

“You know, we are different Nations and have different Ways.”

**European Americans and Native Americans
 View Each Other, 1700-1775**

In British America, there was no greater sense of Otherness than between Europeans and Native Americans. Both Indians and Africans represented the "other" to white colonists, but the Indians held one card denied to the enslaved Africans—autonomy. As sovereign entities, the Indian nations and the European colonies (and countries) often dealt as peers. In trade, war, land deals, and treaty negotiations, Indians held power and used it. As late as 1755, an English trader asserted that "the prosperity of our Colonies on the Continent will stand or fall with our Interest and favour among them."¹

Here we canvas the many descriptions of Indians by white colonists and Europeans, and sample the sparse but telling record of the Native American perspective on Europeans and their culture in pre-revolutionary eighteenth-century British America. All come to us, of course, through the white man's eye, ear, and pen. Were it not for white missionaries, explorers, and frontier negotiators (the go-betweens known as "wood's men"), we would have a much sparser record of the Indian response to colonists and their "civilizing" campaigns.

“The natives, the so-called savages”

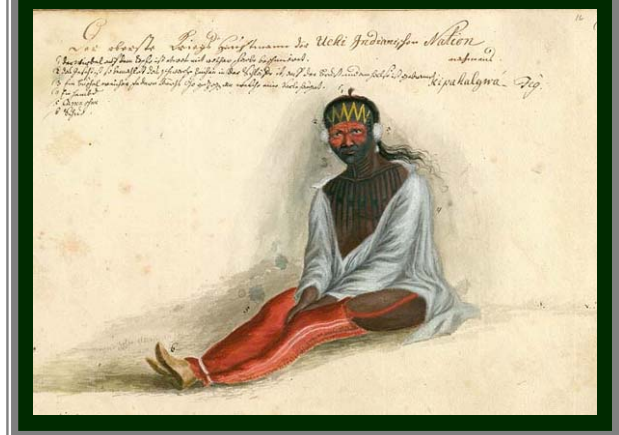
Francis Daniel Pastorius, Pennsylvania, 1700²

Pastorius was the founder of German Town, the first German settlement in Pennsylvania.

The natives, the so-called savages . . . they are, in general, strong, agile, and supple people, with blackish bodies. They went about naked at first and wore only a cloth about the loins. Now they are beginning to wear shirts. They have, usually, coal-black hair, shave the head, smear the same with grease, and allow a long lock to grow on the right side. They also besmear the children with grease and let them creep about in the heat of the sun, so that they become the color of a nut, although they were at first white enough by Nature.



Philip Georg Friedrich von Reck
 “The supreme commander of the Yuchi Indian nation,
 whose name is Kipahalgwa”
 Georgia, 1736



National Humanities Center, 2009: nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds. Spelling and punctuation modernized by NHC for clarity. See statement of Saghughuniunt, 1762, for context of quotation at top of page. Complete image credits at nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/becomingamer/imagecredits.htm.

¹ Edmond Aitkin, 1755. See footnote 20.

² Francis Daniel Pastorius, *Circumstantial Geographical Description of Pennsylvania*, 1700, including later letters to Germany; in *Narratives of Early Pennsylvania, West New Jersey and Delaware, 1630-1707*, ed. Albert Cook Myers (New York: Charles Scribner's Son, 1912), pp. 384-385.

They strive after a sincere honesty, hold strictly to their promises, cheat and injure no one. They willingly give shelter to others and are both useful and loyal to their guests. . . .

I once saw four of them take a meal together in hearty contentment, and eat a pumpkin cooked in clear water, without butter and spice. Their table and bench was the bare earth, their spoons were mussel-shells with which they dipped up the warm water, their plates were the leaves of the nearest tree, which they do not need to wash with painstaking after the meal, nor to keep with care of future use. I thought to myself, these savages have never in their lives heard the teaching of Jesus concerning temperance and contentment, yet they far excel the Christians in carrying it out.

They are, furthermore, serious and of few words, and are amazed when they perceive so much unnecessary chatter, as well as other foolish behavior, on the part of the Christians.

Each man has his own wife, and they detest harlotry, kissing, and lying. They know of no idols, but they worship a single all-powerful and merciful God, who limits the power of the Devil. They also believe in the immortality of the soul, which, after the course of life is finished, has a suitable recompense from the all-powerful hand of God awaiting it.

***“It is certain that good talents
are found among them.”***

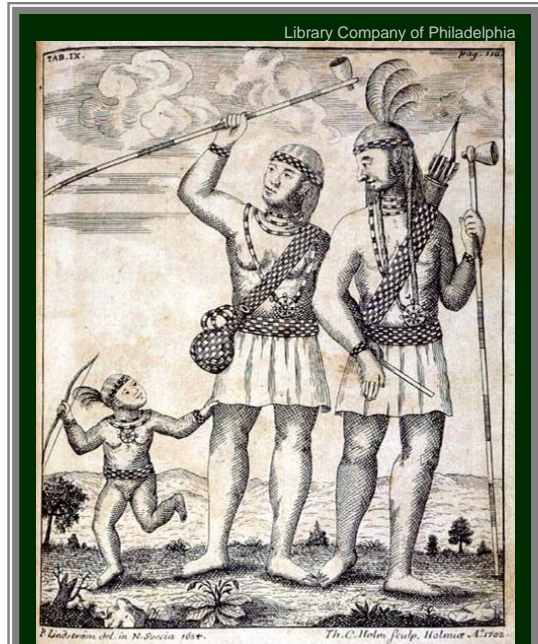
Francis Louis Michel, Virginia, 1702³

Michel, a visiting Swiss nobleman, attended the colony's memorial after the death of King William, an event the neighboring subdued Indians were expected to attend.

After the celebration was over, I endeavored to sell, as best I could, whatever remained of my merchandise. I intended to exchange with the Indians skins and baskets for powder and knives. . . . A Frenchman and I were astonished at the baskets and that two of them could speak English. One of them looked at us and said in poor English whether we thought that if they had been taught like we, they could not learn a thing just as well as we. I asked him where he had learned to speak English. He answered, they were not so stupid, because they had to come every year,⁴ they could hear us speak and learnt it that way. It is certain that good talents are found among them.

³ Francis Louis Michel, *Short Report of the American Journey* . . . , 1702, in William J. Hinke, ed., trans., “Report of the Journey of Francis Louis Michel from Berne, Switzerland, to Virginia, October 2, 1701–December 1, 1702,” *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 24:1-2 (January/April 1916), pp. 129-134.

⁴ The Indians were required to attend the annual muster of the state troops (militia).



Lenni Lenape (Delaware) family, Pennsylvania

in T. C. Holm, *A Short Description of the Province of New Sweden*, 1702

Robert A. Selig



“Drey Americaner” (“Three Americans”), Virginia

copy of drawing in Francis Louis Michel, *Short Report of the American Journey* . . . , 1702

“They are really better to us than we are to them.”

