. They needed to fight a one-front war, not a two-front war despite what some backcountry settlers demanded. The Whigs saw two ways to accomplish this plan of neutrality with the Indians: employing Indian agents and making promises to both the settlers and Native Americans. The first proved fairly effective in dividing Muscogees enough to protect Georgia. George Galphin orchestrated an early conference in Augusta to meet with Muscogee headmen to seek peace with them. Galphin understood Muscogee politics better than many other Georgians and even the British agents. He recognized that he must divide Muscogees to keep them from turning against Georgia in force. Galphin's meetings with Muscogees had mixed results. Some headmen believed his talks of continued friendship while others left the conference in Augusta in disgust, but the overall result accomplished his intended goal. Muscogees were not united against Georgia. Again, in 1778, when frontier settlers threatened to coax Muscogees into a fight, he sought only to prolong Muscogee neutrality by ending the weak trade embargos placed on them by Georgia. He hoped this satisfied the neutrals long enough to prevent a general war. By splitting Muscogees over the matter of alliance,

he succeeded in giving Georgia a means to disrupt British attempts to fully use the power of Muscogee warriors.²⁰

Besides Galphin's peace talks, the Georgia governors wrote letters to Muscogee headmen and held talks with Muscogees, seeking to maintain a semblance of peace. For instance, in 1781, Whig Governor Nathan Brownson wrote to Muscogees calling them "friends" and "brothers." It certainly seems ironic that the same government that wrote to Congress declaring they had "savages" on their borders then called these same "savages" brothers, but that was the game that Georgia played. Ultimately, they did it effectively enough to avoid an outright Indian war. While the backcountry settlers stoked the flames of war, the government resorted to gifts, flattery, and intimidation to try and maintain neutrality with the Indians. Fat King, a Muscogee headman, discussed peace in 1782 with Whig James Rae. Fat King cited his negotiations with George Galphin and George Washington and their desire for peace and friendship, showing that the use of this language in Georgia went all the way from the Indian agents to the leader of the Continental Army. The use of kinship language by the governors actually produced a powerful understanding with Native Americans. Fictive kinship networks enabled Euroamericans to work with the Natives. Without a symbolic familial tie, they could only be strangers. By appealing to Muscogee headmen as their relatives, Georgians called

²⁰ Bast, "Creek Indian Affairs," 13; Corkran, *The Creek Frontier*, 317.

upon ancient traditions of using a personal relationship, and this gave the Georgians added success in treating with Native Americans.²¹

Besides the fact that the American and British Indian agents succeeded in dividing the loyalties of Muscogee headmen, Muscogees themselves divided over relationship and personal interests. The Revolutionary War did not immediately alter the daily lives of the Muscogee nation. Bartram's own account of his time in Indian territory reveals this. In one example, Bartram tells of a Muscogee village he came across in late 1777. When he arrived, he learned of a dispute between the chief of the village and a White trader's son. The son slept with the headman's wife, creating unrest within the village. The chief's men attempted to kill the adulterer, but he escaped to his father's fortified house. Muscogee headman then held a council in which they determined that the appropriate recompense would be the perpetrator's ears, a common punishment for adultery in Muscogee culture. The Indian trader refused to release his son to the Muscogees and believed only George Galphin's intervention could save his son from the chief. Thus, even in the midst of a war, Indian traders and Muscogees continued to have normal domestic disputes. They remained reoccupied with local matters, drew upon Galphin, the Continental Indian Agent, who continued to play a significant role in both international and local Indian affairs. Bartram never reveals whether the Indian trader and his son were Loyalists or Whigs or whether the headman allied himself with the British or remained neutral, but one gets the sense that such matters seemed trivial in the heart of Muscogee

²¹ Nathan Brownson to the Upper and Lower Towns of the Creek Nation, 1781, *SNAD*, https://dlg.usg.edu/record/dlg_zlna_tcc267#item; Fat King to James Rae, transcript, 27 December 1782, *SNAD*. https://dlg.usg.edu/record/dlg_zlna_tcc124#item.

territory. Here, one's kin still reigned supreme even to the point of dragging the inundated George Galphin into a dispute over a headman's wife and a trader's ill-mannered son.²²

Over time the war brought dramatic changes to Muscogee villages as they determined to support different sides of the war. When Muscogees listened to British or American overtures, it could hold dire consequences. In 1778, the neutralist Muscogees attacked Tories in Pensacola, nearly leading to a civil war with the pro-British faction. Fortunately for Muscogees, they tended to avoid fighting one another, and some neutralists even willingly switched sides for the benefit of their own towns. Galphin, however, successfully maintained a group of neutralist Muscogees throughout the war. These Natives, proved their devotion to their friend and relative by supporting the Americans even when their villages faced famine. The Cussitas even argued that if they could get supplies from the Americans, they would remain loyal even if it meant fighting other Muscogees. One fact remains evident. In spite of the infighting, Muscogees remained loyal to their kinship, which Galphin fully enmeshed himself into through both real and fictive relations.²³

The neutral Muscogees' personal relationships with George Galphin and other Whig leaders made them less likely to join the war. By maintaining the mantra of "brother," the Georgians avoided an all-out war with the Muscogees, something that would have destroyed both the Georgia frontier and possibly many Muscogee villages.

²² Bartram, *Travels*, 355-56.

²³ Corkran, *The Creek Frontier*, 316-19.

Muscogees and the conservative Whigs recognized this issue and mutually sought to continue the fictive kinship in spite of the war. On the other hand, Muscogees who did want war with the Georgians and allied themselves with the British also held good Muscogee reasons. Those that joined the British often formed strong bonds with the British officers or Indian agents, warranting their intervention. Another major reason for Muscogees to go to war stemmed from the purpose of expansion or protecting their homelands, the very reason they maintained their protracted war against the Choctaws. This explains why some Muscogees continued raiding the Georgia frontier but did not necessarily join the war itself. Their goal emanated from the desire to drive off the trespassers in the Ceded Lands, not the subjugation of the State of Georgia for Britain's imperial aims. In this way, the continued use of fictive kinship language and practices helped prevent the escalation of minor conflicts into a general war between Georgia and the Muscogee Confederacy.²⁴

While the Georgia Whigs successfully invoked Native Americans in propaganda to simultaneously unite Georgia against the Indians and maintain a level of Muscogee neutrality, it would be foolish to believe that Muscogees served as a nonfactor in the war. Even if they rarely get highlighted in the set-piece battles, they participated and made their presence known to both the Whig officers and the backcountry settlers. Their involvement in both the skirmishes with the militia and backcountry settlers and battles with the Continental Army gave them a level of intimidation and a large enough presence that the Whigs could not ignore them or the British's role in perpetuating their

²⁴ Bartram, *Travels*, 215.

involvement. Their constant presence more than any single action taken by the entire Muscogee Confederacy gave weight to the Whigs' correspondence that cited Muscogees in the state's need for assistance. The backcountry recognized Muscogee power, the coastal elites respected their military prowess, the merchants and Indian traders desired their business, and the military officers feared the possibility of an Indian invasion against their poorly armed and oft deserting ragtag army.

To understand the value of Muscogees in Revolutionary Georgia and the level of intimidation they brought to the conflict, one must see how they interacted with the Georgia military. During the ill-fated 1777 excursion into East Florida, Colonel Samuel Elbert led the Georgia Continental soldiers on an expedition to capture St. Augustine and eliminate East Florida as a threat to Georgia's independence. On April 20, 1777, the Southern Expedition learned of enemy forces approaching to resist their movement toward St. Augustine. From here, the operation quickly devolved into chaos. Samuel Elbert recounted the events in his order book. Colonel Baker led his soldiers as an advance party and encountered a small group of Florida scouts and Indians. He quickly pursued them, thinking he easily outnumbered the contingent but fell into an ambush set by the coalition of Tories and Natives, and the combination of Indians and scouts overwhelmed Baker's forces. They began deserting, causing the Indians to give pursuit and capture several of Baker's fleeing soldiers. According to the Georgians that managed to escape, the Natives murdered several prisoners in cold blood, spreading fear of the warriors among the other soldiers. To make matters worse, the fleeing soldiers heard one of the enemies claim that the entire Muscogee nation mobilized to fight the Americans.

Later in the expedition, Lieutenant Ward led a small group on a hunting sortie to acquire food for the poorly provisioned Georgia army. During the hunt, Muscogeese and scouts surprised Ward's company, shooting and killing him. His comrades then retreated to safety and told of yet another ambush at the hands of Indians. In just a short matter of time, the Loyalist scouts in conjunction with brutally effective Indian warriors derailed the Georgia expedition, leading them to withdraw from Florida.²⁵

What these stories reveal more than any military achievement on the part of the British or the lack of preparation by the Georgians is the power of the presence of Native Americans. As the expedition dissolved into a retreat back to Georgia, two significant thoughts went back with these soldiers, who eagerly returned to their homes. They carried the memory of officers and brothers-in-arms being shot down by Indians hiding in the bushes. This struck fear into the hearts of the already wavering soldiers, and this fear traveled to their homes and communities, providing further proof in the minds of settlers of the "dastardly" Indians killing Georgians. The fact that the Indians acted in military service did not matter to the Georgians. They also took with them the notion of a totally hostile Muscogean Confederacy waiting across the Altamaha River, possibly on its way to destroy the frontier. This enemy, which they believed truly existed, posed a larger threat to the backcountry settlers and isolated farmers than did British soldiers and taxes, and

²⁵ Samuel Elbert to Parole-McIntosh, 20 April 1777, in Samuel Elbert, "Order Book of Samuel Elbert, Colonel and Brigadier General in the Continental Army." *Collections of the Georgia Historical Society* 5, no. 2 (Savannah, GA: The Morning News Print, 1902), 18.
<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.31175034879505&view=1up&seq=3>; Elbert, *Order Book*, 26-8.

now the British joined the Indians, pushing the backcountry solidly into the arms of the Whigs.

Moreover, the fact that someone had the forethought to tell the lie that the entire Muscogee Confederacy had organized to kill the Georgians only further shows the known fear that Native Americans instilled in colonists. These Georgians bore a growing and contagious fear of Muscogees that had been reinforced by the effective military coalition of Loyalist scouts and Indian warriors. This alliance of enemies only made them more intimidating and further solidified the propaganda spread by the Georgia Whigs to term the Indians as an enemy “other” in league with the British tyrants.

