

FROM WARRIORS TO MERCENARIES: TUSCARORA SERVING AS TRIBUTARIES IN NORTH CAROLINA 1715-1761

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ABSTRACT

Following the end of the Tuscarora War in 1715, the Tuscarora Nation's influence in North Carolina had shrunk. The war the Tuscarora fought ended in the diaspora of their people, with hundreds killed and hundreds enslaved by militiamen and Yamasee warriors. Tuscarora families scattered; some hid further in the pine barrens and swamplands of Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Other families relocated to the North to take shelter with their Haudenosaunee kin. However, a significant population relocated onto reservation territory under the rule of Chief Tom Blount, selected as the “King of the Tuscarora,” by the North Carolina Council. The Tuscarora were in a new state of existence that they had never experienced before. With their power lessened and needing to rebuild from years of war, the Tuscarora found themselves as a tributary nation at the behest of North Carolina. Although this was a foreign concept to the Tuscarora, their leadership, under Chief Blount, understood that they had to use their position to maintain some level of autonomy under the oppressive thumb of colonial power. From 1715 to 1761, the Tuscarora served the Colony of North Carolina as tributary mercenaries, fighting alongside, defending, and working with the colonists in three separate wars. Between wars, they brought gifts and reaffirmed their position as tributaries to North Carolina. The Tuscarora on the Indian Woods Reservation were the last nation in eastern North Carolina to hold out against the wave of Manifest Destiny, securing their lands until 1828. The objective of

this thesis is to examine the tributary work conducted by the Tuscarora and how, through it, they navigated this new world.

From Warriors to Mercenaries: Tuscarora Serving as Tributaries in North Carolina 1715-1761

A Thesis

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Chapter 1: The Birth and Struggle of a Nation

Following the end of the Tuscarora War, the Tuscarora people found themselves in a precarious position. Before the war, they reigned as one of the largest nations in the Southeast, controlling trade systems across the east coast and raiding from the Gulf of Mexico to the Great Lakes. Traditional Tuscarora territory was predominantly located on the eastern side of what is now North Carolina, spanning from the Neuse River in southeastern North Carolina to the Roanoke River in southeastern Virginia. However, the territory also extended beyond this region, depending on alliances and military might, as territory was fluid for Indigenous nations.¹ Although a population estimate prior to contact with European's is unknown, in 1683, Lord Culpeper, the governor of Virginia, believed the Tuscarora's population was anywhere between 6,000 and 8,000 in total.² The Tuscarora were revered by their allies and feared by their enemies. The Tuscarora people were a formidable nation, but after generations of molestation, expansion, disease, and war with the colonists, by 1715, they were beaten and scattered. The nation was no longer at its height of political and cultural influence. The Tuscarora people were thrust into a new reality, one in which their every move was closely monitored and controlled by the North Carolina colonists. By the end of the war, the colonists had significant control over the Tuscarora. In a foreign reality compared to their previous one, the Tuscarora had to find novel ways to negotiate their new existence in their homelands. If the Tuscarora wanted to maintain any semblance of their autonomy in the face of the ever-growing threat of westward expansion, colonization, and the eradication of tribal communities, they had to find a way to work with their

¹ Peter Woods, "Tuscarora Roots Historical Report," Durham, Spring 1992, 15.

² Woods, "Tuscarora Roots Historical Report," 19.

enemies, the colonists. The Tuscarora Nation preserved their autonomy and sought stability in a time of dramatic changes as tributaries to the growing province of North Carolina.

Although the Tuscarora War had ended, future conflicts with other Indigenous and European nations were inevitable. A truth abundantly clear in the 18th century was that wars in North America were often fought and won with the assistance of Indigenous warriors, as evident in the Tuscarora War, where colonists heavily relied on the Yamasee and other Indigenous tribes to fight the Tuscarora on their behalf. Now that the Tuscarora's war was over, other Indigenous tribes presented a threat to the colonists' plans of expansion. The Tuscarora understood the need of the colonist for Indigenous allies, and they found their new method of maintaining their autonomy. Instead of continuing to fight the colonists, the Tuscaroras accepted their new position as a Tributary Nation to the colonists. Within their new status, Tuscarora warriors became mercenaries for the colonists, serving as raiders, scouts, and foot soldiers in three different wars alongside the English colonists. Their new status as tributaries was not born out of newfound admiration for the colonists, but rather out of pure survival and necessity.

This thesis will focus on the period between 1715 and 1761, when the Tuscarora tributary status was at its height. Throughout this time frame, the Tuscarora fought in three separate wars at the colonists' behest. The Tuscarora fought these wars to maintain a position of importance within the North Carolina colony and to garner personal wealth and rewards for service. The success of the Tuscarora warriors in these conflicts ultimately determined the future of the colony. The leaders, Chief Tom Blount and his heirs, served as intermediaries between the colonists and the Tuscarora living on the Indian Woods Reservation. Throughout this period, the Tuscarora performed their duties as tributaries to the colonists while also testing the limits of their status through ongoing cultural practices, warfare against enemy tribes, and diplomacy with

their Iroquoian-language family cousins, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, in the Northeast. While other historians focus mainly on the Tuscarora before and during the Tuscarora War or the migration of the Tuscarora to the north to join the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, this thesis examines the experiences of the Tuscarora people who decided to continue living in their homelands and work alongside the colonists. Little is written about the period between the Tuscarora War and the sale of the Tuscarora Indian Woods Reservation in the 19th century. The purpose of this thesis is to examine the continued resistance of the Tuscarora as a tributary nation living in their homelands, where they faced scrutiny and continued pressure from the colonists while fighting to remain autonomous and reduce population loss.