John Lawson, North Carolina, 1709⁵

A British naturalist and explorer, Lawson visited many Indian settlements in the Carolinas and later settled in North Carolina. Just before the outbreak of the Tuscorara War, he was captured and killed by Tuscarora Indians.

They are really better to us than we are to them. They always give us Victuals at their Quarters, and take care we are arm'd against Hunger and Thirst. We do not so by them (generally speaking) but let them walk by our Doors Hungry, and do

not often relieve them. We look upon them with Scorn and Disdain, and think them little better than Beasts in Human Shape; though, if well examined, we shall find that for all our Religion and Education we possess more Moral Deformities and Evils than these Savages do, or are acquainted withal.

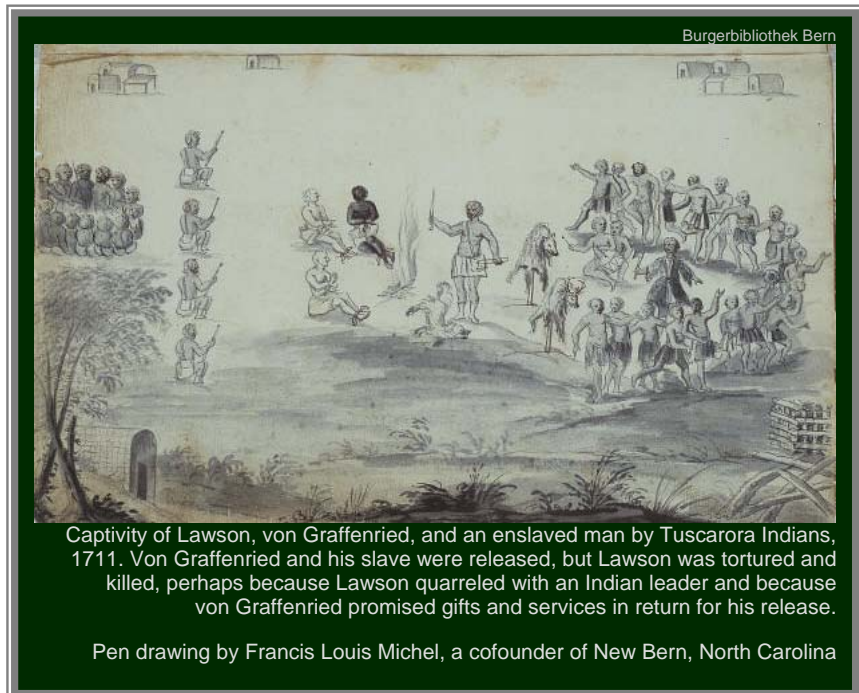
We reckon them Slaves in Comparison to us, and Intruders, as oft as they enter our Houses, or hunt near our Dwellings. But if we will admit Reason to be our Guide, she will inform us that these *Indians* are the freest People in the World, and so far from being Intruders upon us, that we have abandon'd our own Native Soil to drive them out and possess theirs. Neither have we any true Balance in Judging of these poor Heathens, because we neither give Allowance for their Natural Disposition, nor the Sylvian Education⁶ and strange Customs (uncouth to us) they lie under and have ever been train'd up to. . . We trade with them, it's true, but to what End? Not to show them the Steps of Virtue and the Golden Rule, to do as we would be done by. No, we have furnished them with the Vice of Drunkenness, which is the open Road to all others, and daily cheat them in everything we sell, and esteem it a Gift of Christianity not to sell to them so cheap as we do to the Christians, as we call ourselves. Pray let me know where is there to be found one Sacred Command or Precept of our Master that counsels us to such Behaviour? Besides, I believe it will not appear, but that all the Wars which we have had with the Savages were occasion'd by the unjust Dealings of the Christians towards them.

“they will seldom injure a Christian, except if given cause for it”

Christoph von Graffenried, North Carolina, 1711⁷

Von Graffenried was co-founder with Lawson and others of the New Bern settlement in North Carolina.

I have heard and observed many more such things among the Indians. But because so many authors have written about them that my remarks would only pass for repetition I will not relate more, except to say concerning the cruel and barbarous manner of the Indians, that they are indeed furious when one angers them; but if one leaves them in peace, does them no harm, and treats them according to their ways in a friendly and godhearted manner, they will seldom injure a



Captivity of Lawson, von Graffenried, and an enslaved man by Tuscarora Indians, 1711. Von Graffenried and his slave were released, but Lawson was tortured and killed, perhaps because Lawson quarreled with an Indian leader and because von Graffenried promised gifts and services in return for his release.

Pen drawing by Francis Louis Michel, a cofounder of New Bern, North Carolina

⁵ John Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 1709; full text in Documenting the American South, University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill Library, at docsouth.unc.edu/nc/lawson/lawson.html.

⁶ Sylvian education, i.e., natural learning in the woodlands.

⁷ Baron Christoph von Graffenried, Letter to Gov. Edward Hyde (governor of the colony of North Carolina), 23 October 1711, excerpts. Full text in website of the Coastal Carolina Indian Center, at www.coastalcarolinaindians.com/research/lawson_graffenried_trial.htm.

Christian, except if given cause for it. They have occasionally been treated cruelly and badly by the Christians. I have spoken to many of the Indians about their cruelty, but a sensible king answered me and gave a nice example of a snake. If one leaves it in its coil untouched, quiet, and uninjured, it will do no creature harm; but if one disturbs and wounds it, it will bite and wound. And the Spaniards had used their forefathers too cruelly, yes, very inhumanly. Concerning their, the Indians' massacres and fighting treacherously: They had to use their advantage or else they could not hold their own; they were not so strong in numbers, and were not provided with pieces [firearms], muskets, swords, and all sorts of other treacherous inventions made with powder to destroy men; likewise they had neither powder nor lead or else they got them from the Christians themselves; so that our ways were much more treacherous, false, and harmful; otherwise, we would not use them so cruelly. Moreover we practiced among ourselves the greatest tyranny and cruelty. Indeed I have experienced this myself.

“if they had been wise enough to make use of the Opportunities”

Rev. Samuel Stoddard, Massachusetts, 1722⁸

A Puritan clergyman in Boston, Stoddard published a question-and-answer pamphlet addressing ethical issues of import to the community, including the colonists' acquisition of Indian land with little to no payment.

Q[uestion] VIII. DID we any wrong to the Indians in buying their Land at a small price?