Despite the confusion that took place during the war as to how much Native Americans actually fought in support of the British, the effectiveness of inciting the backcountry against the Indians likely exceeded the expectations of Whig propagandists. Civilians quickly became hostile to any Indian that entered their sight. Joshua S. Haynes, contends that “Creek neutrality was impossible because rebel Georgians consistently viewed Creeks as enemies.” When George Galphin attempted to sway Lower Muscogees to the American cause in 1776 at the Augusta congress, backcountry settlers took it upon themselves to teach the Indians a lesson. Thomas Fee led a band of Georgians in a plot to murder the Muscogee delegates on their way to Augusta. While they ultimately failed to kill the headmen, the brigands managed to murder a warrior that accompanied the party. Regardless of the attack, the Muscogees continued to Augusta and presented the new offense to Galphin and the Whigs among their other complaints. This was also not Fee’s first Indian slaying. In 1774, he murdered Muscogee headman, Mad Turkey, in a tavern

in Augusta. After which, Governor Wright issued a proclamation “offer[ing] reward for capture of and information leading to the conviction of Thomas Fee, who murdered the Creek Indian Mad Turkey.” South Carolinians captured and arrested Fee, but a mob of backcountry men freed him, and he fled to the Georgia frontier where no one pursued him. Now he led a band of other backcountry men intent on killing numerous Muscogee headmen rather than acting alone in an isolated incident of murder. Clearly, the settlers became emboldened and felt the situation dire enough to risk a war by assassinating Native American leaders who claimed to be neutrals and had been invited to peace talks.²⁶

Upon arrival at Augusta, Nilgee, the representative for the delegation demanded justice for the murdered Coweta warrior. Astonishingly, George Galphin attempted to justify the murder as recompense for a previous horse theft that he claimed Muscogees committed. Haynes simply states, “rather than offering satisfaction, Galphin justified Fee’s ambush as retaliation for a horse theft.” He then mentions Galphin demanded that if caught, Fee should face trial in Savannah according to their laws. Haynes then moves on to address more issues that the White settlers held with their Indian neighbors, but he glances over the significance of Galphin’s actions. First, Galphin covered over an offense that he knew to be unjustifiably heinous. Galphin likely understood that Fee’s actions stemmed from his open hatred of Indians and not the alleged horse theft. The conspiracy

²⁶ Haynes, *Patrolling the Border*, 69-70; Sir James Wright, “Proclamation issued by Sir James Wright. Savannah, 28 March 1774, “James Wright Papers,” *Georgia Historical Society*. <http://georgiahistory.pastperfectonline.com/archive/A50EC6F2-294F-46FF-8E9A-103562209832>; Griffin, “Murder and Mayhem,” 6.

represented a show of force by Georgians in an attempt to assert their dominance over Muscogees in Georgia territory. Fee wanted Muscogees to know who controlled the region. Secondly, Galphin's actions betrayed the duplicitous nature of the Whigs' game in these peace talks. While reaching out the olive branch with one hand, they continued to fan the flames of hate with the other. Covering this murder up allowed Thomas Fee and his party to feel justified. Even though the state sent a light cavalry to capture him, he easily escaped, and even if he had been found, Galphin already explained that he would be tried by the Georgia court system. This marked the second time Fee murdered an Indian in Georgia territory and the government failed to follow through with its promise to bring him to justice.²⁷

For the backcountry settlers, the Fee incident allowed them to see Georgia on their side in the struggle against Native Americans. Galphin preserved face with the farmers who doubted his allegiance to their cause. Covering the offense also served the other goal of the Whigs to maintain neutrality with Muscogees. The conservative Whigs and the state still believed that a general Indian war with Muscogees exceeded their capabilities. They could not afford war on another front in more open terms, nor did they have the manpower to fight it. So, Galphin temporarily preserved peace by giving an excuse that the headmen initially accepted as justifiable for the life of one warrior, but the issue did not die there and later created more issues for the Whigs. Overall, it proved a significant victory in the short-term for the Whigs. Not only had the murderers gotten

²⁷ Haynes, *Patrolling the Border*, 70.

their desired blood, the neutrality with the Lower Muscogee remained intact for now, giving the Indian-haters and the conservative Whigs what they both desired.

This subterfuge by the Georgia Whigs persisted throughout the war and met with relative success prior to the fall of Savannah in December 1778. The evidence of their ability to play both parties against one another for the benefit of the state comes from the very writings of the real threat, Georgia Loyalists. One such Loyalist, Dr. Thomas Taylor, experienced the travails of remaining true to his king in tumultuous Georgia. Writing in January 1776 from the frontier town of Wrightsborough, founded by Quakers, Taylor expressed that the Indians remained remarkably quiet, noting that “only a few stragglers of them are frequently pilfering horses; but their nation does not approve of such practices.” These comments reveal that the Muscogee Confederacy presented only a minor military threat to the state of Georgia at this time even in a small frontier town. While raids did persist, no united Muscogee effort against Georgia existed. Moreover, the Indians did not raid Whig homes and leave Tories alone. They had no system of differentiating who they raided. These comments are not only representative of the Loyalist perspective. They characterize the general situation at the start of 1776, a time when John Stuart warned the British against using indiscriminate Indian raids and when Muscogees remained largely neutral; however, the Whigs had already begun their propaganda campaign, coaxing the flames of Indian hating.²⁸

Native Americans even occasionally played into the hands of the Whig lies. While the settlers believed that John Stuart actively sought to send Indians on raids

²⁸ Thomas Taylor to J. Morrison, 3 January 1776, “GLPAR,” 127.

against the frontier, Muscogees refused to be puppets of the English. Instead, they sought their own goals in the midst of the chaos that war created. Muscogee ethnohistorian Kevin Kokomoor argues that Muscogees and Seminoles often infuriated the British agents by choosing to only fight on their own terms rather than at the command of the British officers. In turn, this policy of Muscogee warriors only worked to the advantage of Georgia propaganda. Through 1777 young Muscogee warriors led an inconsistent raiding war on the Georgia frontier, pushing many of the settlers off the land and into South Carolina. Because the Indians busied themselves with their own matters of land disputes, the British in East Florida turned to other forms of assistance, namely the King's Rangers that Governor Tonyn used as his right arm in skirmishes with the Georgians. While this changed little in the way of military strategy outside of employing fewer warriors than expected, it still allowed the backcountry to believe the Whig argument that the British sent the Indians against the backcountry. Even though the warriors fought for local issues unrelated to the British, the Georgians being displaced cared little for the semantics, believing they suffered at the hands of British treachery. 1777 marked the worst of the raids as Muscogee warriors pushed farther into the backcountry, displacing settlers in their path. Retaliations by the Georgians only made matters worse as Muscogees increased their attacks as reprisals for their lost kin. As the conflict escalated, the desire of Georgians to defeat the British and the Indians only increased. After John Stuart's death in 1779, Muscogee raids against Georgia persisted.

The Whigs successfully created a uniting “other” that drew the backcountry into the rebellious wing of the Whigs.²⁹

Throughout the early years of the American Revolution, the Georgia Whigs implemented a campaign to disseminate rumors of British treachery, claiming the English planned to send Native Americans against the Georgia backcountry. The Whigs began this campaign in an attempt to unite a fractured Georgia around a common enemy. Because many of the frontier settlers initially remained loyal to Britain, the Whigs knew they must call upon something other than British political tyranny to bring the backcountry into the Patriot fold. Using the fears of these settlers, the Whigs invoked Native Americans in propaganda while simultaneously attempting to maintain a strenuous peace with several of Muscogee towns. The Georgia Whigs feared a united Muscogee enemy, so they continued to employ Indian traders, such as George Galphin, to keep the Muscogee Confederacy divided in its allegiance to Britain. This campaign walked a thin and dangerous line as they told lies mixed with strained truths to both the backcountry and Native Americans, calling the Indians both murderer and brother to achieve their goals.

²⁹ Kokomoor, “Burning & Destroying,” 302, 311-13, 317-18, and 329.

Chapter 3

Overcorrection and Overreaction: How Whig Propaganda Split the State Over the Indian Issue

The success of Whig propaganda in uniting the state ultimately came at a cost. Their propaganda worked too well, creating a radical anti-Indian sect of the Whig movement in the backcountry. While this helped in unifying the state against the British, it hindered the plans of the government and army to create an alliance of neutrality among the Muscogee. Backcountry leaders joined the Whig movement, forming local militias and fighting both British regulars and Indian raiders. These units proved necessary throughout the war, but they also created diplomatic issues between the Whig leadership and Indian headmen as the backcountry often initiated violence with neutral Muscogees that the conservative Whigs hoped to prevent from joining the British cause. Despite these negative consequences, the state continued to escalate the propaganda beyond unification, invoking the Indians in letters to the Continental Congress and Army to solicit soldiers, ammunition, and money. Despite the façade of Whig propaganda against the Indians, a clear shift in policy toward satisfying Muscogees created a split between the backcountry and lowcountry Whigs over what the Revolutionary War meant for the state.

The Whig propaganda scheme worked quickly and exceeded the expectations of the Whigs. Part of this success owed to the recent disagreement between the radical backcountry and the royal Georgia government. In 1774, after Muscogees approached Governor James Wright about a peace agreement regarding recent altercations stemming

from Thomas Fee's murder of Mad Turkey, the backcountry balked over Governor Wright's willingness to settle for less land than initially demanded of the Indians. One frontier leader, George Wells, attempted to rally the frontier settlers against peace with Muscogees. While Wright jumped at the prospect of a peace agreement, the backcountry held higher aspirations than the land known as the Oconee Strip. They desired further land acquisitions as part of the peace. Wright's willingness to settle angered George Wells, but it failed to initially impact his loyalty to the crown as he later signed a petition denouncing the Tondee's Tavern Whig resolutions. While little came of Wells' attempt to pressure Wright into demanding more land, he did succeed in securing significant clout among the frontier, and the desire for more land never died.¹

Wells continued his career of stirring up the frontiersmen when he led another petition in 1776. This one denounced the Indian trade taking place in Georgia, citing the 'barbarous attacks' the settlers endured because of the vile institution, claiming that inviting Indians to trade in Georgia created more problems for those on the outskirts of the state. He contended that when the Indians came to the interior, they rarely left without murdering or thieving, leaving frontier settlers to bear the brunt of the consequences while the wealthy merchants reaped the harvest of the fur trade. He painted this picture in the light of poor settlers being oppressed by a combination of the Indian traders and their Native clients. Wells even made the argument that Governor Wright's inability to acquire more land in the peace agreement with the Muscogees resulted from the selfish motivations of the Indian traders. As a result, the traders became the direct enemies of the

¹ Cashin, *William Bartram*, 114-15.

backcountry and were blamed for limiting the aspirations of land gathering, and Wells urged Georgians ‘to exterminate and rout those savages of their nation.’ Even though Wells eventually turned on Britain, believing that the Continental Congress offered a better solution to the Indian problem than the Royal Government, he never adopted the belief that peace with Native Americans should be Georgia’s goal. This proved a problem when the military commanders of Georgia’s Continental forces argued for a purely defensive strategy that included appealing to the Indians for friendship. The engine of this discussion further angered the backcountry because it moved through the famed Indian trader, George Galphin.²

Despite the somewhat embellished reasoning of men like Wells against the Indian traders, and the headaches they created for General Lachlan McIntosh and the Georgia government, the backcountry believed that they did have valid arguments that the Indian traders made life harder for the frontier and that these traders served themselves more than the good of the people. Trading with Native Americans served multiple purposes and benefitted various people knowingly and unknowingly. While many traders certainly ignored the Continental Association by continuing trade with Britain for their own monetary gain, they also understood that ceasing trade immediately after James Wright ended the embargo would create greater harm with the Muscogee Confederacy. If they refused to trade with Muscogees, the headmen would take offense and would lead renewed Indian raids on the frontier to restore the trade. This reasoning did not satisfy the backcountry because by continuing the trade, the Indians continued coming to the

² Cashin, *William Bartram*, 115.

interior, which caused disputes. Thus, Wells and the backcountry relied on one solution, unrestricted warfare on all Indians in the name of Georgia expansion. This became a divisor of Georgia within the Whig camp.³

The issue of Native American neutrality in Georgia ultimately split the Whigs into two camps: those in favor of Indian neutrality and those who desired a general Indian war. Historiography largely ignores this division because it conveniently rests along the same lines as the radical and conservative Whig camps. Historians generally focus on the dispute between Lachlan McIntosh and Button Gwinnett and the argument over what political landscape Georgia should pursue in their newfound independence, causing historians to skim over the fact that the Whigs also disagreed on the ever-important Indian problem. Georgia faced what seemed like insurmountable odds. They boasted few military resources, almost no money, and fewer volunteers to protect their borders. On top of this, the British employed several of Muscogee headmen and Seminoles to join the Loyalist band known as the King's Rangers in raiding the southern frontier and defending East Florida. The Whigs saw only two realistic possibilities of how to proceed: negotiate a peace through neutrality while continuing their propaganda or start an outright Indian war and hope to conquer as much Muscogee territory as possible in the process. Despite all the issues Georgia faced in the war, many backcountry Georgians believed that fighting the Indians represented Georgia's first priority. Either drunk on the desire for land or scared to the point of aggression, the settlers wanted a quarrel that most of the conservative Whigs believed impossible to win.