The Beginning: Cosmology and Culture of the Tuscarora

The Tuscarora Nation was a regional powerhouse before becoming a tributary to the English. The beginning for most Native people starts with their personal cosmology story. The Tuscarora share a similar story to their Iroquoian cousins in the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. The story introduces a spiritual being known as Sky Woman, who fell from Sky World and created the earth on top of a turtle's back.³ According to legend, the Tuscarora were originally located in the Northeast with their Haudenosaunee cousins until they eventually migrated to the Southeast, into the lands they knew as Katenoah, or the place where the "pine grows in water."⁴ Following the Tuscarora migration story, they were led to their new home by a spiritual being known as Tarenhiawagen (Ruler of Skyland).⁵ Tarenhiawagen greatly favored the Tuscarora and kept them protected by the Hine (Thunder beings) while he traveled back to the north to form the

³ Frank Roy, Johnson, *The Tuscaroras: Mythology, Medicine, Culture*, Vol. 1, United States: Johnson Publishing Company, 1967, 18-19.

⁴ Johnson, *The Tuscaroras: Mythology, Medicine, Culture*, Vol. 1, 51.

⁵ Johnson, *The Tuscaroras: Mythology, Medicine, Culture*, Vol. 1, 58.

Haudenosaunee Confederacy.⁶ The timeframe for when the Tuscarora arrived in the Southeast region is not exact, but by at least 600 A.D., they were settled in their villages in present-day eastern North Carolina.⁷ Upon arriving in the Southeast, the Tuscarora quickly began establishing themselves in their new home. Although resettled a reasonable distance away from the rest of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the Tuscarora and members of the confederacy made frequent inroads into one another's villages as their territories intersected one another.

According to tradition and early colonial records, the Tuscarora quickly rose to prominence in the South, forming alliances similar to their cousins in the North, primarily comprising the Iroquoian-speaking Nottoway and Meherrin, the Siouan-speaking Woccon, and the Algonquin-speaking Machapunga and Pamlico.⁸ The Tuscarora alliance was run similarly to the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, where village-level issues were handled locally and larger issues were addressed as a united council, referred to as the "Assembly of the great."⁹ Due to their alliance, the Tuscarora boasted an extensive territorial control of the Southeast, spanning from modern-day southeastern Virginia down to northeastern South Carolina. In this territory, trade routes, diplomatic engagements, and warfare was overseen and directed by Tuscarora headmen and headwomen.¹⁰ Tuscarora influence extended as far south as the Gulf of Mexico, particularly in warfare, and as far north as the territory of their Haudenosaunee cousins.¹¹ The

⁶ Johnson, *The Tuscaroras: Mythology, Medicine, Culture*, Vol. 1, 58-59

⁷ David La Vere, *The Tuscarora War: Indians, Settlers, and the Fight for the Carolina Colonies*, Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2013, 40.

⁸ Frank Roy Johnson, *The Tuscaroras: History-Traditions-Culture*, Vol. 2, Murfreesboro, NC: Johnson Publishing Company, 1968, 84.

⁹ Christoph von Graffenried, Vincent H. Todd, and Julius Goebel, *Christoph von Graffenried's Account of the Founding of New Bern*, Raleigh, NC: Edwards & Broughton Printing, 1920, 265.

¹⁰ Woods, "Tuscarora Roots Historical Report," 15-16.

¹¹ Douglas Wesley Boyce, "Notes on Tuscarora Political Organization, 1650-1713," Thesis, Chapel Hill, 1971, 38.

Tuscarora were so influential that their language became the primary trade language among the majority of Indigenous nations in North Carolina.¹² The cultural practices of the Tuscarora were significant and profoundly shaped by their daily lives.

The Tuscarora were culturally and linguistically Iroquoian, although they were surrounded by Algonquin and Siouan cultures.¹³ Little difference is found between the Tuscarora culture and their cousins in the Haudenosaunee Confederacy.¹⁴ The Tuscarora were a matrilineal people; their bloodlines followed their mother's lineage, which also determined their clan membership.¹⁵ Land, air, and water animals, including Bears, Wolves, Deer, Turtles, Beavers, Eels, and Snipes, represented their clans.¹⁶ The clan served multiple roles in Tuscarora culture. For one, a person's clan signified their birth citizenship. Although Tuscaroras identified as members of the Tuscarora Nation, their primary duty was to their clan, in which all, regardless of bloodline, were treated as relatives.¹⁷ Members of the same clan were forbidden from marrying one another. When a man married a woman from a different clan, he would move in with her clan and raise their children alongside the mother's clan.¹⁸

The Tuscarora were agricultural people, and their ceremonial practices were closely tied to the agricultural calendar. Planting and harvest ceremonies were conducted throughout the year, during which the clans would plant the crops for the coming season and give thanks to

¹² La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 47.

¹³ Anthony F. C. Wallace, "The Modal Personality Structure of the Tuscarora Indians As Revealed by the Rorschach Test," *Smithsonian Institution Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin* 150, December 1952, 23.

¹⁴ Wallace, "The Modal Personality Structure of the Tuscarora Indians As Revealed by the Rorschach Test," 23.

¹⁵ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 40.

¹⁶ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 40.

¹⁷ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 40.

¹⁸ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 40.