- A[nswer].** 1. THERE was some part of the Land that was not purchased, neither was there need that it should — it was *vacuum domicilium*;⁹ and so might be possessed by virtue of GOD's grant to Mankind, Gen. I:28. *And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.* The Indians made no use of it, but for Hunting. By GOD's first Grant Men were to subdue the Earth. When *Abraham* came into the Land of *Canaan*, he made use of vacant Land as he pleased: so did *Isaac* and *Jacob*.
2. THE Indians were well contented that we should sit down [settle] by them. And it would have been for great Advantage, both for this World and the Other; if they had been wise enough to make use of their Opportunities. It has been common with many People, in planting this World since the Flood, to admit Neighbours, to sit down by them.
3. THO' we gave but a small Price for what we bought, we gave them their demands. We came to their Market and gave them their price, and, indeed, it was worth but little. And had it continued in their hands, it would have been of little value. It is our dwelling on it and our Improvements that have made it to be of worth.

“we all know that very bright talents may be lodged under a very dark skin”

William Byrd, Virginia, 1728¹⁰

Byrd was a wealthy and influential tobacco planter in Virginia, serving in several positions in the colonial government.

Though these Indians dwell among the English, and see in what plenty a little industry enables them to live, yet they choose to continue in their stupid idleness and to suffer all the inconveniences of dirt, cold and want, rather than to disturb their heads with care, or defile their hands with labour.

⁸ Rev. Samuel Stoddard, *An Answer to Some Cases of Conscience Respecting the Country*, Boston, 1722, Question VIII. Accessed through Early American Imprints online, American Antiquarian Society; permission pending. Two lengthy scriptural footnotes in Stoddard's piece are omitted here.

⁹ “The English believed wholeheartedly in the concept of ‘vacuum domicilium.’ For, ‘it is a principle in nature that in a vacant soyle, hee that taketh possession of it and bestoweth culture and husbandry upon it has an inviolable right to the land.” Susan McGowan, “The Landscape in the Colonial Period,” Memorial Hall Museum, Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, Deerfield, Massachusetts, at www.memorialhall.mass.edu/home.html.

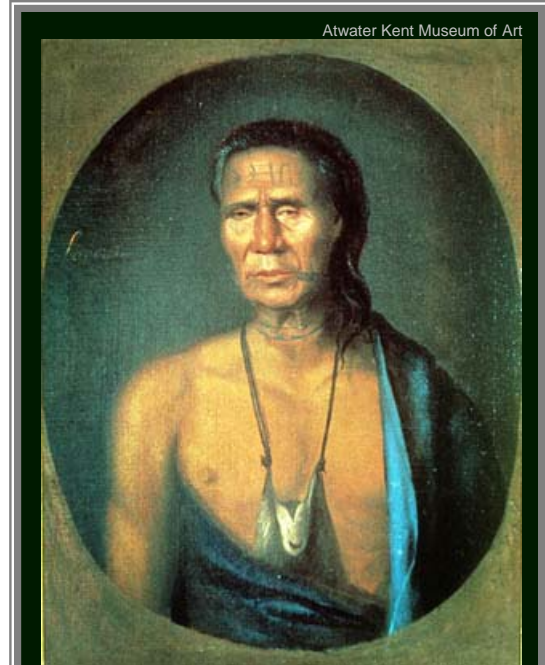
¹⁰ William Byrd, *The History of the Dividing Line betwixt Virginia and North Carolina, Run in the Year of Our Lord 1728*, first published 1841. Full text online in Documenting the American South, University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill Library, at docsouth.unc.edu/nc/byrd/menu.html

The whole number of people belonging to the Nottoway town, if you include women and children, amount to about two hundred. These are the only Indians of any consequence now remaining within the limits of Virginia. The rest are either removed or dwindled to a very inconsiderable number, either by destroying one another or else by the small-pox and other diseases. Though nothing has been so fatal to them as their ungovernable passion for rum, with which, I am sorry to say it, they have been but too liberally supplied by the English that live near them. And here I must lament the bad success Mr. Boyle's charity has hitherto had towards converting any of these poor heathens to Christianity. Many children of our neighbouring Indians have been brought up in the college of William and Mary. They have been taught to read and write, and have been carefully instructed in the principles of the Christian religion, till they came to be men. Yet after they returned home, instead of civilizing and converting the rest, they have immediately relapsed into infidelity [paganism] and barbarism themselves.

And some of them too have made the worst use of the knowledge they acquired among the English by employing it against their benefactors. Besides, as they unhappily forget all the good they learn and remember the ill, they are apt to be more vicious and disorderly than the rest of their countrymen. . . .

I am sorry I cannot give a better account of the state of the poor Indians with respect to Christianity, although a great deal of pains has been and still continues to be taken with them. For my part, I must be of opinion, as I hinted before, that there is but one way of converting these poor infidels and reclaiming them from barbarity, and that is, charitably to intermarry with them, according to the modern policy of the most Christian king in Canada and Louisiana.¹¹ Had the English done this at the first settlement of the colony, the infidelity of the Indians had been worn out at this day, with their dark complexions, and the country had swarmed with people more than it does with insects. It was certainly an unreasonable nicety that prevented their entering into so good-natured an alliance. All nations of men have the same natural dignity, and we all know that very bright talents may be lodged under a very dark skin. The principal difference between one people and another proceeds only from the different opportunities of improvement.

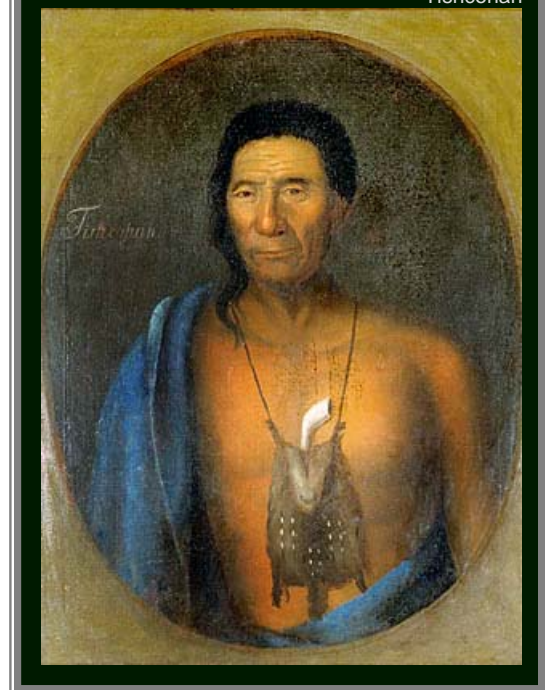
¹¹ That is, the King of France.