³ Cashin, *William Bartram*, 123.

Now the conservative Whigs had a predicament on their hands. The backcountry settlers allied themselves with the radical Whigs, who wanted to tear down the hold of the conservative coastal elites. This ultimately hitched the political fight within the Whigs to the decision of war with Muscogees. This issue drove a wedge between the already unstable factions. Historians typically highlight this fragmentation along political differences, such as democratic versus aristocratic government or protecting the wealth of the planter elite, ignoring the fact that the division went much deeper, including the idea of Indian conquest. The very notion of starting an Indian war drove some military leaders to believe the radical Whigs had abandoned all reason. Lachlan McIntosh, the commander of the Georgia Continental forces, penned a letter referring to those in favor of conquering the Indians as “people of wild extravagant imaginations.” McIntosh and other military officers in the Continental Army cited very strong reasons for not wanting to add Muscogees to their list of enemies. While McIntosh willingly participated in exploiting the Indians to gain military aid from General Charles Lee and the Continental Congress, he balked at the idea of actually fighting the Muscogee warriors.⁴

In fact, the fear of an Indian war commanded a general sense of distress mounting among Georgia Whigs. If Georgia landed themselves in a war with Muscogees, the conservative Whigs understood it would exacerbate their other problems and likely spell their doom. On July 5, 1776, a Council of Safety committee composed of conservative

⁴ Lachlan McIntosh to Lieutenant Colonel William McIntosh, 22 October 1776, in Lilla M. Hawes, ed., “The Letter Book of Lachlan McIntosh, 1776-1777, Part I: Letter Book of Lachlan McIntosh, 1776-1777” (hereafter cited as “LBLM I”), *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 38, no. 2 (1954): 164. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40577509>.

Whigs, including Lachlan McIntosh and Jonathan Bryan, submitted a report on the condition of the state to the council and General Lee. The statement argued that Georgia not only faced the common threat of British invasion from the sea, but that their frontier opened them to attack by “the most numerous tribes of savages in North America, and far less able than any of them [colonies] to bear it.” The report went on to claim that while Georgia faced nearly one thousand British in East Florida, they also confronted a staggering fifteen thousand Indian gunmen to their west. Clearly, the report, which later requested General Charles Lee, the commander of the southern Continental forces, relay the message to the General Congress, intended to use the insurmountable number of Indian warriors bordering Georgia to convince Congress to fund and man Georgia’s army. Conservative Whig John Wereat confirmed this idea again in 1777, when he argued that “Georgia cannot exist as a seperate [sic] state twelve months longer, without the immediate interposition of Congress.” The conservatives earnestly believed Georgia could not face an Indian war and survive.⁵

Lachlan McIntosh and many of his allies recognized Georgia’s precarious position and felt that fighting Native Americans presented an even more dire situation to an already bleak outlook for Georgia. When war broke out in Georgia, the Whigs secured

⁵ Jonathan Bryan, John Houstoun, and Colonel McIntosh to Archibald Bulloch and the Council of Safety, 5 July 1776, in Allen D. Candler, ed., *Revolutionary Records of the State of Georgia* vol. 1 (Atlanta: The Franklin-Turner Company, 1908), 300-1. [https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.\\$b324304&view=1up&seq=9](https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.$b324304&view=1up&seq=9), 300-301; John Wereat to George Walton, 30 August 1777, in Lilla M. Hawes, ed., “The Papers of Lachlan McIntosh, 1774-1799, Part V: Letter Book of Lachlan McIntosh, 1776-1777” (hereafter cited as “PLM V”), *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 39, no. 2 (1955): 172. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40577564>.

their hold on Savannah and Augusta, which wrenched the state nearly completely free of royal control, a rare luxury that many northern states only dreamed of obtaining. Still, the situation proved more vulnerable than they hoped. McIntosh successfully fended off an early invasion of Savannah in which British forces came to steal rice and supplies for their soldiers. Despite this early victory, McIntosh and the other military leaders sensed their ever-present danger to the south. East Florida's capital, St. Augustine, represented a standing force of British regulars under the direction of Governor Tonyn, a band of Loyalist rangers under Georgia escapee Thomas Brown, and an Indian coalition loyal to John Stuart, who had narrowly escaped capture in Savannah. This unholy trinity posed a glaring threat to the Whigs perched in Savannah.

McIntosh respected Georgia's situation, and only months after his Council of Safety committee told General Lee that Native Americans presented a dire need for Congressional aid, he wrote peace talks to Muscogeese. He addressed the headmen as "brothers" and went on to say they were all "Children of the same Mother," likely referring to North America itself because he later contended that they should work together to defend their homeland from the British, who desire to enslave both the Americans and Indians. Ironically, the exact same month that he sent this letter to Muscogeese, McIntosh also sent a dispatch to General Robert Howe requesting ammunition, cloth, and gunpowder because the Indians had begun "plundering and now murdering." He complained that, "I see no Cause of Sparing them any Longer where ever [sic] they are found." Even though McIntosh understood that the British in East Florida would prove difficult enough without adding an Indian war to their troubles, he continued

to implement propaganda to gain more aid from other generals, believing this to be the best method of gaining the necessary support to simply contend with the British. This reveals the harrowing situation McIntosh assumed they faced since he continued to play the dangerous game of citing the Indians as Georgia's primary concern while also seeking neutrality with Muscogees.⁶

The Georgia Whigs acted quickly to stamp out their real enemy, the British and Loyalists in East Florida. They believed they must first eliminate St. Augustine and therefore eradicate their only conceivable British impediment to true independence, but to do this they needed military forces, a major deficiency in the state. Unlike much of New England, Georgia failed to rally behind the "Spirit of 1776" that enraptured colonists early in the war. While Minutemen and farmers seemed to lead the way early in the war in the north, Georgia struggled to arouse any form of patriotic fervor for military service. As a result, the Georgia Council of Safety made three bold requests of the Continental Congress. First, they bluntly asked General Charles Lee to tell Congress to send Georgia at least six battalions of soldiers to defend the state. They argued that any less would be too few, and none of these men could be recruited from within Georgia. As a justification for such a demand, they attempted to convince Lee that large numbers of Indian gunmen

⁶ Lachlan McIntosh to Creek Indians, 23 December 1776, in Lilla M. Hawes, ed., "The Papers of Lachlan McIntosh, 1774-1799, Part IV: Letter Book of Lachlan McIntosh, 1776-1777" (hereafter cited as "PLM IV"), *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 39, no. 1 (1955): 61. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40577581>; Lachlan McIntosh to General Robert Howe, 13 December 1776, in Lilla M. Hawes, ed., "The Papers of Lachlan McIntosh, 1774-1799, Part II: Letter Book of Lachlan McIntosh, 1776-1777" (hereafter cited as "PLM II"), *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 38, no. 3 (1954): 255. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40577710>.

and British encircled the state. Second, they petitioned for sums of sterling silver to build forts and boats to better interrupt British communications with Muscogeans, which they deemed necessary for preventing a general Indian war. Third, Georgia solicited Congress for reimbursement for cattle gifts to Native Americans. Georgia contended that these gifts would not only pacify them, but that it might be able to teach the Natives the value of property and “be a means of civilizing them.” General Lee found Georgia so incompetent of producing its own defenses, he claimed ‘I shou’d not be surprised if they were to propose mounting a body of Mermaids on Alligators...’ Georgia made it clear they would make any argument to get aid from Congress, but it also showed that Georgia believed in the power of invoking Native Americans in their correspondence.⁷

When it came time to recruiting militia for the purpose of invading East Florida in 1777, Georgia struggled to even raise roughly two hundred militiamen for the excursion. Simply put, fighting the British all the way in East Florida did not concern the backcountry settlers, whose biggest fear continued to be Indian raids or losing fathers and sons to the war when they needed to be planting crops. This left the military leadership with very limited options outside of continued anti-Indian propaganda. In two May 1776 letters from McIntosh’s second in command, Colonel Samuel Elbert, wrote to General Charles Lee once again requesting aid on account of Indians. Elbert explained that McIntosh left Savannah on urgent business to the southern frontier. He went on to lay out an appeal for northern aid due to a fear of a plot by the British to unite with Native

⁷ Georgia Council of Safety, *Proceedings of the Georgia Council of Safety* (hereafter cited as *PCGCS*) (Savannah, 1901), 73-4.
<https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.31175034879562>; Coleman, *American Revolution*, 96-7.