Tarenhiawagen and other spiritual beings for their assistance with the harvest, as the winter months approached.¹⁹ The women oversaw the planting and harvesting of crops. Corn, beans, and squash, collectively known as the Three Sisters, provided a staple food source for the people.²⁰ According to Tuscarora beliefs, the Three Sisters were a gift from Tarenhiawagen; when grown together, they support one another as sisters would. The corn grew and provided a sturdy base for the beans to climb, while the squash's leaves grew and collected enough photosynthesis to provide nutrition for all three. During the Fall and Winter, the focus shifted from agriculture to hunting, in which the men were typically responsible for setting up hunting expeditions and supplying their villages with meat and furs used for clothing.²¹

Warfare was deeply ingrained in the culture of the Tuscarora. One of the Tuscarora deities was the Sun God, referred to as Elder Brother Sun, who also served as the God of War.²² For the Tuscarora, going to War was a spiritually charged event, and when the occasion arose, special ceremonies were performed to seek spiritual guidance and strength.²³ Men preparing to go to war conducted spiritual purification ceremonies, during which they would have their hair combed, faces and bodies painted, and accessories for the occasion adorned with the help of women.²⁴ Dances and songs were performed to detail the violence that the warriors wished to inflict upon their enemies in combat.²⁵ Warfare was the ultimate test to see what warriors were suitable leaders in both war and peacetime. The Tuscarora were renowned warriors, and their

¹⁹ Johnson, *The Tuscaroras: Mythology, Medicine, Culture*, Vol. 1, 64-65.

²⁰ Johnson, *The Tuscaroras: Mythology, Medicine, Culture*, Vol. 1, 65.

²¹ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 41.

²² Johnson, *The Tuscaroras: Mythology, Medicine, Culture*, Vol. 1, 95.

²³ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 46.

²⁴ John Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984, 192-193.

²⁵ Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 174.

enemies, notably the Catawba, Cherokee, Creek, and other Algonquin and Siouan-speaking tribes that were not part of their alliance, lived in fear of Tuscarora warriors.²⁶ The Catawba passed down a traditional tale of a dog and a child, who were the only survivors of a village that the Tuscarora had attacked.²⁷

The Tuscarora had War Chiefs, later recorded as War Captains, who planned and led the expeditions. The War Chiefs were calm and calculated individuals chosen based on their nature to make rational decisions. If a War Chief decided that war was the only option, it typically meant that all other means had been exhausted, or other methods would not work in the specific circumstances.²⁸ Warfare was usually used to enact revenge for a previous attack and to capture enemy tribe members for torture or to replace the loss of community members in villages.²⁹ The Tuscarora never engaged their enemies in large battles; instead, they ambushed and raided them, striking quickly to kill and retreat with captives within a short time span.³⁰ War parties were considered successful if warriors returned with captives and plunder they had taken during their travels, along with limited casualties.

Since their arrival in the region known today as North Carolina, the Tuscarora adhered to the guidance of Taranhiawagen. Listening to and abiding by Taranhiawagen's guidance assisted in the growth of the Tuscarora and made them a prominent nation in the area. The Tuscarora expanded their alliances, forming their own confederacy, just as their cousins did. They practiced their rituals given to them by Tarenhiawagen and continued to follow their ceremonial duties.

²⁶ Johnson, *The Tuscaroras: History-Traditions-Culture*, Vol. 2, 8.

²⁷ Johnson, *The Tuscaroras: History-Traditions-Culture*, Vol.2, 8-9.

²⁸ Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 199.

²⁹ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 56.

³⁰ Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 199.

They grew their clans and cultivated their crops, while also hunting to ensure the village's sustainability. They participated in warfare to appease the War God and promote their nation's influence. Life was pleasant for the Tuscarora, and their generations were assured to reap the benefits of their labor.

However, Tuscarora life and culture became threatened when a new group of foreigners arrived in their region. These foreigners came across the ocean and brought many gifts and tools to the Tuscarora, helping bolster their warriors with new weapons and supplies that assisted with everyday life in their villages. But the foreigners also brought havoc in the form of diseases, false promises, and deceitful representatives. Life as the Tuscarora knew it would become turned upside down, and what followed was their fight to survive in this new existence that the foreigners had created.

The Arrival of Foreigners and the Aftermath of the Tuscarora War

The Tuscarora did not fall into their eventual tributary status until generations after the arrival of the first Europeans. The initial European arrival in the Carolinas was not the prophetic beginning of the end for the Tuscarora people and culture. The coming of Europeans offered several opportunities for the Tuscarora to expand their power and commerce. One of the first physical encounters the Tuscarora had with the English was Ralph Lane's expedition into the interior of North Carolina in 1586.³¹ Lane's mission to map out the river system and his pursuit of riches was cut short when the Tuscarora ambushed his boats and destroyed all of Lane's men's provisions, sending them back to the coast.³² Although this initial interaction with the English colonists was not ideal in terms of collaboration, subsequent interactions led to increased trade

³¹ Johnson, *The Tuscaroras: History-Traditions-Culture*, Vol. 2, 20.

³² Johnson, *The Tuscaroras: History-Traditions-Culture*, Vol. 2, 20.

and national expansion. The decline of the Algonquin tribes, such as the Chowanoke, was facilitated by colonial settlements on the coast, which afforded the Tuscarora the opportunity to expand their control over the land and Algonquin villages.³³ With the decline of the Algonquin "buffer" tribes, the Tuscarora had more interactions with European colonists.