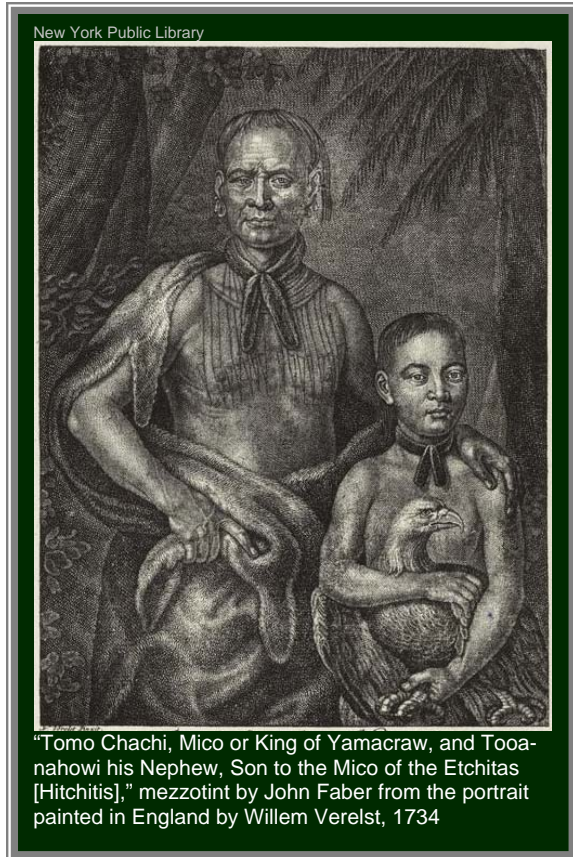


Lapowinsa

Lapowinsa and Tishcohan, leaders of the Lenni Lenape (Delaware) Indians in Pennsylvania, were signers of the infamous "Walking Purchase" treaty of 1736 which tricked the Indians into ceding far more land than they had anticipated from the treaty's terms. Although they protested the treaty for decades, they did not regain the land. Their portraits were painted in 1735 by Gustavus Hesselius, a Swedish immigrant and Pennsylvania colonist.

Tishcohan





***“In a little time white men
will be dust as well as I.”***

Tomachichi, Georgia, 1736¹²

A Creek leader who befriended James Oglethorpe in the early years of the Georgia colony, Tomachichi travelled to England with Oglethorpe in 1734 where his portrait was painted with his nephew. After his return to Georgia, Tomachichi met the young missionary John Wesley.

On another occasion, upon the termination of a public audience with the Indians, Wesley and the venerable chief dined with Governor Oglethorpe. After dinner the missionary asked the gray-headed old man what he thought he was made for. “He that is above,” replied the mico [chief], “knows what He made us for. We know nothing. We are in the dark. But white men know much, and yet white men build great houses as if they were to live forever. But white men cannot live forever. In a little time white men will be dust as well as I.”

Wesley responded, “If red men will learn the Good Book they may know as much as white men. But neither we nor you can understand that Book unless we are taught by Him that is above; and He will not teach unless you avoid what you already know is not good.”

“I believe that,” said the Indian. “He will not teach us while our hearts are not white, and our men do what they know is not good. Therefore He that is above, does not send us the Good Book.”

“They keep their word, and hate lies.”

Philip Georg Friedrich von Reck, Georgia, 1736¹³

Von Reck was a leader of the German settlement of Ebenezer, Georgia, founded in 1734.

As strange and wild as the Indians seem superficially, yet when one associates with them, one finds they are very polite, of natural good understanding, sensible, brief in their conversation and agile and quick in their behavior. They have sharp sight and can see far into the distance. Their sense of smell is so sharp that they can smell when enemy Indians are nearby and track and follow them through their smell. Also they can recognize from footprints in the sand of what [Indian] nation the person was who left the footprints behind. . . .

They are very courteous, friendly, and hospitable towards strangers, with whom they quickly become acquainted. Their table is open to everyone, and one can sit at it uninvited. When an Indian want to assure someone of his friendship, he strikes himself with his right hand on his left breast and says, my breast is like your breast, my and your breast is one breast — the equivalent of my and your heart is one heart, my heart is closely bound with your heart, &c. And it is also a sign of friendship and welcome to light a pipe of tobacco and hold it up before the arriving stranger so that he can take a couple of draws on it, also to hold up a bottle of rum, so he can take a swallow from it. If one is not received with these ceremonies,

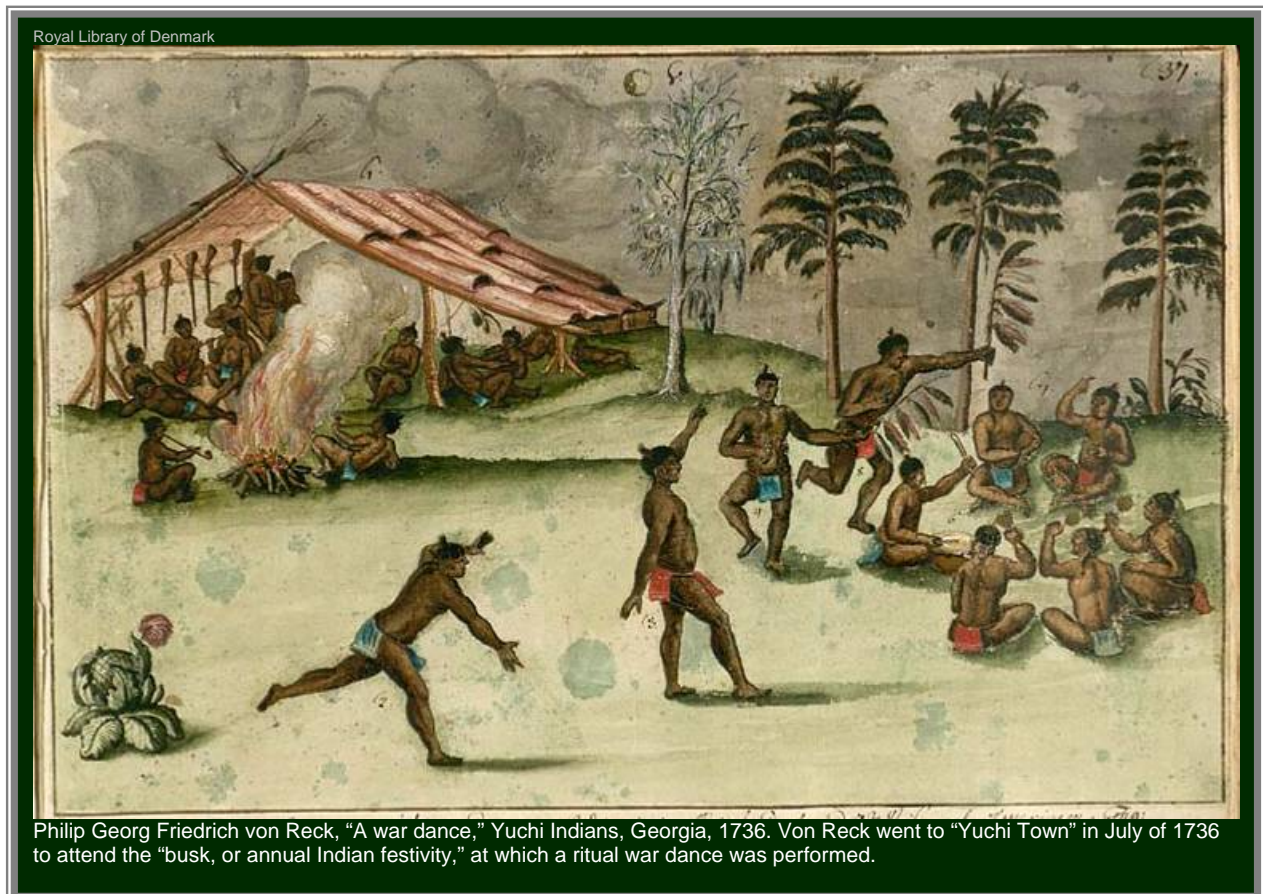
¹² Journal of John Wesley, publ. 1743, entry of July 1, 1736. Full text online in Christian Classics Ethereal Library, at www.ccel.org/ccel/wesley/journal.vi.i.ix.html