Americans and attack Georgia. He rationalized that Georgia required Continental aid because South Carolina outmatched Georgia recruiters by offering better bounties, and he did not expect the Georgia recruiters to bring in soldiers for the impending invasion. Elbert named the Natives in his writings, saying, “the Savages are too much inclin’d [to use] the Hatchet against us.” He concluded that “the Province without Immediate assistance [from the] Northward would be reduced.” Elbert performed his duty admirably, making it clear to Lee that Georgia struggled to recruit its own soldiers and faced warriors alongside the British in Florida, further enforcing that Georgia would soon fall without the aid of the other states’ men. Whether Lee believed the necessity of protecting Georgia from Indian warriors and British regulars, or if he simply hoped to keep a barrier between South Carolina and the British, Lee chose to listen to the Council’s and Elbert’s appeals and prepared to invade East Florida.⁸

As the preparations began, the Georgia Whigs’ dream of their propaganda victory to persuade the Continental Army to do their fighting quickly evaporated. General Lee still required Georgia to raise a contingent force to aid in the invasion. Unfortunately, Georgia’s government remained too fractured and incompetent to raise the needed soldiers and supplies, and Lee postponed the incursion until further notice, something that never came to fruition. The first of three East Florida invasion attempts crumbled despite successfully convincing Lee that they needed Continental aid as a result of the purported fifteen thousand warriors on their borders. It proved that claiming the Indians represented

⁸ Coleman, *American Revolution*, 104; Samuel Elbert to General Lee, 14 May 1776, “LBLM I,” 155; Gally, *The Formation of a Planter Elite*, 153.

a menace to the safety and the liberty of other states besides Georgia worked in acquiring Congress' assistance, but it also demonstrated to McIntosh and the conservative Whig military officers that Georgia lacked the ability to go on the offensive. Even with the promised aid of General Lee and soldiers from other states, Georgia failed to raise a meager military force. This confirmed the opinions of McIntosh and others that Georgia must fight a defensive war.⁹

By late 1776, the Continental leaders in Georgia developed a defensive approach to the war which the radical Whigs countered with continued demands to invade East Florida. McIntosh outlined the plan in October 1776, arguing several points of defensive measures that needed to be taken. First, he said Georgia should remove from the barrier islands for fear of the British Navy. He also encouraged the light horse, the military branch created to protect the border from Indians, to establish headquarters along the Altamaha River, their "natural frontier." This, in his opinion, enabled Georgia to properly defend from both British and Native American plunderers while also allowing them to be "ready at all times to annoy the Enemy." McIntosh believed that the defensive strategy permitted the feeble military enough communication and planning to properly defend their cities and frontier settlements. In turn, he hoped to drain the treasury and desire of Britain to continue to fight, leaving the Americans "the whole [c]ontinent to Settle and Improve at our Leizure [sic]." For McIntosh, defense did not mean succumbing to the

⁹ Gallay, *The Formation of a Planter Elite*, 155.

British or the Indians. It meant living to conquer another day, but the radical Whigs and backcountry refused to see the long-term implications of this plan.¹⁰

In spite of the arguments for a defensive scheme, the Indian issue encouraged radicals to seek a general Indian war. Muscogee raids heightened in 1777 after Georgia frontiersmen began killing Native American hunters in the Ceded Lands. The settlers then demanded more military support from the state, but Governor Treutlen blamed the “poisoning” of the Indians’ minds on the British in St. Augustine, claiming that Georgia must first destroy the British presence to pacify the Indians. Here Treutlen attempted to sway the Indian-hating backcountry to help achieve a radical Whig aim of invading East Florida by redirecting the blame of the Indian problem toward St. Augustine. Still, both Lachlan McIntosh and Joseph Clay, the Deputy Paymaster-General of Georgia, pushed for a defensive strategy as a result of their perilous position. Unfortunately for the Continental officers, most of Georgia did not appreciate the weakness of their situation, which Clay quickly pointed out in his correspondence, noting that Georgia lacked natural allies on her borders and bountiful natural resources in the interior. Instead, most of their resources rested on the coast close enough for the British and Loyalists to easily raid. In Clay’s opinion, Britain could easily take Georgia if they desired. Little did he know how true his words would ring when Lieutenant Colonel Archibald Campbell besieged Savannah, Georgia in late December 1778.¹¹

¹⁰ Lachlan McIntosh to Lieutenant Colonel William McIntosh, 22 October 1776, “LBLM I,” 164-65.

¹¹ Kokomoor, “Burning & Destroying,” 320-21; Joseph Clay to Henry Laurens, 21 October 1777, in *Letters of Joseph Clay, Merchant of Savannah, 1776-1793* (hereafter

Clay recognized that as long as East Florida stood firm, Georgia remained in danger. He cited the same triumvirate, Governor Tonyn, the raiding “Banditti,” and Stuart and his Indian allies, believing such a force proved an indomitable foe for Georgia. Clay went on to say that,

We can expect no Security or Safety, for our Inhabitants till the Florida’s are reduced or a Peace takes place; the Murders being so generally committed on the Ceded Land induces me to believe that the Treaty relative to the Indian Debts not being comply’d with has been in a great measure the occasion of them.

In spite of the conservative Whigs’ appeals for reason, the backcountry and radical Whigs clamored for war with the Muscogee Confederacy. In Clay’s estimation, the state government currently run by radical Whigs acted as if they maintained a large army at their disposal capable of fighting the British and the Indians. In reality, they fielded a weak and poorly-run militia. Clay argued they only narrowly escaped a war with the Muscogee Confederacy in 1777 despite Muscogees not acting as aggressors. Throughout this time, Georgia continued peace talks with Muscogees, even operating propaganda schemes to turn Muscogees against the British, which met limited success. Clay noted that some Muscogee drove John Stuart’s Indian agents out of their land as an act of good faith toward Georgia, and yet the settlers demanded war. This completely contradicted the defensive strategy and led conservative Whigs and Continental officers to question the rationality of their political rivals. Joseph Clay penned two letters to Henry Laurens in October 1777 stating that he believed if Georgia broke with the Muscogee Confederacy as some wanted, that the state would split. He further accused the radical Whigs, who

cited as *LJC*), W. J. DeRenne, et al, ed. (Savannah, GA: The Morning News, Printers and Binders, 1913), 52-3.

encouraged war, of being “demagogues” bent on using the war to their own personal advantage. For him, such men represented more of a threat to liberty than the Tories as they attempted to subvert not only their political enemy Lachlan McIntosh, but also the entire military.¹²

Despite these well founded fears expressed by the military leadership of Georgia, the backcountry continued to clamor for a fight with Muscogees. Much of their confidence stemmed not from the belief in a large army as Clay suspected but came from the example provided by South Carolina’s early destruction of the Cherokees in 1776. While the Cherokee War, as it later became known, initially started as a successful raiding campaign by young Cherokee warriors, the tide quickly shifted against them. The combined forces of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and some Georgians overwhelmed the Cherokees and led to a ravaging of Cherokee villages. State militias burned homes, destroyed crops, and killed anyone in their path, leaving a swath of devastation throughout Cherokee territory, eliminating them as a threat for several years. It also represented a truly interstate effort as the various governors and militia commanders worked to almost completely eliminate the Cherokee military presence. Such a victory signaled that substantial Patriot forces had the capability of dealing harshly with belligerent Native Americans.¹³

¹² Joseph Clay to Henry Laurens, 9 September 1778, *LJC*, 106; Joseph Clay to unknown, 7 September 1778, *LJC*, 109; Joseph Clay to Henry Laurens, 16 October 1777, *LJC*, 51; Joseph Clay to Henry Laurens 21 October 1777, *LJC*, 52-6.

¹³ Calloway, *The American Revolution*, 198-201.

The Cherokee defeat sent a word of warning to the Muscogees, and it encouraged the Georgians already raving for an Indian war. Still, differences abounded between the situation of the Cherokees and Muscogees. Muscogees had British allies to the south in St. Augustine. If Muscogees fought Georgia, they knew they also had the support of British regulars and Loyalists of the King's Rangers since these forces actively sought the aid of Native American warriors. This differed from the Cherokee warriors, who fought without British support. In fact, the British strategy in East Florida largely hinged on the support of Indians, and this came from the grand plan that Thomas Brown and his King's Rangers implemented with varying degrees of success. Further, the Muscogee Confederacy stood alongside Native American allies. Muscogees represented three bodies of Indigenous people across the Georgia frontier: the Upper Muscogee, the Lower Muscogee, and the Seminoles. This string of allied Native American groups all belonging to a connected network of kinship groups and familial clans lacked a centralized government, but they worked together for self-preservation. This dramatically differed from the Cherokee situation as Muscogees sat out of the conflict, ignoring the encouragement of the Cherokees to join their war. Lastly, South Carolina's own ability to fight the Cherokees differed from Georgia's. South Carolina readily recruited sufficient military forces, and because the Cherokees bordered North Carolina, Virginia, and Georgia, they gained far greater support from the backcountry of these other states. Overall, Muscogees stood a much better chance against Georgia than the Cherokees did against South Carolina, but the backcountry Georgians decided to ignore these factors.¹⁴

¹⁴ Calloway, *The American Revolution*, 197

Not only did the example of the Cherokee War encourage the backcountry toward action with the Muscogeas, but the British themselves increased the frontier militancy by invoking the Indians in their own propaganda. Backcountry settlers envisaged Native Americans as wild and uncontrollable killers, and the British sought to use this to their advantage by using the Indians in threats to the backcountry Georgians. In 1778, a Georgian named J. White wrote a letter to British commander, Major General Augustine Prevost, complaining of the brutal treatment of the Americans at the hands of Loyalists. He specifically referenced the murder of General James Screven by Brown's Rangers. White appealed to Prevost's sense of strategy as well, arguing that such brutal tactics only made controlling the backcountry of Georgia more difficult. Prevost felt little sympathy and used this opportunity to encourage the fear of Native Americans upon his enemies. Prevost responded to White, noting that he regretted the actions taken against Screven, but that he could do nothing about it since the King's Rangers acted as irregulars outside his jurisdiction of control. Prevost continued his letter, likely deepening the dread of Mr. White, explaining that on account of past atrocities and the Whigs' behavior during their invasions of East Florida, the Georgians deserved much worse than what they had received.¹⁵

Prevost pressed his point, arguing that the Georgians earned the ferocity the Indians unleashed upon them, saying that he should let loose the Indians' leash to satisfy their desire to raid Georgia. He claimed that he had "a large number of Indians anxious to join" him, and that he hoped he did not have to use them against the Georgia settlements.

¹⁵ J. White to J. Prevost, 20 November 1778, *HCG*, 524.

Prevost also admitted to White that the Natives' "mode of carrying on war have always shocked me." Doubtless he intended to remind White and the Whigs that Native Americans fought differently than British regulars by portraying the warriors as worse than the King's Rangers, who already drew the ardor of the backcountry. In his conclusion, Prevost relented that only his humanity and desire to save Georgia restrained him from sending the Indians against the frontier. By the time White finished reading Prevost's letter, he likely regretted sending his initial correspondence and felt renewed terror rising at the thought of warriors coming down upon frontier settlers. Ironically, after the Native Americans' role in defending East Florida during the 1777-1778 invasions, General Prevost warned William Howe that he doubted Britain's ability to trust Native Americans. Still, this did nothing to discourage him from threatening the Georgians with the notion that he controlled them. Backsettlers feared Native Americans so much that facing British regulars and murderous irregulars seemed like the kinder fate.¹⁶

The intent behind invoking the Indians against the Georgians served another purpose besides simply striking dread into the hearts of the soldiers and settlers, a purpose that later held major consequences for the Muscogees and the conservative Whigs. The British understood that the Georgians played a double game with propaganda. The British saw through the attempts of the Georgia Whigs to create a uniting "other" because the British also understood that Georgia still wanted a state of

¹⁶ Cashin, *King's Ranger*, 65; J. Prevost to J. White, 22 November 1778, *HCG*, 525.

neutrality with the Muscogees. In 1775, John Moultrie, the lieutenant governor of East Florida wrote to General Grant acknowledging Grant's correct suspicion that the Georgians sought to gain an alliance with the Indians. For Moultrie, the development of competition for Indigenous friendship prompted increased attention and preparation. He requested that Grant take no more defenses or provisions from St. Augustine because it served as the "best and only immediate communication between *Great Britain* and our red brothers" since Augusta fell into Whig hands. While Moultrie regarded the Indians as valued assets, similar to Stuart, he warned against sending them upon the frontier for fear of changing the hearts of the Loyalist backcountry settlers. Also writing in 1775, Frederick Mulcaster explained to Grant that John Stuart acquired the assistance of forty to fifty Indian warriors to winter outside St. Augustine, which held a tenuous position in East Florida, and the British feared it might fall without Indian support. Thus, the notion that the Georgians might either take the city or woo Native Americans to their cause motivated the British to ensure neither could happen.¹⁷