The Tuscarora, like other Indigenous nations on the East Coast, participated in the "play-off system," in which they bartered and played the different European nations against each other.³⁴ Francis Yearly took one such recording in 1653, when his men reported that the Tuscarora had Spaniards living amongst them in their village and trading with them. The Tuscarora wished to learn what the English could supply them with in comparison to the Spanish. The headman of the village sent his son along with Yearly to be tutored by the English.³⁵ In the 1660s, some English settlers encroached too far inland on the Chowan River to establish a settlement. In response to the English squatters on the Chowan River, the Tuscarora attacked and pushed the settlers back off their land, leading to an unnamed treaty establishing a peace between the two parties, "a firm perpetuall and inviolable pease to continue So long as Sun and moon Endure."³⁶ The Tuscarora, over time, inserted themselves into the Piedmont Indian trade and trade systems that extended further towards the Gulf of Mexico and up to the Great Lakes.³⁷ Exports of Tuscarora trade included salt, dried fish, yaupon, baskets, mats, bowls, and knives.³⁸ Imports of trade with Europeans included guns, ammo, metal goods, beads, cookware,

³³ Thomas C. Parramore, "The Tuscarora Ascendancy," *The North Carolina Historical Review* 59, no. 4 (1982): 307–26, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23521798>, 309.

³⁴ Parramore, "The Tuscarora Ascendancy," 310–311.

³⁵ Lindley S. Butler, *A History of North Carolina in the Proprietary Era, 1629–1729*, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2022, 46–47.

³⁶ Woods, "Tuscarora Roots Historical Report," 18.

³⁷ Parramore, "The Tuscarora Ascendancy," 312.

³⁸ Parramore, "The Tuscarora Ascendancy," 312.

and alcohol.³⁹ Tuscarora wealth in European goods had risen to such a level that when William Byrd I went to them to negotiate the release of some runaway slaves they had taken in, he found there was little in English goods he could offer that they did not already possess.⁴⁰ Ultimately, European trade was a lucrative endeavor for the Tuscarora, enabling them to increase their autonomy and control over the Southeast. Soon, though, the Tuscarora became entrapped in another lucrative European trade, which they wanted no part in on their own accord.

Before the mass influx of enslaved Africans into North America, there was the Indigenous Slave Trade that took place in the Southeast. The Indigenous Slave Trade morphed over time from settlers kidnapping and enslaving Indigenous people to settlers paying Indigenous people with weapons and other commodities to hunt down and capture other Indigenous people.⁴¹ Settlers had to coerce Indigenous people to work in the trade, typically by allowing Indigenous people to buy trade items on credit until they reached a limit they could not pay back. When the Indigenous person had so much credit they could not pay back, the trader then bargained that if they brought back captured Indigenous peoples for enslavement, they would clear their credit.⁴² Before European arrival, most Indigenous tribes practiced forms of unfreedom, but not chattel slavery like that introduced by the Indian Slave Trade.⁴³ For the Tuscarora, during wartime, they captured enemy Natives and brought them back to their village. The individual who was captured either faced ritual torture, adoption, or remained unfree performing menial tasks until they were adopted or passed away.

³⁹ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 41.

⁴⁰ Woods, "Tuscarora Roots Historical Report," 17.

⁴¹ Alan Gallay, *The Indian Slave Trade : The Rise of the English Empire in the American South, 1670-1717*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002, 8.

⁴² La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 51.

⁴³ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 52.

Participation in the slave trade was mixed, but in the Southeast, one was either the enslaver or the enslaved, and unfortunately for the Tuscarora, they were the latter. Traditional enemies of the Tuscarora, mainly the Yamasee and Siouan-speaking tribes, used the slave trade to boost their power by gaining firearms and other European goods while also whittling down the Tuscarora population. The Tuscarora were infuriated by their newfound position as targets for the slave trade. Tuscarora people, especially those living within their southern territorial lands known as the Lower Towns, living off the lower Neuse River and Contentnea Creek, faced enslavement and molestation frequently due to their geographical location closer to the Siouan nations and the Colony of South Carolina.⁴⁴ The Tuscarora tried to resolve this issue by speaking with the North Carolina government, but their pleas were disregarded.⁴⁵ To make matters worse, when some Tuscarora villages met with representatives from Pennsylvania in 1710, bearing wampum belts, in hopes of relocating closer to the Haudenosaunee kin, the North Carolina government denied their request to relocate.⁴⁶ Finally, after years of abuse, enslavement, and theft of land, the Tuscarora decided to put down the wampum and pick up the tomahawk.

By September 1711, the Tuscarora had dealt with consistent disrespect and molestation by the North Carolina settlers. The colonists appeared to have become far too comfortable in disregarding the Tuscarora people, their land, and their culture. Their allies, the Seneca, also believed that the Tuscarora should go to war with the colonists. The Seneca believed the Tuscarora had been far too nice and needed to show their military strength to the settlers. The Seneca's prodding was likely due to their desire to increase the power of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy in the North, and their allies, the Tuscarora, would serve as an extension of the

⁴⁴ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 53.

⁴⁵ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 53.

⁴⁶ LaVere, *The Tuscarora War*, 53-54.

confederacy's military might.⁴⁷ After receiving sufficient provocation from their allies, the Tuscarora people in the Lower Towns decided to teach the settlers a lesson they would seldom forget.⁴⁸ The conflict initially started after Tuscarora warriors from the village of Catechna captured John Lawson, Christoph De Graffenried, and their two enslaved Africans.⁴⁹ The two Englishmen were on a scouting mission to explore further trade routes and potential land for settlement in Tuscarora territory. After their capture, they were brought back to Catechna, where Chief Hancock presided over the proceedings. After several days of deliberation, the Assembly of the Great decided to execute Lawson and spare Graffenried.⁵⁰ After the execution of Lawson, the Tuscarora, specifically the Lower Towns, agreed that a quick and deliberate strike across the colony would not only surprise the settlers but also leave little room for a counterattack, and so on the morning of September 22nd the offensive began with "Tuscaroras, Cores, Machapungas, Pamlicos, Weetocks, and Bear River Indians," assaulting farms and settlements throughout the colony.⁵¹ As expected, the Tuscarora and their allies met little resistance. After minor skirmishes between settlers, most of the fighting force pulled back, feeling they had accomplished their mission in teaching the colony a lesson. Unfortunately, the colony could not allow such an offensive to go unanswered for long.