¹³ Kristian Hvidt, ed., *Von Reck's Voyage: Drawings and Journal of Philip Georg Friedrich von Reck* (Savannah, Georgia: The Beehive Press, 1980), pp. 47-48; permission pending. Von Reck drawings reproduced by permission of the Royal Library of Denmark.

one is not accepted. They love one another, when they are of the same nation. They are satisfied with the little that they have, even if it consists only of a gun, kettle, and mirror. They keep their word, and hate lies. When they praise a European, they say that he has never told them an untruth. They are affectionate and live peaceably with their wives.

But on the other hand they are haughty, especially towards their wives, who are not much better than slaves. They must wait upon their husband in the house, do all the household work, and they may not eat with their husband. On the hunt the wife must haul all the baggage and household goods, yet meanwhile the husband carries only his gun, mirror, shot pouch and sometimes a bottle of brandy. Yet they do all this so willingly that it seems rather their kind intention than a burden on them. . . They are cruel to their war captives, and they either take off the skin from the top of their heads, or burn them up while they are still alive.

During all these torments the captive takes care to show a constant undaunted courage, to rebuke his enemies as cowardly and womanish people for inflicting on him such a womanish death, that he only laughs at all these torments, that nothing better has previously happened to him, that his death even in this manner will soon be found out. All this he sings in many songs in order to dispel the death pangs. Sometimes the captive, before he is entirely consumed by fire, is thrown into the river where the boys shoot arrows at him until he is dead. But the reason they are so cruel is that they hold death itself to be no punishment and do not fear it. They are treacherous, lie in wait secretly for their adversaries and make war with ambushes and deception. If an Indian is wronged by a European, he kills him or, which is all the same to him, another European. From this it may be seen how dangerous it is to offend an Indian and how soon, through the bad behavior of a single person, an Indian war and the ruin of an entire colony can be brought about.



Philip Georg Friedrich von Reck, "A war dance," Yuchi Indians, Georgia, 1736. Von Reck went to "Yuchi Town" in July of 1736 to attend the "busk, or annual Indian festivity," at which a ritual war dance was performed.

**“Monuments of the Anger of
a righteous God”**

Rev. John Callender, Rhode Island,
1739¹⁴

Callender was a prominent Baptist clergyman.

The Indians in this Part of *America* appear to have been some of the least improved of the *human Species*, without any Learning or Knowledge in any of the politer Arts of Life, even without *Iron* and the Improvements which depend on that. The strange Destruction of this People, now since the Wars ceased, and within Memory, is very remarkable. Their insuperable Aversion to the English industry and Way of Life, the Alteration from the *Indian*

Method of living, their *Laziness*, and their *universal Love of Strong Drink*, have swept them away in a wonderful Manner. So that there are now above *twenty English to one Indian* in the Colony. Their few miserable Remains are left, as Monuments of the Anger of a righteous God, . . .

“These savages will give us trouble yet.”

Francis Cample, Pennsylvania, 1740¹⁵

An Irish immigrant, Cample settled in the new town of Shippensburg in the Cumberland Valley.

Oct. 10th, 1740. The building of our little fort, and the digging of the well within its enclosure, has been a good work. Had it not been for the recent killing of young Alex[ande]r Askew, near to where Robert McInnis was shot seven years ago, the friendship of the Indians might not have

been suspected, and this very necessary work might have been postponed until a more serious calamity would have overtaken us. I have no confidence in the friendship of these savages, and have always felt that we have been warming a viper which will some day show us its fangs. Our only safety, in my opinion, depends wholly upon our vigilance and the preparation we make in our defense. . . .

March 10th, 1742. A quarrel occurred last night out at the Spring amongst a party of drunken Indians, during which four of their cabins were set on fire and burned to the ground. One of the Indians, named Bright Star, a desperate man, was seriously injured in the fight, and will likely die of his wounds. I saw him not an hour ago, and considered him then in a dying condition. These savages will give us trouble yet.

“You have your Laws and Customs, so have we.”

Gachradodow, Pennsylvania, 1744¹⁶

Gachradodow, a leader of the Iroquois, addressed colonial officials during negotiations for the Lancaster Treaty of 1744 between the Iroquois and the colonies of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia.

Gachradodow in a strong voice, and with a proper action, spoke as follows:

Great Assaragoa, The World at the first was made on the other Side of the Great Water, different from what it is on this Side, as may be known

from the different Colors of our Skin and of our Flesh, and that which you call Justice may not be so amongst us. You have your Laws and Customs, and so have we. The Great King might send you over to conquer the *Indians*, but it looks to us that God did not approve of it. If he had, he would not have placed the Sea where it is, as the Limits between us and you. . . .

Brother Assaragoa, . . . You know very well when the white people came first here, they were poor; but now they have got lands and are by them become rich, and we are now poor: what little we have had for the land goes soon away, but the land lasts forever.

¹⁴ John Callender, *An Historical Discourse on the Civil and Religious Affairs of the Colony of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations in New-England in America*, 1739. Accessed through Early American Imprints online, American Antiquarian Society; permission pending.

¹⁵ Kerby A. Miller, et al., eds., *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan: Letters and Memoirs from Colonial and Revolutionary America, 1675-1815* (Oxford University Press, 2003); permission pending.

¹⁶ The Lancaster Treaty of 1744, in C. Van Doren & J. P. Boyd, eds., *Indian Treaties Printed by Benjamin Franklin, 1736-1762* (Philadelphia: The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1938), p. 63; full text online in Early Recognized Treaties with American Nations, from the Center for Digital Research in the Humanities, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, at earlytreaties.unl.edu/treaty.00003.html.

“We are Indians, and don’t wish to be transformed into white men.”

Shickellamy, New York, 1745¹⁷

An Oneida leader, Shickellamy expressed his opinion of Christians’ attempts to convert the Indians, as recounted by a Moravian missionary.