As a result, when the Georgians turned the Indians into an enemy "other" and the backcountry broke the hearts of the British by turning out for the American cause, Britain's sense of protecting the backcountry's sentiments evaporated. Prevost's attempt to scare the backcountry settlers with his notions of Indian violence barely being restrained completely departed from the 1775 strategy of not letting the backcountry feel as though the British controlled the farm-raiding Indians. Instead, the British

¹⁷ John Moultrie to General Grant, 4 October 1775, AA, 336; Frederick George Mulcaster to General Grant, 3 October 1775, AA, 332.

wholeheartedly embraced the propaganda the Georgians created. This might seem odd, but it did enable the British to strike fear into the hearts of Georgians. On the other hand, it also served a greater strategy. The British fanned the flames of backcountry hatred of the Indians because they knew the settlers now served the Patriot cause, and the colony must be reconquered at all costs. By going all in on the notion that the British supported Native Americans, and that they controlled the Indians' actions, the intermittent Muscogee raids taking place throughout the early years of the war took on a new shine. These raids now confirmed the exact arguments Georgian propagandists had championed: that the British sent warriors to murder settlers. In actuality, these attacks occurred separately from the British war effort and served the motivations of individual Muscogee villages, but the idea still operated according to British plans. Now, if Georgia wanted liberty from the Indians they must fight Muscogees or submit to Great Britain. The idea of bloodthirsty Indians working for the tyrannical British no longer served a theoretical scheme harnessed by the Whigs. It represented a perceived reality as confirmed by General Prevost's pronouncement that he held the Indians in his grasp.

The nightmare became material in the minds of the backcountry settlers, and shifted the policy away from the one expressed in the 1775 letter by Moultrie warning against scaring the backcountry. If the settlers believed the propaganda, then they would cry for an Indian war. If they created a war with the Indians, then the Cherokees, Muscogee, and Seminoles became entrenched British allies. The Georgians had no more hope for Indian neutrality. The British now realized that their best hope for retaking their lost colony rested not with the long-perceived backcountry Loyalists but through military

domination alongside Native American warriors. In fact, this plan became the official strategy of the British during the second half of the war. After taking Savannah and Augusta back from the Whigs, the British tactics took on a new light under the direction of former backcountry farmer, Thomas Brown, leader of the King's Rangers, a man who worked closely with and respected the influence of Native Americans. Edward Cashin argues in his monograph, *The King's Ranger: Thomas Brown and the American Revolution on the Southern Frontier*, that Brown helped create the British backcountry tactic of using Indians with Loyalists and regulars. Cashin contends that this isolated the settlers, pushing them to rebellion because they desired the Indian's land. This marks a complete shift in British policy, which also impacted the approach of the Whigs.¹⁸

Brown witnessed firsthand the inability of the British to rally the backcountry to the king's cause as a result of Whig propaganda. After being brutally attacked and mangled by Whigs, Brown joined South Carolina Loyalist militia leader, James Grierson. He and Grierson set about the backcountry attempting to recruit militiamen to the Loyalist cause, but they continued to be confounded by American rumor mills. Hearsay spread that Brown was Lord North's bastard son and came to America to spy on the Whigs and enslave malcontents. The most damning rumors, however, came from Whig leaders William Henry Drayton and Reverend William Tennent. The two Williams and Brown often competed for the same recruits, and the apparent fear of Native Americans shone through in the success of the Whigs. When talk of noble bastards failed to rally the American spirit, Tennent always accused the Loyalists of trying to get the Indians to join

¹⁸ Cashin, *King's Ranger*, x.

them in a ‘hellish plot.’ After that, little more needed to be said, and such arguments certainly outweighed the appeal by Brown to remember their king. Ultimately, the backcountry feared Native Americans more than they feared any Redcoat and more than they felt the patriotic duty to obey their distant patriarch. This in itself shaped Brown’s strategy and that of the southern British forces when they hoped to secure the southernmost rebellious colony.¹⁹

The British plan to use the fear of a British-Indian alliance to sever Georgia’s neutral relationship with Muscogees built off conflict that began in 1777. The rise of the infamous George Wells increased the rancor of the backcountry and shattered the strategies of the conservative Whigs. By this point, the Whig propaganda had outdone itself. With the settlers now firmly on the side of the Whigs, they took it upon themselves to take care of the Indian issue in their own manner, an outright Indian war. Wells, now a colonel and state legislature used his influence to push for Georgia to strike first against the Lower Muscogee, who he argued planned to invade Georgia with Loyalists, but George Galphin held another conference in 1777 that fractured the Muscogees’ alliance with Britain and prevented either the backcountry or the Indians from attacking. Joseph Clay wrote to Henry Laurens of the events, saying it took great effort to prevent Georgia initiating a war on Muscogees, and that if it had occurred, “we must have been broke up as a State at once & yours [South Carolina] greatly Distressed.”²⁰

¹⁹ Cashin, *King’s Ranger*, 26 and 31.

²⁰ Cashin, *King’s Ranger*, 67; Joseph Clay to Henry Laurens, 16 October 1777, *LJC*, 51.

Despite the success in preventing a Muscogee war, the frontier cared little for George Galphin or other Indian traders, and they cared less for General McIntosh's defensive strategy coupled with Muscogee neutrality. The settlers desired to remove the Indian threat and in the process acquire more land. In fact, these settlers quickly began to undo all that Galphin and the Georgia government worked toward from 1775 to 1776. Galphin wrote to Henry Laurens, his close associate in South Carolina, telling him that he received threats from the settlers, demanding that he stop dealing with the Indians altogether, including his diplomatic actions on behalf of the Continental Congress for Georgia and South Carolina. Galphin then blamed these settlers for the increased raids by Muscogees, claiming their hostile actions against the Indians unraveled his talks and peace arrangements. Thus, in the view of conservative Whigs, the backcountry settlers carried the Whig propaganda too far, destabilizing the state's plans of tip-toeing between propaganda and actually confronting the Indians. Now the conservative Whigs feared that the backcountry's actions pushed Muscogees into the open arms of the British.²¹

The continual struggle by the Georgia government and Continental forces to prevent the backcountry from initiating an Indian war represented one of the greatest battles ever fought in Georgia during the Revolution. For instance, the state continually reimbursed various men for their contributions in inhibiting an all-out Indian war. In 1776, the state reimbursed William McIntosh for providing horses and supplies to Muscogees. McIntosh provided these supplies as recompense for robberies by White settlers in Georgia. In 1784, Colonel Daniel McMurphy submitted a request for cash

²¹ Cashin, *King's Ranger*, 88.

reimbursement to the state for supplying corn, potatoes, beef, and tools to various Muscogee villages from 1777 to 1784. Not only did the state fight to keep its soldiers supplied and paid, but they also diverted needed funds and resources to keep the Indians satisfied as a result of backcountry hostilities. This became a recurring theme throughout the war as George Galphin and the state officials sought to maintain Native American neutrality while inciting enough anti-Indian rhetoric to keep the settlers on their side.²²

Not only did conservative Whigs pay Native Americans extravagantly to prevent a war, but they also prioritized stopping their backcountry citizens from instigating bloodshed. In January 1776, the Georgia Council of Safety, the government entity tasked with handling military and intelligence operations for the defense of the state, emphasized preventing individual hostilities made by Georgians against Native Americans because neutrality served as a key component to early military success. The council resolved to arrest any White person attempting to “molest” the friendly Indians bordering Georgia. This sent a confusing message to the settlers that they must treat their Indigenous neighbors on a case-by-case basis according to their relationship with Georgia. This came after the warnings that Native Americans operated as puppets under British control. Unfortunately, the message failed its purpose, and by May 1776, a conflict erupted that required the special attention of the Council of Safety. The Council sent orders to William McIntosh to find and arrest Mr. Few and his men for the unlawful

²² “Account Between the State of Georgia and Lieutenant Colonel William McIntosh for Furnishing Some Creek Indians with 5 horses”, 30 April 1776, *SNAD*. https://dlg.usg.edu/record/dlg_zlna_tcc821#item; Daniel McMurphy, “Account of Colonel Daniel McMurphy Against the State of Georgia,” 1777, *SNAD*. https://dlg.usg.edu/record/dlg_zlna_tcc778#item.

murder of an Indian. The Council also instructed McIntosh to bring Few back to Savannah to face trial for the incident. Leonard Marbury also received the same orders to find and arrest Few. The Council explained to both light horse officers that they should continue to patrol the region to prevent further murders by White settlers against Indians traveling in the region. While neither officer successfully apprehended Few, it represented an example of the numerous cases in which the state sought to prevent unrest with their Native American friends after spreading anti-Indian propaganda.²³

The Few incident also served to provide several key insights about how the government viewed the backcountry's militaristic actions. First, the Council referred to the perpetrators as Mr. Few and his men. The lack of military indicator reveals that the murderers acted outside of military sanction. The Council's other letters referred to men by their rank, meaning Mr. Few's gang represented civilians. These men acted as backcountry vigilantes taking matters into their own hands and attacking Indians for their own motivations. Another significant development represented by this scenario stems from the Council of Safety, a government organization tasked with protecting the state and its citizens, sending the light horse to arrest Georgians for killing Native Americans. This likely shocked the backcountry since they viewed the Natives as uncivilized murderers, and they believed the state felt the same way after the propaganda issued throughout 1775 and 1776. This created a contradiction the settlers probably found disheartening, and it eventually led to further incidents as the backcountry lost faith in the Georgia government and the conservative Whigs. Lastly, these letters reveal that the state

²³ *PCGCS*, 29 and 54.

understood the frontier dynamic fairly well. The Council of Safety instructed the light horse officers to prevent future murders, meaning they knew the settlers would not stop fighting the Indians despite their January decree. It also shows they understood that not all Indians in the Ceded Lands represented threats. Many Native Americans hunted in the region and traveled on their way to trade with Indian traders. If the state enabled the constant murder of innocent Indians in the region, they knew the neutral Muscogee villages would quickly turn against the state, making Georgia's war effort that much harder to maintain.