North Carolina did not have an available fighting force to handle a war with the Tuscarora, so they turned to their neighbors for help. South Carolina agreed to send a mixed force of colonists and Indigenous warriors, mostly Yamasee, to help fight the Tuscarora led by

⁴⁷ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 57-58.

⁴⁸ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 57-58.

⁴⁹ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 38.

⁵⁰ Graffenried, *Christoph von Graffenried's Account of the Founding of New Bern*, 270.

⁵¹ Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 69.

Colonel John Barnwell in the Winter of 1712.⁵² Barnwell and his force met little resistance as they marched through Tuscarora territory, finding most villages deserted.⁵³ The majority of the hostile Tuscarora received word of Barnwell's forces and decided to retreat to the heavily fortified village of Catechna with Chief Hancock.⁵⁴ Barnwell's forces eventually surrounded Catechna, but after several thwarted attacks and a siege, Barnwell and the Tuscarora agreed to a peace treaty that spring.⁵⁵ However, the treaty was broken soon that same summer after a massacre at another peace conference, where an estimated 50 Tuscarora allies were killed and the rest enslaved.⁵⁶

The Tuscarora and their allies resumed raiding the frontier, which prompted another expedition from South Carolina, this time led by Colonel James Moore. Similar to Col. Barnwell's expedition, Moore's forces met little resistance until they surrounded the heavily fortified Fort Neoheroka in March 1713.⁵⁷ After several days of siege warfare, Moore's forces successfully sieged the fort, leading to nearly a thousand Tuscarora men, women, and children being killed or enslaved.⁵⁸ The massacre at Fort Neoheroka was a massive blow to Tuscarora power, which marked the beginning of the end of the war between the Tuscarora and the colony. Although some fighting continued, it typically consisted of smaller-scale skirmishes and ambushes for the next several years, extending into 1715.⁵⁹

⁵² Wayne E. Lee, "Fortify, Fight, or Flee: Tuscarora and Cherokee Defensive Warfare and Military Culture Adaptation," *The Journal of Military History* 68, no. 3 (2004): 713-770, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1353/jmh.2004.0124>, 735.

⁵³ Lee, "Fortify, Fight, or Flee, 735.

⁵⁴ Lee, "Fortify, Fight, or Flee, 735.

⁵⁵ Lee, "Fortify, Fight, or Flee, 738.

⁵⁶ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 133.

⁵⁷ Lee, "Fortify, Fight, or Flee, 743.

⁵⁸ Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 169.

⁵⁹ Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 176.

The Tuscarora Nation served as a barrier, stopping the westward expansion of settlers. For generations, the Tuscarora were feared and highly respected by the settlers and other Indigenous nations. Unfortunately for the Tuscarora, after decades of fighting, enslavement, and disease, their control eventually withered away. The Tuscarora War was the last stand between the Tuscarora people and the land-hungry colonists. Sadly, the Tuscarora were divided by conflict, with most of the Upper Towns that lived off the Upper Neuse, Roanoke, and Tar Rivers under the rule of Chief Tom Blount remaining neutral, while the Lower Towns and their allies fought against the colonists. The Upper Town Tuscarora had maintained a mutually beneficial relationship with Virginia traders and knew that if they openly declared war on the colonists, they would lose their trade. However, the Upper Town Tuscarora did provide protection and housing for Lower Town Tuscarora women and children within their own villages during and after the war.⁶⁰ By the end of the war, the Lower Towns experienced the most violence, just as they had before the war, leaving the Upper Towns largely unscathed in comparison. After the Massacre of Neoheroka, the Lower Towns, having sustained the most losses, split, with some moving into the Upper Towns, others fleeing into the swamplands, and others beginning their trek north to find shelter among the Haudenosaunee. The state of the Tuscarora Nation in North Carolina at the end of the War was far from its pre-war state. For Tuscarora to maintain any influence and autonomy, they had to work with the colony that sought to destroy them.

Historiography

Historians have mostly overlooked the Tuscarora during the tributary period, and coverage of it greatly lacks adequate discussion and examination of the actions taken by the

⁶⁰ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 109.

Tuscarora. For many scholars, their primary focus is on the Tuscarora War, which took place from 1711 to 1715. It is understandable to focus on the Tuscarora War; this conflict was, in retrospect, a watershed moment that led to the end of the Southeastern Indian Slave Trade. Without the Tuscarora War, the Yamasee War would not have occurred, which was the primary catalyst for ending the slave trade as it was. The Tuscarora War also marks the beginning of forward settlement into the interior of North Carolina, which was previously impossible, as the Tuscarora Nation's diplomatic and military capabilities had hindered the colony's growth, along with geographical barriers. The Tuscarora War also demonstrated a unique style of warfare, with the Tuscarora relying on highly fortified forts to protect them from sieges, like English-style warfare, which was largely successful until the Massacre of Fort Neoheroka. Whatever the fascination is with the Tuscarora War for historians, it seems to outshine the rest of Tuscarora history.