We were told that two ministers and an Indian had been lately here — probably it was the Presbyterian [David] Brainerd and his interpreter Tatami. He had assembled the Delawares in Shickellmy’s house, and (as Shickellmy’s people told us) informed that that on Sundays they should assemble as the whites do and pray as they do. Hence he would build a house for that purpose, and stay with them two years. . . To this Shickellmy said: “We are Indians, and don’t wish to be transformed into white men. The English are our Brethren, but we never promised to become what they are. As little as we desire the preacher to become Indian, so little ought he to desire the Indians to become preachers. He should not build a house here, they don’t want one.” They departed for Philadelphia the next day.

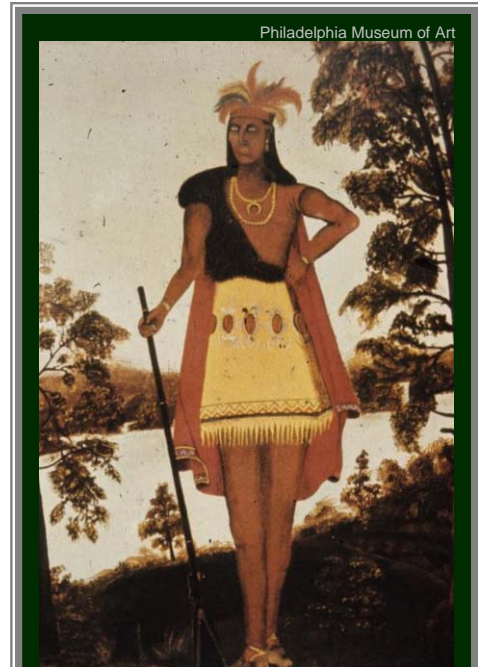
“They are almost always engaged in war.”

Rev. Johann Martin Bolzcius, Georgia, 1750¹⁸

A founder of the German settlement of Ebenezer in Georgia, Bolzcius published a pamphlet to inform other Germans considering emigration to America.

4th Question. Whether the natives of the land are very numerous, and whether very barbaric, and whether trouble is to be feared from them.

Answer. It has been noticed that the natives of the land (called Indians) have since the arrival of the Europeans not only retired farther into the mountains towards the northwest, but also by an unknown law of God continuously decreased in number. Among themselves they are almost always engaged in war, and kill one another. Several tribes are still said to be rather numerous; these are allied with the English, and as allies receive as presents from Carolina and Georgia every year three thousand pounds worth of all kinds of goods used among them. They are very barbarous toward one another and toward Europeans in times of war. They torture prisoners to death slowly in an unspeakable way. As long as there is peace among England, Spain, and France, little is to be feared from them, but in times of war they are provoked by French and Spanish emissaries to break with the English, which God however has prevented until now. . . The more Europeans come into the land, the less one is afraid of them.



Shickellamy, portrait by unknown artist, ca. 1820 (detail)



von Reck, “The Indian King . . . of the Yuchis,” Georgia, 1736

¹⁷ Bishop A. G. Spangenberg’s Journal of a Journey to Onandaga in 1745,” in *Moravian Journals Relating to Central New York, 1745-66*, ed. Rev. William M. Beauchamp, S.T.D., for the Onandaga Historical Association (Syracuse, NY: Dehler Press, 1916), p. 7.

¹⁸ Rev. Johann Martin Bolzcius, *Reliable Answer to Some Submitted Questions Concerning the Land Carolina in Which Answer, However, Regard Is Also Paid at the Same Time to the Condition of the Colony of Georgia*, 1750; published in *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series, 14:2 (April 1957), pp. 218-261; translated and edited by Klaus G. Loewald, Beverly Starika, and Paul S. Taylor. Reproduced by permission of *The William and Mary Quarterly*. Von Reck drawings reproduced by permission of the Royal Library of Denmark.

5th Question. Whether it is true that they eat people.

Answer. In Florida there are some Spanish Indians of whom it is said that they eat people. At least they are very barbaric. But there are very few of them, and they are hunted for their lives by the other Indians.

6th Question. Whether they have their own kings, or whether they are subjects of the English.

Answer. It may be said and written that they have kings, but they are nothing except chiefs in war, namely the most courageous and daring, also possibly the most reasonable. Otherwise they cannot order the other Indians around. He who has the most followers achieves most among the Indians and has something like an honorary title. They are not subjects of the English, but consider themselves noble-men and allies of the English.

“What benefits they receive, they ascribe to a divine power.”

John Bartram, Pennsylvania, 1751¹⁹

Considered America's first major botanist, Bartram travelled throughout the British colonies.

. . . [O]ur six nations [Iroquois] may be now thus characterized: they are a subtle, prudent, and judicious people in their councils, indefatigable, crafty, and revengeful in their wars, the men lazy and indolent at home, the women continual slaves, modest, very loving, and obedient to their husbands. As to the natural disposition of these *Nations*, they are grave, solid, and still in their recreations, as well as in their councils. . . .

Their religious notions are very confused and much mixed with superstition. Yet they seem not only to acknowledge a deity, but even to worship him in unity and spirit. What benefits they receive, they ascribe to a divine power. They have strange notions of spirits, conjuration, and witchcraft: these are agreeable to their blindness and want of proper education among them, . . .

“Your mouth is of sugar but your heart of gall.”

Atiwaneto, French Canada, 1752²⁰

The Abenaki leader Atiwaneto explained to a colonial official the Indians' decision to leave British territory in New England and settle in French Canada.

Brother, We speak to you as if we spoke to your Governor of Boston. We hear on all sides that this Governor and the Bostonians say that the Abenakis are bad people. 'Tis in vain that we are taxed [accused] with having a bad heart. It is you, brother, that always attack us. Your mouth is of sugar but your heart of gall. In truth, the moment you begin we are on our guard.

Brothers, We tell you that we seek not war. We ask nothing better than to be quiet, and it depends, brothers, only on you English to have peace with us. . . We acknowledge no other boundaries of yours than your settlements whereon you have built, and we will not, under any pretext whatsoever, that you pass beyond them. The lands we possess have been given us by the Master of Life. We acknowledge to hold only from him.

“When they are our Friends . . . when Enemies . . .”

Edmond Aitken, 1755²¹

A southern fur trader, Aitken was commissioned by the British Board of Trade to compile a report on Indian affairs with his recommendations.

The importance of Indians is now generally known and understood. A Doubt remains not that the prosperity of our Colonies will stand or fall with our Interest and favour among them. When they are our Friends, they are the Cheapest and strongest Barrier for the Protection of our Settlements; when Enemies, they are capable of ravaging in their methods of War, in spite of all we can do to render those Possessions almost useless.

¹⁹ John Bartram, *Observations on the Inhabitants, Climate, Soil, Rivers . . . Made by Mr. John Bartram, in His Travels from Pensilvania to Onondago, Oswego and the Lake Ontario, in Canada . . .*, London: 1751. Full text online in Early Canadiana Online at www.canadiana.org/cgi-bin/ECO/mtq?doc=11915.