As the war progressed, the Council of Safety's fears proved fruitful as the backcountry continued to fight and kill Muscogee in the Ceded Lands, leading Lachlan McIntosh to urge his officers to deal gently with the Indians. The light horse patrolled the borders of Georgia along the Altamaha River, but McIntosh hoped they could serve more as a peace-keeping force than Indian fighters. In October 1776, he instructed his brother and light cavalry officer, William McIntosh, to "give as little umbrage as possible to the Creek" unless they proved hostile. General McIntosh directed another officer to watch for Indians in order to warn the settlers when warriors approached and to prevent pillaging, but McIntosh also directed him not to allow his soldiers to "wantonly" kill Native Americans. These actions did little to endear the Continental general or his light cavalry with the backcountry. When radical Whigs began spreading rumors against Lachlan McIntosh and his family that they worked with both the Indians and the British, John Wreath, a conservative Whig and ally of McIntosh, argued that George Wells, the former Loyalist and now Colonel in the Georgia Militia, kept up the rumors against Lachlan in

the Ceded Lands. McIntosh's actions to protect Georgia from a general Indian war separated him from the frontier Whigs irreparably, but the irony remains that the radical Whigs used the same propaganda tactic to destroy McIntosh's reputation that he incorporated against the British.²⁴

Because the Continental Army and conservative Whigs gained notoriety for protecting the Indians instead of the settlers, frontier militiamen took matters upon themselves. John Dooly, who originally protested the drafting of the Whig resolutions at Tondee's Tavern became a backcountry Whig leader and militia commander. Dooly's brother, a militia captain, led frontier patrols in defense of settlements against raids by Indians and Loyalist banditti. In July 1777, Captain Thomas Dooly and his party fell into an ambush laid by Muscogee warriors on a horse raiding expedition. Thomas died in the fight, and John Dooly sped to the scene to exact revenge upon the invading Native Americans. When John arrived, he found a delegation of neutral Muscogee on their way to talks with George Galphin and captured several of them, holding them hostage for the killers of his brother. These actions perturbed the Georgia government because he directly endangered their plans of maintaining Muscogee neutrality with friendly villages. Georgia then sent Colonel Samuel Elbert and George Galphin to correct Dooly's blunder. After freeing the Muscogees, Galphin lied to the delegates, claiming that John Dooly captured them for their own safety because Georgia had uncovered a plot that warrior headman Emistisiguo planned to assassinate them for treating with the Georgians. This

²⁴ Lachlan McIntosh to William McIntosh, 24 October 1776, "LBLM I," 166; Lachlan McIntosh to Captain Walton, 21 December 1776, "PLM II," 258; John Wreath to George Walton, August 30, 1777, "PLM V," 174.

angered the delegates and played perfectly into the hands of Georgia's propaganda. Upon the Indians' return to Muscogee country, they led a war party against British agent David Taitt and Emistisguo, who Alexander McGillivray narrowly saved. Thus, Galphin once again salvaged disaster with lies to cover b wantonly attacking and murdering neutral Muscogee, but this did not mean the situation was firmly in hand. The entire ordeal could just as easily exploded into outright war with the Muscogees, which many settlers desired.²⁵

Still, there remained the matter of what to do with John Dooly, the errant militiaman who ignored the directives of the Council of Safety. While Galphin mended relations with the Muscogees delegates, Samuel Elbert dealt with Dooly. Elbert and his Continental soldiers arrested Dooly and several of his followers for handling Indian relations contrary to the orders of the state. Elbert remarked that the backcountry leaders learned they cannot simply do as they please with Native Americans. Elbert's actions on behalf of the state did little to endear their Indian policies with the frontier, nor did it instill confidence in the state's handling of Indian raiders. Elbert noted that when he arrived, he found all the settlers hidden in fortresses for fear of further raids. Elbert took Dooly to Savannah to face trial, and Dooly then resigned his commission, convinced the state government protected the Indians more than the settlers. In reality, the Georgia government worked diligently on the Indian issue to preserve Muscogee neutrality, but it

²⁵ Robert Scott Davis, "A Frontier for Pioneer Revolutionaries," 329.

did not meet the bloody aspirations of acquiring land and declaring war that men such as Dooly held.²⁶

As the war drew into its sixth year, relations between the backcountry Whigs and Muscogees fell apart completely. Savannah rested in the hands of the British, the conservative Whigs lost favor with the people, and the Indian-haters controlled Whig Georgia. General Lachlan McIntosh's expulsion from Georgia, following his killing radical Whig Button Gwinnett in a duel, marked the success of the radical Whigs in commandeering both political and military control of Georgia. George Galphin's death in December 1780 only punctuated the dire situation of those in favor of neutrality, coinciding with Elijah Clarke's rise to being one of the primary proponents of Georgia's expansionist goals. Becoming a prominent Whig militia commander, Clarke made it his purpose to not only retake the backcountry from the British but also to destroy Muscogees for working with the Loyalists. After suffering a humiliating defeat at the hand of the King's Rangers and Muscogee warriors in the first Battle of Augusta, Clarke accused Muscogees of committing atrocities such as scalping anyone, including women and children. Clarke used this hatred to fuel his expansionist aspirations which eclipsed the Patriot aim of defeating the British and securing Georgia's borders.²⁷

The extent to which Clarke and the backcountry cared about the prospect of taking Muscogee lands over the necessity of defeating the British became evident during

²⁶ Samuel Elbert to Captain Hatten Middleton, 9 September 1777, in Elbert, *Order Book of Samuel Elbert*, 54; Robert Scott Davis, "A Frontier for Pioneer Revolutionaries," 329.

²⁷ Haynes, *Patrolling the Border*, 78.

the siege of Savannah in which the Patriots finally reclaimed the crown jewel of Georgia. In the summer of 1781, General Anthony Wayne led his Continental forces from across the United States to Savannah to retake the city for the Georgia Whigs and to liberate the only state that returned to colonial status. The importance of such a task cannot be overstated. The British believed that the south represented their best opportunity at reconquering the lost colonies. They maintained a strong presence in East Florida despite the increased annoyance of the Spanish, and they continued to hold out hope for a Loyalist resurgence in Georgia. Georgia held reason to fear a prolonged siege as Britain initially dug in to fight for their hold in the American South. Moreover, Georgia leaders feared that if the war ended as it stood, Britain would keep Savannah as part of its spoils. Following Lord Cornwallis' surrender at Yorktown, British soldiers moved to Savannah to make a stand, and General Wayne requested aid from Governor John Martin to send Georgia militiamen because the British forces in Savannah more than doubled his army. Martin promised the Georgia militia, but he failed to enforce his words as the call of Indian land once more distracted the backcountry militiamen.²⁸

During this paramount moment Clarke cemented the true meaning of the Revolution for the backcountry. While General Wayne struggled to obtain soldiers to join his siege of Savannah against the entrenched British regulars, Elijah Clarke led an expedition of Georgia militiamen against the Cherokees. Of all the audacious moves, this marked the height of the settlers' devotion to see the Ceded Lands secured and any

²⁸ Coleman, *American Revolution in Georgia*, 141-42; Leslie Hall, *Land and Allegiance in Revolutionary Georgia* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1979), 120.

potential Indian conquests accomplished. If the war ended before they took more land and if negotiations continued favorably with the Indian headmen, then the backcountry Whigs would lose their justification in raiding Native American territory. In fact, parleys had renewed between the government and Muscogee headmen, and many of these talks headed toward peace as Muscogees professed their desire to end conflict and resume trade. At this key instant of the war in Georgia, Clarke showed the true colors of the backcountry leaders as he wrote of his successful raids in November 1781.

I can with pleasure inform you of our Success -- on the 6th. Inst. [Instant] we entered the towns undiscovered, killed about forty Indian fellows & two white men, took upwards of forty prisoners. two of which were whites burnt Seven towns four of which were principal, beside a number of out Villages and plantations, Some thousand Bushels of Corn and a large quantity of other provisions were destroyed [sic] - Some few made their escape & flew to the mountains for refuge whome [sic] we pursued, Killed Some & found Some Hundred bushells [sic] of Corn, which they had hid.²⁹

This no longer represented a defensive attack by the backcountry for fear of Indian raids. This represented the actions of a man on conquest against an arch nemesis, destroying homes, food supplies, and killing those who fled for their lives. Nor did it constitute an isolated event. Micajah Williamson also used his militia on the frontier against Native Americans rather than support the siege of Savannah. Without a doubt, the Georgia propaganda machine not only achieved its desired goal, but it went far beyond. The “other” had been created and became the enabler of the radical backcountry goal of fighting the Indians for their land. Men such as Clarke and Williamson became military leaders with an army that could fight for the backcountry’s vision of revolution. What

²⁹ Clarke to unknown, 15 November 1781, *SNAD*.
https://dlg.usg.edu/record/dlg_zlna_krc067#item.

Governor Wright restricted them from doing before the war, the Continental Congress now funded and celebrated.³⁰

Furthermore, Clarke's letter makes clear the goal of his expedition. He intended to push back Native Americans living near the backcountry and to enact more aggressive expansion for White settlers. His actions could not be construed as an isolated incident by a backcountry murderer. It made it clear that backcountry Georgians wanted to fight the Indians for their land. The success of this invasion by Clarke became evident throughout the waning years of the Revolutionary War and the resulting treaties. Only two years later, Georgia sent the conquering hero to the Muscogees, but this time he went under the guise as a delegate of peace. His mission remained the same as before. Clarke met with the headmen to secure a treaty ending all hostilities between Muscogees and Georgians and to swindle more land from the Indians. He wrote Governor Lyman Hall of his great success on his diplomatic mission in securing a land cession. Muscogees granted Georgia lands all the way to the Oconee River. Clarke went on to remind Governor Hall that he sacrificed at a great personal expense for Georgia to acquire this land and to appease the Muscogees. He further noted that he understood cash issues, and asked if he could instead be reimbursed with a plantation in Richmond County.³¹

Thus, the backcountry Indian fighter leveraged his heroics to become the very thing the settlers initially fought to overthrow, an elite planter. Such a move reveals not only the cunning of the man but also begs the question, was the fight with Muscogees

³⁰ Haynes, *Patrolling the Border*, 82.

³¹ Elijah Clarke to Lyman Hall, 6 November 1783, *SNAD*.
https://dlg.usg.edu/record/dlg_zlna_tcc273#item.

ever actually about the safety of the state, or was it as Lachlan McIntosh predicted, an effort by scurrilous men to achieve personal glory and riches? One cannot but suspect that the leadership of the backcountry radicals that demanded war with the Indians fully understood what they accomplished and never truly believed Indians represented a mortal threat to the state except as a barrier against its expansion and the aspirations of lesser landowners to join the plantation economy. The idea of using the American Revolution to expand the backcountry existed across the American states. The settlers who illegally rushed into Kentucky before the war also used rebellion to justify their Indian land grab. In these regions too, Indians became the primary enemy of their revolution as they faced Indian attackers who sought to reclaim their homelands. In this way, the Georgia settlers followed a revolutionary trend across the American frontier. Just as the Georgia government used Native Americans to strip the pockets of Congress, the frontier Georgians used anti-Indian propaganda to validate their personal desire of expansion and planter elite status.³²

³² Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires*, 199 and 215.