When historians do cover the Tuscarora during the 1715-1761 Tributary Period, it is typically in relation to other topics at hand. Historians discussing the Yamasee War often mention Tuscarora service on behalf of the colonists, primarily due to the irony of the situation. During the Tuscarora War, the Yamasee served in the South Carolina companies formed to attack, destroy, and capture the Tuscarora, both during Col. Barnwell's expedition and Col. Moore's expedition. Then, in the same year the Tuscarora War ended, the Yamasee War began, and Tuscarora warriors served in the ranks of North Carolina companies who sought to attack, destroy, and capture the Yamasee and their allies. In *The Yamasee War: A Study of Culture, Economy, and Conflict In the Colonial South*, William L. Ramsey concluded that, "The irony of the situation could not have been clearer. The same colony that had sought to destroy the Tuscaroras by massing its native allies in 1713 now begged for help from Tuscarora refugees

against those former allies."⁶¹ Still, the Tuscarora remain anecdotal in Ramsey's work, only mentioned when their impact on the conflict needs discussion.

During the Tributary Period of the Tuscarora, another massive conflict developed, remembered as the French and Indian War. The Tuscarora, both those in North Carolina and New York, served in multiple capacities during this conflict. However, the Tuscarora in North Carolina are typically unidentified in major historical works when recounting the War. The lack of Tuscarora inclusion is likely due to the limited number of available warriors to fight alongside the English in the War. The Tuscarora are mentioned in several articles and books, but their mentions are typically limited to a single page or less. One article that mentions the Tuscarora in the French and Indian War is Buck Woodard and Danielle Moretti-Langholtz's "The Millie Woodson-Turner Nottoway Reservation Allotment and Farmstead." This article's focus is on the Nottoway, who were close allies of the Tuscarora. During the French and Indian War segment of the article, it is mentioned that the Tuscarora served alongside the Nottoway as raiders, scouts, and caravan security throughout the campaigns of 1757 and 1758.⁶²

Other sources, such as Douglas R. Cubbison's *The British Defeat of the French in Pennsylvania, 1758: A Military History of the Forbes Campaign Against Fort Duquesne*, mention the Tuscarora twice, as they were part of the Forbes Campaign effort. The issue is that the Tuscarora warriors were considerably smaller in number compared to the Catawba and Cherokee, whom Cubbison primarily focused on. In *Carolina in Crisis: Cherokees, Colonists*,

⁶¹ William L. Ramsey, *The Yamasee War: A Study of Culture, Economy, and Conflict In the Colonial South*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008, 164-165.

⁶² Buck Woodward and Danielle Moretti-Langholtz, "The Millie Woodson-Turner Nottoway Reservation Allotment and Farmstead." United States: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 2017, 24-25.

and Slaves in the American Southeast, 1756-1763, Daniel J. Tortora mentions the Tuscarora a handful of times, as they appear during the French and Indian War and the Anglo-Cherokee War. Once again, the focus is on the Cherokee, and the Tuscarora are brought up only in connection with how their participation affected the Cherokee. Although most articles and books mention the Tuscarora during the tributary period, only two books cover this period.

In Frank Roy Johnson's book *The Tuscaroras: Mythology, Medicine, Culture, Volume 2*, a continuation of his previous work, Johnson covers Tuscarora history from their arrival in North Carolina up until the 20th century. In Johnson's book, the Tuscarora Tributary period covers three chapters. Over the course of these three chapters, Johnson examines the reservation life under Chief Tom Blount and how the Tuscarora people provided services to North Carolina settlers to maintain their reservation and goodwill with the colonists. Johnson mentions Tuscarora participation in the Yamasee War and the French and Indian War, and also discusses the Tuscarora's other methods of serving as tributaries, such as their annual visits with the Governor of North Carolina.⁶³ Overall, Johnson provides a decent investigation into the Tuscarora Tributary Period. Unfortunately, Johnson's book is several decades old, having been published in 1968. Due to the date of Johnson's work, he lacks resources that were unavailable to him during the time of his writing, such as the recorded "Treaty of Holston River" between the Cherokee and Tuscarora during the Anglo-Cherokee War, which highlights the tributary status and services of the Tuscarora. Johnson also does not provide detailed information regarding Tuscarora participation in the French and Indian War and the Anglo-Cherokee War. These two conflicts only amount to a page and a half in his book.⁶⁴

⁶³ Johnson, *The Tuscaroras: History-Traditions-Culture*, Vol. 2, 166.

⁶⁴ Johnson, *The Tuscaroras: History-Traditions-Culture*, Vol. 2, 186-187.

The latest book by David La Vere, titled *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, was published in 2024 and covers the tributary period the best. La Vere's book is a continuation of his 2013 work, titled *The Tuscarora War: Indians, Settlers, and the Fight for the Carolina Colonies*. In his earlier work, La Vere provides significant detail on the causes of the Tuscarora War and the war itself. In the conclusion, *The Tuscarora War* La Vere summarizes the tributary period with one sentence: "The Tuscaroras managed to hang onto their Indian Woods reservation the longest, but in the end it was still extinguished."⁶⁵ In his latest book, La Vere was determined to cover the largely left-out part of Tuscarora history after the Tuscarora War. To La Vere's credit, he details the reservation period of the Tuscarora people in North Carolina and finishes with the present-day issues of the Tuscarora in North Carolina. La Vere's book is far ahead of Johnson's in terms of coverage of the tributary period and the collection of sources. Still, La Vere's book also dedicates a significant portion of its chapters to discussing other tribes and North Carolina colonial history. Another issue with La Vere's latest book is his brief summary of the conflicts in which the Tuscarora fought as part of their tributary status. The Yamasee War is only briefly mentioned, occupying two pages.⁶⁶ The French and Indian War is discussed in only two and a half pages.⁶⁷ Lastly, the participation of Tuscarora warriors in the Anglo-Cherokee War was briefly mentioned in a few sentences spread across several pages.⁶⁸ La Vere's *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina* significantly contributes to the discussion of the Tuscarora during the tributary period. Still, its lack of detailed examination of sources on the Tuscarora service continues to leave the period without fully receiving the

⁶⁵ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 204.