²⁰ Statement to Phineas Stevens, Abenaki Conference of 1752, Montreal, in John R. Brodhead, ed., *Documents Related to the History of Colonial New York*, 10 vols, 1853-1858; vol. 10, pp. 252-254.

²¹ Wilbur R. Jacobs, ed., *The Appalachian Indian Frontier: The Edmond Aitken Report and Plan of 1755* (University of Nebraska Press, 1967), pp. 7-8.

“We love you more than you love us.”

Delaware leaders, Ohio River Valley, 1758²¹

Allied with the French during the French and Indian War, Delaware leaders explained their position to a British colonial negotiator whom they knew well.

Shingas, King Beaver, Delaware George, and Pisquetumen, with several other captains said to me, “. . . All our young men, women and children are glad to see you. Before you came, they all agreed together to go and join the *French*, but since they have seen you they all draw back, though we have great reason to believe you intend to drive us

away and settle the country, or else why do you come to fight in the land that God has given us?”

I said we did not intend to take the land from them, only to drive the *French* away. They said they knew better, for that they were informed so by our greatest traders, and some Justices of the Peace had told them the same, and the *French*, said they, tell us much the same thing — “that the *English* intend to destroy us and take our lands” — but the land is ours, and not theirs. Therefore we say, if you will be at peace with us, we will send the *French* home. It is you that have begun the war, and it is necessary that you hold fast and be not discouraged in the work of peace. We love you more than you love us, for when we take any prisoners from you, we treat them as our own children. We are poor, and yet we clothe them as well as we can, though you see our children are as naked as at the first. By this you may see that our hearts are better than yours. It is plain that you white people are the cause of this war. Why do not you and the *French* fight in the old country, and on the sea? Why do you come to fight on our land? This makes everybody believe you want to take the land from us by force, and settle it.

I told them, “Brothers, as for my part, I have not one foot of land nor do I desire to have any; and if I had any land, I had rather give it to you than take any from you. . . .”

They said, “Brother, your heart is good. You speak always sincerely, but we know there are always a great number of people that want to get rich; they never have enough. Look, we do not want to be rich and take away that which others have. . . . Look now, my brother, the white people think we have no brains in our heads, but that they are great and big, and that makes them make war with us. We are but a little handful to what you are, but remember, when you look for a wild turkey you cannot always find it, it is so little it hides itself under the bushes, and when you hunt for a rattlesnake you cannot find it, and perhaps it will bite you before you see it. However, since you are so great and big, and we so little, do you use your greatness and strength in completing this work of peace? This is the first time that we saw or heard of you since the war begun, and we have great reason to think about it, since such a great body of you comes into our lands. It is told us that you and the *French* contrived the war to waste the *Indians* between you, and that you and the *French* intended to divide the land between you. This was told us by the chief of the *Indian* traders; and they said further, brothers, this is the last time we shall come among you; for the *French* and the *English* intend to kill all the *Indians*, and then divide the land among themselves.”



²² Christian Frederick Post, *Two Journals of Western Tours . . . one to the neighborhood of Fort Duquesne (July-September, 1758); the other, to the Ohio (October 1758-January, 1759)*, in Reuben G. Thwaites, ed., *Early Western Travels* (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark, 1904), vol. 1, pp. 213-216. Full text online in *American Notes: Travels in America, 1750-1920*, in *American Memory*, Library of Congress, at hdl.loc.gov/loc/gdc/hbbtn.06902.

“We are not your slaves.”

Minavavana, French Canada,
1761²³

Minavavana, a Chippewa leader in French Canada, declared the Indians' position after the British conquest of French Canada.

woods and mountains were left to us by our ancestors. They are our inheritance, and we will part with them to none. Your nation supposes that we, like the white people, cannot live without bread — and pork — and beef! But you ought to know that He, the Great Spirit and master of Life, has provided food for us in these spacious lakes and on these woody mountains.

Englishman, it is to you that I speak, and I demand your attention!

Englishman, you know that the French king is our father. . . it is you that have made war with this, our father. You are his enemy, and how then could you have the boldness to venture among us, his children? You know that his enemies are ours. . . .

Englishman, although you have conquered the French, you have not yet conquered us! We are not your slaves. These lakes, these

***“They will hear to reason
& allow it to be right.”***

James Kenny, Pennsylvania, 1762²⁴

Kenny managed a trading store established by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in western Pennsylvania.

Feb. 2, 1762. Frederick Post [Moravian missionary] says that the Indians are void of Reason, but I find that in many cases they will hear to reason & allow it to be right, . . .

Sept. 17, 1762. The Delawares are mightily pleas'd that I have preferr'd their Tongue in learning most if it so that I can converse a little with them. One of them told me in Weighing his Skins that I must not Cheat or it would offend the Good Spirit above. I told him I would not & that he should mind the Same Rule.

***“thereby deprived of
the use of reason”***

John Woolman, Pennsylvania, 1762²⁵

An itinerant Quaker preacher, John Woolman was troubled by the indiscriminate sale of white man's liquor to the Indians.

At this place we met with an Indian trader lately come from Wyoming [a frontier settlement in Pennsylvania]. In conversation with him, I perceived that many white people often sell rum to the Indians, which I believe is a great evil. In the first place, they are thereby deprived of the use of reason, and, their spirits being violently agitated, quarrels often arise which end in mischief, and the bitterness and resentment occasioned hereby are frequently of long continuance. Again, their skins and

furs, gotten through much fatigue and hard travels in hunting, with which they intended to buy clothing, they often sell at a low rate for more rum, when they become intoxicated; and afterward, when they suffer for want of the necessaries of life, are angry with those who, for the sake of gain, took advantage of their weakness.

Their chiefs have often complained of this in their treaties with the English. Where cunning people pass counterfeits and impose on others that which is good for nothing, it is considered as wickedness; but, for the sake of gain to sell that which we know does people harm, and which often works their ruin, manifests a hardened and corrupt heart, and is an evil which demands the care of all true lovers of virtue to suppress.

²³ Alexander Henry, *Travels and Adventures in the Years 1760-1776*, ed. M. M. Quaife (Chicago: R. R. Donnelley, 1921), pp. 43-45.

²⁴ James Kenny, Journal, 1761-1763. Excerpts in website of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania at www.hsp.org/files/kennytradeexcerpt.pdf.

²⁵ Journal of John Woolman, publ. 1774, full text online in the Electronic Text Center, University of Virginia, at etext.lib.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/WooJour.html.

“I am of a quite different Nature from you.”

Saghughuniunt, Pennsylvania, 1762²⁶

Saghughuniunt, an Oneida leader whose English name was Thomas King, explained the different concepts of war prisoner held by Indians and Europeans. (He also mentions the difficulties caused by the need to translate multiple languages in Indian-European meetings.)