Conclusion

Elijah Clarke and the Backcountry Revolution

For backcountry settlers, Independence from Great Britain and securing a more democratic government failed to realize the revolution they sought. The actions of Elijah Clarke reveal that for many backsettlers, the revolution represented conquest of Indian lands more than who ruled the colonies. Following the war, Clarke led a fairly successful life. He served in Georgia's young government, and he gained the homestead he demanded as recompense for his military duties. He became the model of frontier success, acquiring land and renown. Unfortunately for Clarke, the Revolutionary War ended before his goals could be achieved, but he continued to fight toward completing the backcountry dream of defeating the Muscogees. In 1794, Elijah Clarke led a band of "adventurers" from the western counties of Georgia across of the Appalachian Mountains and Oconee River to the same strip of land settlers previously derided James Wright for failing to obtain. These colonizers then established the Trans-Oconee Republic, "a free separate And Independent State and Government." The Georgia revolution lived on beyond the crucible for independence.¹

Clarke's newly established nation attracted the same men and women that formerly squatted on the Ceded Lands and that gained the reputation of being Crackers. In a letter to Governor Matthews, Thomas Houghton described the new independent state and its inhabitants with a cynical view. Houghton explained that the state promised six

¹ Thomas Houghton to Governor Matthews, 20 May 1794, in "An Elijah Clarke Document," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 14, no. 3 (1930): 254-55. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40576058>.

hundred forty acres of land to new residents with the potential of an additional four hundred after the first year. Moreover, Houghton recognized the malcontents' obvious antagonism towards the Muscogeas due to their erecting a blockhouse "at the mouth of the Apilachy," which undoubtedly served the purpose of defending against the Indians.²

Houghton's main concern stemmed from the attraction of criminals and bad sorts of people to the region, which he believed created less desirable neighbors than Muscogeas themselves. Houghton referred to the leaders of the state as Major General Clarke of Wilkes County and Joseph Phillips of Greene County. He also explained that Colonels Gains and Griffin took on the responsibility of creating a constitution for the new republic. From Houghton's description, it seems that the leadership of this revolution predominantly came from backcountry counties and militia officers. The brief republic represented the aspirations of the men that led radical, Indian-hating Whigs during the Revolution. It further reveals the true nature of their allegiance to the Whig cause, but more than this, Clarke's attempt shows the continued disparity between what the Indians and their land represented to two groups of Georgians. For the planters, Muscogeas continued to exist between trade partner and feared neighbor which had pushed Georgians toward the stronger federal government outlined in the Constitution that could more readily deal with the Indians. On the other hand, the backcountry sustained a

² Thomas Houghton to Governor Matthews, 20 May 1794, in "An Elijah Clarke Document," 254-55.

striking animosity toward the Natives and a belief in their ability to take Muscogee land by force.³

Clarke's short lived state ultimately posed a threat to Georgia and its citizens by curtailing Georgia's ability to expand legally and by undermining the nation's ability to control Indian relations. Attorney General G. Walker, wrote Governor Matthews on the legality of Clarke's republic. He declared that the nation violated state and federal acts. First, the very placement of the settlement became problematic. The land that Clarke claimed rested entirely in Muscogee territory; it failed to even border a Georgia county, disclosing the significance of conquest to the backsettlers. Further, the settlers' interactions with the Indians, whether civil or hostile, marked an abridgement of the federal government's right to regulate trade and intercourse with Native Americans. If Clarke's adventurers began fighting Muscogees, it would inevitably disrupt trade and land negotiations with Georgia and the United States. Matthews threatened to declare Clarke a traitor, and George Washington offered to give Matthews federal soldiers to end the rebellion; however, the issue came to an end when Matthews dispatched the Georgia militia. Clarke's government disbanded in the fall of 1794, only a few months after its creation.⁴

Even though the American Revolution in Georgia represented many things to different groups of people, the conquest of Muscogee land cannot be separated from the

³ Thomas Houghton to Governor Matthews, 20 May 1794, in "An Elijah Clarke Document," 254-55.

⁴ Attorney General G. Walker to Governor Matthews, 30 August 1794, in "Elijah Clarke's Trans-Oconee Republic," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 27, no. 3 (1943): 285-89. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40576888>.

aspirations of the backcountry. When one acknowledges Elijah Clarke's 1781 foray into Indian country despite being ordered to assist in the siege of Savannah and his subsequent attempt to establish an independent nation on conquered Muscogee land, one must acknowledge the significance of Indian land to the revolutionary aspirations of the settlers. Paul M. Pressly similarly contends in his monograph, *On the Rim of the Caribbean*, that the upcountry Georgians used the Revolution to obtain land and rise in status, supplanting the traditional planter elites. He explains that following the war, settlers took the slave-based plantation system with them into the backcountry, replacing subsistence farming. Thus, the lower sorts used the Indian issue to their advantage to take more land, enabling their pursuit of becoming planters themselves.⁵

The Whigs showed remarkable discernment by identifying the value of Indian land and the prewar hostility between Muscogees and backsettlers. This wisdom enabled the Whigs to invoke Native Americans in their anti-British propaganda in a way that created ardent Whigs out of formerly lukewarm Loyalists. Despite the unanticipated success of the propaganda in creating radical Whigs, the lowcountry Georgians ultimately held onto victory in the state by defeating the British and turning most of the progressive backcountry leaders into more moderate planters. As former militia officers gained land and government positions, many of them became satisfied with their newly independent state. Elijah Clarke represented the exception and the continuation of the backcountry revolution when he abandoned his status for the dream of taking Muscogee land and

⁵ Pressly, *On the Rim of the Caribbean*, 226-27.

settling in the west in order to create a territory that protected the backcountry first and did not limit the expansion of White settlers across Indian land.

The idea of using the Revolution to expand the frontier extended to other colonies, but Georgia's situation remains unique in several aspects. In his monograph, *Elusive Empires*, Eric Hinderaker argues that the American Revolution broke down the restraints of empire that previously hindered colonial expansion into the backcountry. The colonists then began pressing into Indian territory as traditional structures collapsed. Consequently, he contends that the Revolutionary governments championed this new expansion. Georgia, however, provides a distinctive case study into how some colonies differed from the Ohio Valley region. Even though the Georgia Whigs put on the façade of supporting war with the Creeks by spreading anti-Indian propaganda, the reality proved far more convoluted. Some of the Revolutionary government supported expansion and war with the Natives, but as seen through the rhetoric of many of Georgia's military and civil leadership, they largely believed a general Indian war needed to be avoided. Part of this difference likely stemmed from the large numbers of Whig leaders who speculated in Ohio Valley land. On the other hand, Georgia's backcountry settlers largely constituted of squatters seeking to break down social barriers by gaining more land.⁶

Moreover, if historiography will recognize Whig propaganda as an attempt to invoke Indian stereotypes to foment Whig allegiance among the backsettlers, then the actual efforts and goals of the Muscogees themselves can be better appreciated as well. Once one looks past the surface-understanding of the propaganda, it becomes clear that a

⁶ Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires*, 172-73 and 185-86.

far more intricate relationship existed between Georgia and the Muscogees than simple hatred. For instance, Georgia Whigs recognized that the Okfuskee Muscogees actively supported the Americans by working to prevent a general Indian war. While Georgians likely failed to grasp the plethora of reasons the Okfuskees held for helping Georgia, the Whigs still toiled to maintain a working relationship with these Native Americans. This further lends to the need for investigation into the sociopolitical aims of Muscogees during the American Revolution. As Joshua Piker contends, the 1760s to 1770s represented an era of problems and possibilities that Muscogees confronted in the face of a dramatically changing sociopolitical world. In this way, historians need to continue to look beyond military actions to the “cross-cultural narratives” that shaped the interplay between powers during the revolutionary period.⁷

By focusing on the role of Native Americans in the Georgia theater as political and social influencers rather than purely military players, one gains a better glimpse into the Muscogees’ true power and effect on the war. Rather than continue to argue over whether Muscogee warriors turned the tide in specific battles or performed a significant part for or against the Whigs and British, one can see how their very reputation and inclusion in Whig propaganda transformed the backcountry into rebels and how the mention of Indian warriors in correspondence brought supplies and soldiers from the Continental Congress. Placing Revolutionary Georgia in the context of Indian relations further helps explain how the youngest, weakest, and most divided colony eventually

⁷ Piker, *Okfuskee*, 66; “Lying Together: The Imperial Implications of Cross-Cultural Untruths,” *The American Historical Review* 116, no. 4 (2011): 984. <http://www.jstor.org/unk.idm.oclc.org/stable/23307875>

became as much a member of the American Revolution as any other state; however, it also insists that historiography recognize that many rebels fought for reasons beyond British taxation or political tyranny. It becomes clear that Native Americans and their association with the British played a principle part in turning the tide of political allegiance in Georgia, which further brings to the forefront that for the backcountry, independence from Great Britain and the establishment of a Whig government represented a scheme to displace Indians and gain control over the state's expansionist plans. Ultimately, historiography needs to conduct further investigations into both the political machinations of the backcountry and how this developed in relation to the United States' relationship with Native Americans.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Collections:

Davis, Jr., Robert S. *Georgia Citizens and Soldiers of the American Revolution*. Greenville, SC: Southern Historical Press, Inc., 1979.

— — — ed. *The Wilkes County Papers, 1773-1833*. Easley, SC: Southern Historical Press, 1979.

Wright, James. James Wright Papers. *Georgia Historical Society*.
<https://georgiahistory.pastperfectonline.com/archive>.

Southeastern Native American Documents, 1730-1842.
https://dlg.usg.edu/collection/dlg_zlna.

White, George, ed. *Historical Collections of Georgia: Containing the Most Interesting Facts, Traditions, Biographical Sketches, Anecdotes, Etc.* 3rd ed. New York: Pudney & Russell Publishers, 1855. Accessed December 10, 2020.
<https://archive.org/details/historicalcolle00duttgoog/>.

Government Documents:

Candler, Allen D. ed. *Revolutionary Records of the State of Georgia*. Vol. 1. Atlanta: The Franklin-Turner Company, 1908. Accessed December 9, 2020.
[https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.\\$b324304&view=1up&seq=9](https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.$b324304&view=1up&seq=9).

Crawford, Michael J., ed. *Naval Document of the American Revolution*. Vol. 12. Washington, D.C.: Department of the Navy, 2013. Accessed May 21, 2020.
<https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=vLaz69feO9UC&pg=GBS.PP5>.

Elbert, Samuel “Order Book of Samuel Elbert, Colonel and Brigadier General in the Continental Army.” *Collections of the Georgia Historical Society* 5, no. 2 (Savannah, GA: The Morning News Print, 1902). Accessed June 9, 2020.
<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.31175034879505&view=1up&seq=3>.

Force, Peter, ed. *American Archives: Fourth Series Containing a Documentary History of the English Colonies in North America, From the King's Message to Parliament of March 7, 1774, to the Declaration of Independence by the United States*. Fourth series. Vol. 4. Washington, D.C.: M. St. Clair Clarke and Peter Force, 1843. Accessed December 10, 2020.
<https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=lEwMAQAAMAAJ&pg=GBS>.

Georgia Council of Safety. *Proceedings of the Georgia Council of Safety*. Savannah, 1901. Accessed June 18, 2020. <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.31175034879562>.

Hawes, Lilla M. ed. "The Proceedings and Minutes of the Governor and Council of Georgia, October 4, 1774 Through September 20, 1780." Part II. *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 34, no. 4 (1950): 288-312. Accessed May 6, 2020. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40577247>.

— — —. "The Proceedings and Minutes of the Governor and Council of Georgia, October 4, 1774 Through September 20, 1780." Part III. *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 35, no. 1 (1951): 31-59. Accessed May 6, 2020. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40577364>.