⁶⁶ David La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, United States: Syracuse University Press, 2024, 90-91.

⁶⁷ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 160-162.

⁶⁸ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 162-164.

discussion it deserves. This thesis will provide a further detailed examination of legislation, letters, and treaties that the Tuscarora impacted throughout this period, which La Vere does not.

The purpose of this thesis is to accurately and thoroughly examine the significant impact of the Tuscarora people in North Carolina during their tributary period. Previous resources only mention the Tuscarora's services in passing, leaving much uncovered. The two works by Johnson and La Vere attribute a greater focus to this monumental period of Tuscarora history, but both have their shortcomings. This thesis will examine the tributary period over the course of several chapters, utilizing all available primary and secondary resources to analyze and assess the contributions and lives of the Tuscarora who resided on the Indian Woods Reservation from 1715 to 1761. The history of the Tuscarora during this period is crucial in understanding the experiences of other Indigenous nations in North Carolina during the same time. This period sheds light on how Indigenous people fought to resist colonial pressures within the Imperial English colonies. Lastly, this period demonstrates the resilience of the Tuscarora, who, after suffering significant losses from the Tuscarora War, fought to remain in their homelands while recovering from generations of colonial oppression through tributary services rather than warfare.

Chapter 2: Reorganizing after the Tuscarora War

For the Tuscarora who decided to stay in North Carolina following the end of the war, their existence was constantly under threat by the colonists and their rival Indigenous nations. To remain in their homelands, they had to accept their position as a tributary nation under the overwatch of the colonists. The Tuscarora War significantly reduced the overall fighting power of the Tuscarora, resulting in at least 1,000 dead and captured, or around 20% of their prewar population, thereby decreasing their ability to engage in another conflict with North Carolina. The Tuscarora were also dealing with the diaspora of their people. After the Massacre of Fort Neoheroka, the Tuscarora people were in disarray. Some of the Tuscarora fled to the swampland interior of North Carolina to hide out from Col. Moore and his men. Other groups fled into Virginia, where they lived as refugees.⁶⁹ A few members of the Tuscarora, Core, and Machapunga continued small raids on North Carolina homesteads until 1718.⁷⁰ Governor Pollock appointed the title “King of the Tuscarora” to Chief Tom Blount after he abided by his word and kept the Upper Town Tuscarora mostly out of the war.⁷¹ Blount’s appointment as ruler of all Tuscarora caused dissatisfaction amongst many Tuscarora, who saw his neutrality in the beginning of the war and his betrayal of Chief Hancock and the Lower Towns as the cause for their defeat, leading some to relocate to the north with the Haudenosaunee.⁷² Still, the Tuscarora remained one of the most populous Indigenous nations in eastern North Carolina, with approximately 3,000 individuals under the rule of Blount in 1715.⁷³ With a war lost and his people in turmoil, Chief Blount had to begin strategizing a new relationship for his people and

⁶⁹ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 74.

⁷⁰ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 198.

⁷¹ Alexander Spotswood, “Letter from Alexander Spotswood to Thomas Pollock,” April 1713.

⁷² La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 87.

⁷³ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 74.

the North Carolina Government. Whether he liked it or not, Chief Blount held the future of the Tuscarora nation in his hands. Luckily for him, a new conflict arose that he could consider advantageous to his Tuscarora.

The Yamasee War: The Beginning of Tuscarora Tributary Services

While the Tuscarora were still collecting themselves after their War, they were quickly thrown into another conflict as an obligation of their status as a tributary nation for the Colony of North Carolina. Enemies of the Tuscarora but friends to the colonists, the Yamasee had served as South Carolina's trusted Indigenous allies. The Yamasee were notoriously involved in the Indigenous Slave Trade to boost their personal autonomy and power in South Carolina. The Yamasee emerged from the Tuscarora War in good standing with the colonists, having done the dirty work of killing and enslaving Tuscarora men, women, and children. The Yamasee also collected plenty of loot for their trouble when ransacking Tuscarora villages. For the colonists, it seemed that their relationship with the Yamasee was only growing stronger every day. However, the Yamasee, having witnessed and committed atrocities against the Tuscarora people at the behest of the colonists, began to reassess their current relationship with the Carolinians. Although their current relationship with the European colonists was prosperous, they knew it was only a matter of time until they would find themselves enslaved by the colonists. Due to this, interactions between Yamasee and the colonists became strained.