Brother . . . When I used to go to War with the Southern Indians and brought Prisoners Home, I thought they were mine and that nobody had any Right to meddle with them. Now since I joined with you, I went to War again and I brought French People Home with me, as Prisoners, and you took them from me. This makes me think it was owing to the Evil Spirit.

Brother, I desire you to be strong. I have heard you often say you would be very glad if I would bring you the Captives, and you would make me Satisfaction because you know I am not as you are. I am of a quite different Nature from you. Sometimes I think you are not in Earnest with me, in telling me you will make me Satisfaction. . . .

Brother, You know we are different Nations and have different Ways. We could not immediately perform what you required of us in returning your Flesh and Blood, because every one of these Nations have different Ways. That is the Reason why we could not so soon perform it.

Brother, I am sorry it is so difficult for us to understand each other. If we could understand one another, we would put one another in Mind of the Friendship that subsisted between us and our Forefathers, but as we do not easily understand one another, we are obliged to deliver you the Substance in short of what we have to say, which makes it tedious. — (Meaning that they are obliged to interpret in two or three Languages before it is told to us.) . . .

Brother Onas, You have been requiring your Flesh and Blood these three Years. I promise you I will give you them, and now I will deliver all I have brought.

Brother Onas, I am sorry we cannot speak to one another any faster, because we cannot understand one another without so many Interpreters, and this takes up much Time, so that we must be slow in telling our Business.

“They exercise virtues which Christians need not blush to imitate.”

Military accounts, Ohio, 1764²⁷

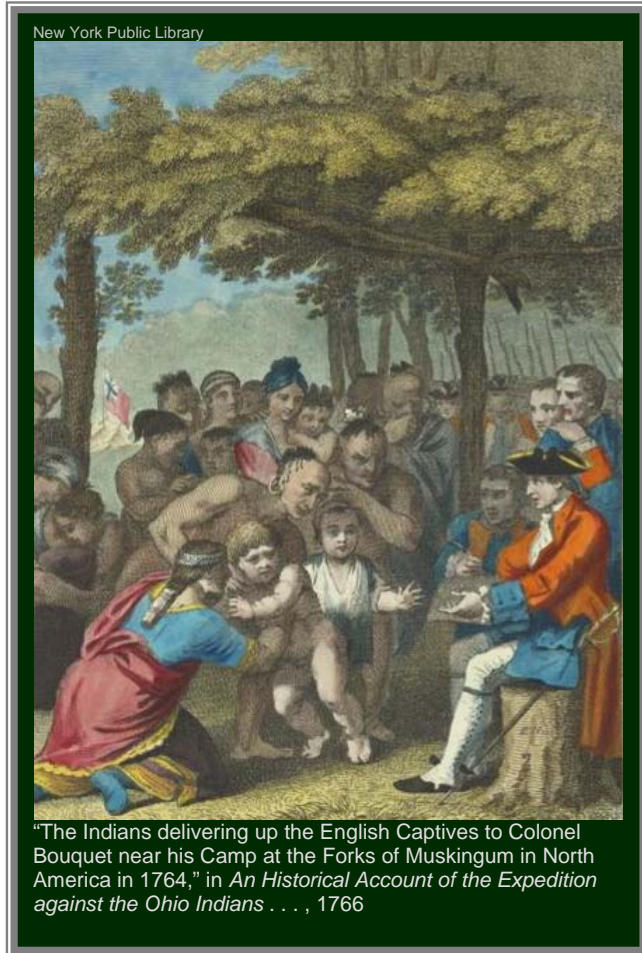
The Indians' return of war captives after the French and Indian War was described by historian William Smith, based on military accounts.

The scene I mean was the arrival of the prisoners in the camp, where were to be seen fathers and mothers recognizing and clasping their once-lost babes, husbands hanging round the necks of their newly-recovered wives, sisters and brothers unexpectedly meeting together after long separation, scarce able to speak the same language, . . .

The Indians, too, as if wholly forgetting their usual savageness . . . delivered up their beloved captives with the utmost reluctance, shed torrents of tears over them, recommending them to the care and protection of the commanding officer. Their regard to them continued all the time they remained in camp. They visited them from day to day, and brought them what corn, skins, horses and other matters they had bestowed on them while in their families; accompanied with other presents and all the marks of the most sincere and tender affection. Nay, they did not stop here, but, when the army marched, some of the Indians solicited and obtained leave to accompany their former captives all the way to Fort Pitt, and employed themselves in hunting and bringing provisions for them on the road. . . .

²⁶ *Minutes of Conferences, Held at Lancaster [Pennsylvania], in August, 1762. With the Sachems and Warriors of several Tribes of Northern and Western Indians* (Philadelphia, printed by Benjamin Franklin, 1763), p. 16. Accessed through Early American Imprints online, American Antiquarian Society; permission pending.

²⁷ William Smith, *An Historical Account of the Expedition against the Ohio Indians in the Year 1764 under the Command of Henry Bouquet* . . . , 1766, pp. 27-28; full text online in *The First American West: The Ohio River Valley, 1750-1820*; in *American Memory*, Library of Congress, at memory.loc.gov/ammem/award99/icuhtml/fawhome.html.



Those qualities in savages challenge our just esteem. They should make us charitably consider their barbarities as the effects of wrong education and false notions of bravery and heroism, while we should look on their virtues as sure marks that nature has made them fit subjects of cultivation as well as us, and that we are called by our superior advantages to yield them all the helps we can in this way. Cruel and unmerciful as they are by habit and long example in war, yet whenever they come to give way to the native dictates of humanity, they exercise virtues which Christians need not blush to imitate.

"They are all equal."

James Adair, 1775²⁸

An Irish immigrant, Adair became a trader with Indians in the southern colonies and lived with the Chickasaw in the Mississippi River valley for six years.

They are all equal — the only precedence any gain is by superior virtue, oratory, or prowess; and they esteem themselves bound to live and die in defense of their country. . . . The head-men reward the worthy with titles of honor, according to their merit in speaking or the number of enemies' scalps they bring home. Their hearts are fully satisfied if they have

revenged crying blood, enobled themselves by war actions, given cheerfulness to their mourning country, and fired the breasts of the youth with a spirit of emulation to guard the beloved people from danger, and revenge the wrongs of their country. Warriors are to protect all, but not to molest or injure the meanest. If they attempted it, they would pay dear for their folly. . . .

The equality among the Indians, and the just rewards they always confer on merit, are the great and leading — the only motives that warm their hearts with a strong and permanent love to the country. Governed by the plain and honest law of nature, their whole constitution breathes nothing but liberty.

²⁸ James Adair, *The History of the American Indians . . .* (London: E&C Dilly, 1775), pp. 378-379; full text online in *The First American West: The Ohio River Valley, 1750-1820*; in American Memory, Library of Congress, at memory.loc.gov/ammem/award99/icuhtml/fawhome.html.