— — —. "The Proceedings and Minutes of the Governor and Council of Georgia, October 4, 1774 Through September 20, 1780." Part IV. *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 35, no. 2 (1951): 126-51. Accessed May 6, 2020. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40577280>.

— — —. "The Proceedings and Minutes of the Governor and Council of Georgia, October 4, 1774 Through September 20, 1780." Part V. *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 35, no. 3 (1951): 196-221. Accessed May 6, 2020. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40577294>.

Journals and Memoirs:

Bartram, William. *The Travels of William Bartram*. Edited by Mark Van Doren. New York: Facsimile Library, Inc., 1940.

Chesney, Alexander. "The Journal of Alexander Chesney: A South Carolina Loyalist in the Revolution and After." Edited by E. Alfred Jones. *The Ohio State University Bulletin* 26, no. 4 (1921): 1-57. Accessed July 21, 2020. https://www.google.com/books/edition/Memoirs_of_the_American_Revolution/L1CEdGzLtYC?hl=en&gbpv=0.

Drayton, John. *Memoirs of the American Revolution: From Its Commencement to the Year 1776*, Vol. 1. Bedford, MA: Applewood Books, 1821. Accessed June 30, 2021. https://www.google.com/books/edition/Memoirs_of_the_American_Revolution/L1CEdG_zLtYC?hl=en&gbpv=1.

George Hanger, *The Life, Adventures, and Opinions of Col George Hanger*. London: Wilson & Co. Oriental Press, 1801. Accessed December 9, 2020. https://books.google.com/books/about/The_life_adventures_and_opinions_of_Col.html?i d=E_wLAQAAMAAJ

Mereness, Newton D. ed. *Travels in the American Colonies*. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1916. Accessed December 9, 2020.

https://www.google.com/books/edition/Travels_in_the_American_Colonies/V-8MAAAAIAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&printsec=frontcover

Taylor, Thomas. "A Georgia Loyalist's Perspective on the American Revolution: The Letters of Dr. Thomas Taylor." Robert S. Davis, Jr., ed. *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 81, no. 1 (1997), 118-138. Accessed May 20, 2020.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/40583546>.

Letters:

Clay, Joseph. *Letters of Joseph Clay, Merchant of Savannah, 1776-1793*. Edited by W. J. DeRenne, Otis Ashmore, W. W. Gordon, and Thomas J. Charlton. Savannah, GA: The Morning News, Printers and Binders, 1913. Accessed December 9, 2020.

<https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=8VrjAAAAMAAJ&pg=GBS>.

Hawes, Lilla M., ed. "Letter Book of Lachlan McIntosh, 1776-1777, Part I." *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 38, no. 2 (1954): 148-169. Accessed April 28, 2020.

<http://search.ebscohost.com.unk.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsjsr&AN=edsjsr.40577509&site=eds-live>.

— — —. "The Papers of Lachlan McIntosh, 1774-1799, Part II: Letter Book of Lachlan McIntosh, 1776-1777." *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 38, no. 3 (1954): 253-267. Accessed April 28, 2020. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40577710>.

— — —. "The Papers of Lachlan McIntosh, 1774-1799, Part III: Letter Book of Lachlan McIntosh, 1776-1777." *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 38, no. 4 (1954): 356-368. Accessed April 28, 2020.

<http://search.ebscohost.com.unk.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsjsr&AN=edsjsr.40577545&site=eds-live>.

— — —. "The Papers of Lachlan McIntosh, 1774-1799, Part IV: Miscellaneous Papers." *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 39, no. 1 (1955): 52-68. Accessed April 28, 2020. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40577581>.

— — —. "The Papers of Lachlan McIntosh, 1774-1799, Part V: Miscellaneous Papers." *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 39, no. 2 (1955): 172-186. Accessed April 28, 2020. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40577564>.

Houghton, Thomas. "An Elijah Clarke Document." *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 14, no. 3 (1930): 254-55. Accessed March 26, 2021.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/40576058>.

Martin, John. "Official Letters of Governor John Martin, 1782-1783." *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 1, no. 4 (1917): 281-335. Accessed May 15, 2020.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/40575562>.

Walker, G. "Elijah Clarke's Trans-Oconee Republic." *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 27, no. 3 (1943): 285-89. Accessed May 4, 2021.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/40576888>.

Secondary Sources

Monographs:

Calloway, Colin G. *The American Revolution in Indian Country: Crisis and Diversity in Native American Communities*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Calhoun, Robert C., Timothy M. Barnes, and Robert S. Davis. *Tory Insurgents: The Loyalist Perception and Other Essays*. Rev. and expanded ed. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2010. Accessed May 27, 2020.
<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=478076&site=eds-live>.

Cashin, Edward. *Guardians of the Valley: Chickasaws in Colonial South Carolina and Georgia*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2009.

— — —. *The King's Ranger: Thomas Brown and the American Revolution on the Southern Frontier*. Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1989.

— — —. *William Bartram and the American Revolution on the Southern Frontier*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2000.

Coleman, Kenneth. *The American Revolution in Georgia*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1958.

Corkran, David H. *The Creek Frontier, 1540-1873*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967.

Dennis, Jeff W. *Patriots and Indians: Shaping Identity in Eighteenth-Century South Carolina*. Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 2017. Accessed September 28, 2020.
<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1385536&site=eds-live>.

DuVal, Kathleen. *Independence Lost: Lives on the Edge of the American Revolution*. New York: Random House, 2015.

- Ethridge, Robbie Franklyn. *Creek Country: The Creek Indians and Their World*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003. Accessed June 17, 2021.
<http://search.ebscohost.com.proxygsuemmm1.galileo.usg.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=114681&site=ehost-live&scope=site>
- Gallay, Alan. *The Formation of a Planter Elite: Jonathan Bryan and the Southern Colonial Frontier*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1989.
- Hall, Leslie. *Land and Allegiance in Revolutionary Georgia*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1979.
- Haynes, Joshua S. *Patrolling the Border: Theft and Violence on the Creek-Georgia Frontier, 1770-1796*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2018.
- Hinderaker, Eric. *Elusive Empires: Constructing Colonialism in the Ohio Valley, 1673-1800*. Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- — — and Peter C. Mancall. *At the Edge of Empire: The Backcountry in British North America*. Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 2003.
- Holton, Woody. *Forced Founders: Indians Debtors, Slaves, and the Making of the American Revolution in Virginia*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999.
- Jackson, Harvey H. *Lachlan McIntosh and the Politics of Revolutionary Georgia*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1979.
- Juricek, John T. *Endgame for Empire: British-Creek Relations in Georgia and Vicinity, 1763-1776*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2015. Accessed May 19, 2020.
<http://search.ebscohost.com.unk.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=879243&site=eds-live>.
- Mazzagetti, Dominick A. *Charles Lee: Self Before Country*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rivergate Regionals: Rutgers University Press, 2013. Accessed November 5, 2020.
<http://search.ebscohost.com.unk.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=659879&site=eds-live>.
- O'Donnell, James H. *Southern Indians in the American Revolution*. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1973.

- Parkinson, Robert G. “‘This Class of Britain’s Heroes:’ From the Fall of Charleston to Yorktown.” In *The Common Cause: Creating Race and Nation in the American Revolution*, 477-533. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016. Accessed July 15, 2020. www.jstor.org/stable/10.5149/9781469626925_parkinson.16.
- Piker, Joshua Aaron. *Okfuskee*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2004. Accessed June 1, 2021. <http://search.ebscohost.com/unk.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=282314&site=ehost-live>.
- Pressly, Paul M. *On the Rim of the Caribbean: Colonial Georgia and the British Atlantic World*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2013.
- Rindfleisch, Bryan C. *George Galphin’s Intimate Empire: The Creek Indians, Family, and Colonialism in Early America*. Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 2019.
- Royster, Charles. *A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army & American Character, 1775-1783*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1986.
- Searcy, Martha Condray. *The Georgia-Florida Contest in the American Revolution, 1776-1778*. Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 1985.
- Silver, Peter. *Our Savage Neighbors: How Indian War Transformed Early America*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2008.
- Taylor, Alan. *The Divided Ground: Indians, Settlers, and the Northern Borderland of the American Revolution*. New York: Vintage Books, 2006.
- Journal Articles:
- Bast, Homer. “Creek Indian Affairs, 1775-1778.” *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 33, No. 1 (1949): 1-25. Accessed June 17, 2020. <http://www.jstor.com/stable/40577135>.
- Cashin, Edward. “From Creeks to Crackers.” *The Southern Colonial Backcountry*. Ed. David C. Crass, et. Al (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1998): 69-75. Accessed March 9, 2021. <https://www.srbeuchetribes.org>.
- . “‘The Famous Colonel Wells:’ Factionalism in Revolutionary Georgia.” *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 58 (1974): 137-56. Accessed March 8, 2020. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40579633>.

- Chandler, Abby. "'Unawed by the Laws of Their Country:' Local and Imperial Legitimacy in North Carolina's Regulator Rebellion." *North Carolina Historical Review* 93, no. 2 (April 2016): 119-46. Accessed February 22, 2021. <https://unk.idm.oclc.org>.
- Davis, Robert Scott. "A Frontier for Pioneer Revolutionaries: John Dooly and the Beginnings of Popular Democracy in Original Wilkes County." *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 90, No. 3 (2006): 315-49. Accessed September 29, 2020. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40584931>.
- Griffin, Kelsey. "Murder and Mayhem: How the Creek Murders Affected British Policy on Indian Affairs in Georgia during the American Revolution." *Journal of Backcountry Studies* 4 (Fall 2009): 1-8. Accessed May 27, 2021. <http://libjournal.uncg.edu/jbc/article/view/17/7>.
- Kokomoor, Kevin. "'Burning & Destroying All Before Them:' Creeks and Seminoles on Georgia's Revolutionary Frontier." *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 98, No. 4 (2014): 300-40. Accessed June 1, 2020. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44735557>.
- Lamplugh, George R. "'To Check and Discourage the Wicked and Designing:' John Wreath and the Revolution in Georgia." *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 61, no. 4 (1977): 295-307. Accessed March 8, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40580411>.
- Piker, Joshua. "Lying Together: The Imperial Implications of Cross-Cultural Untruths." *The American Historical Review* 116, no. 4 (2011): 964-86. Accessed May 19, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org.unk.idm.oclc.org/stable/23307875>.
- Rindfleisch, Bryan. "My Land Is My Flesh: Silver Bluff, the Creek Indians, and the Transformation of Colonized Space in Early America." *Early American Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 16, no. 3 (2018): 405-30. Accessed May 22, 2021. doi:10.1353/eam.2018.0014.
- — —. "'Our Lands Are Our Life and Breath:' Coweta, Cusseta, and the Struggle for Creek Territory and Sovereignty During the American Revolution." *Ethnohistory* 60, no. 4 (2013): 581-603. Accessed June 24, 2021. doi:10.1215/00141801-2313840.
- Searcy, Martha Condray. "1779: The First Year of the British Occupation of Georgia." *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 67, no. 2 (1983): 168-88. Accessed November 5, 2020. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40581049>.