Noticing the new distrust from the Yamasee, on April 14, 1715, South Carolinian negotiators met with the Yamasee at their village of Pocotaligo to discuss their future relationship and to ease the growing tension of the Yamasee.⁷⁴ On the surface, the meeting

⁷⁴ Ramsey, *The Yamasee War*, 1.

between the two parties went well; however, by the next morning, the Carolinian negotiators were either killed in their sleep or ceremonially tortured by the Yamasee.⁷⁵ That same day, a coalition of “Yamasees, Guales, Apalachees, Savannahs, Cheraws, Catawbass, Waterees, Waccamaws, Cape Fears, and to the west the Lower Creeks, Yuchis, and Cherokees,” swept through South Carolina in a surprise, large-scale assault, reminiscent of the September 22nd attacks conducted by the Tuscarora and their allies in 1711.⁷⁶ This new war not only threatened the lucrative Indigenous Slave Trade but also the very existence of South Carolina as a colony.

South Carolina was in shambles, and all their trusted Indigenous allies were now attacking their settlements. The conflict quickly began to spill into North Carolina, launching the North Carolinians into panic not long after the Tuscarora War. The North Carolinians needed assistance in this war; however, their number one ally, who saved them from the Tuscarora, was South Carolina, along with their Yamasee warriors. Now, who would come to the rescue of the North Carolinians still licking their wounds from the Tuscarora, Core, and Machapunga attacks? The solution needed to arrive quickly, as Charles Town, the largest port city in the South, was under attack, along with other settlements to the north, by the Cheraws, Waterees, Santee, and Catawbass.⁷⁷ It was only a matter of time before bloodshed painted the southern North Carolina settlements red once again, so the time to act was crucial for North Carolina.

While this conflict arose in South Carolina, Chief Blount and the Tuscarora people were still settling down on their assigned reservation land between the Pamlico and Neuse Rivers.⁷⁸ This land was historically under Tuscarora control, and near his old village, which was promised

⁷⁵ Ramsey, *The Yamasee War*, 1.

⁷⁶ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 179.

⁷⁷ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 180.

⁷⁸ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 87.

to Blount, along with his position as “King of the Tuscarora,” if his Upper Towns remained out of the conflict his Lower Town cousins were engaged in during the Tuscarora War, as stipulated in the 1713 Treaty.⁷⁹ Blount is a polarizing figure in history for the Tuscarora. On the one hand, his neutrality in the Tuscarora War was a significant factor in the defeat of the Lower Town Tuscarora. His agreement with Governor Pollock's assignment of him as the ruler of all Tuscarora in the colony also makes him appear like a traitorous, power-hungry dictator, only caring about himself and his personal gain. But, on the other hand, his neutrality saved his village and the other Upper Towns from molestation during the Tuscarora War. Blount also made numerous promises to fight and capture the Lower Town Tuscarora for Gov. Pollock throughout the war. He seldom kept these promises outside of handing over Chief Hancock and several others from the Catechna Tuscarora Alliance.⁸⁰ Blount had dissenters amongst his people, which led many to relocate to the swamps of North Carolina or voyage to their Seneca cousins in the North rather than live under his rule. Ultimately, Blount, like many figures in history, cannot be considered good or bad, a traitor or a savior; he was simply a man put in extraordinary circumstances, and whether it was right or wrong, he did help keep his village and other “neutral” Tuscarora relatively safe.

The betrayal of the Yamasee and their attacks in South Carolina became known to Blount. After the Tuscarora War and relocation onto their reservation, many Tuscarora villages were abandoned on the frontier. Soon after the conflict arose in South Carolina, Cheraws began moving into and occupying abandoned Tuscarora villages on Contentnea Creek.⁸¹ This news

⁷⁹ Spotswood, Letter to Pollock, April 1713.

⁸⁰ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 78-80.

⁸¹ William L. Saunders, *The Colonial Records of North Carolina 1713-1728*, Vol. 2, Raleigh, NC: Joseph Daniels, 1886, 288-289.

must have been a significant blow to Blount and the Tuscarora. The Cheraw were ancestral enemies of the Tuscarora. In the past, if the Cheraw attempted to set foot in Tuscarora territory, they would be met with arrows, clubs, and hatchets. Unfortunately for Blount and his Tuscarora, they were still recovering from years of war and learning to accept their place as a tributary nation to North Carolina. As tributaries to North Carolina, the Tuscarora were expected to work with the colonists during times of war and peace, while also showing mutual respect for colonial officials through gifts and obedience to the colonial government. Even if they wanted to leave their reservation land and route the Cheraw out of their old villages, their new situation made their freedom of movement almost impossible. They were now consolidated in one location, which made planning easier, but also left their nation vulnerable to attack, primarily due to the location of their reservation. The Cheraws' sudden arrival had made Blount drastically aware that his people were not situated in a strategically tactical area. Additionally, they were under the jurisdiction of North Carolina, which had not forgotten their attacks in 1711. If the Tuscarora made any moves outside of the approval of North Carolina, they would find themselves victims of militia roaming the frontier. If Blount wanted to remove the Cheraw from their old villages, he had to gain approval from North Carolina.

North Carolina was already planning to join the fight against the Yamasee, and the new Cheraw inhabitants of their old villages fell under the list of tribes the colony was at war with. Although North Carolina officials had their eyes set on the Yamasee and their allied tribes conducting raids in South Carolina, Blount was able to convince them that the Cheraws also posed a credible threat, not just to his Tuscarora people, but also to the settlers on the frontier.⁸² For now, though, North Carolina's gaze was on the Yamasee, the leaders of this new conflict.

⁸² Saunders, *The Colonial Records of North Carolina 1713-1728*, Vol. 2, 288-289.

Governor Charles Eden ordered the mustering of two militia companies under the command of Colonel Theophilus Hastings and Colonel Maurice Moore, as well as a patrol under Captain Drinkwater, to monitor the land between the Neuse and Pamlico for hostile forces.⁸³ Blount's Tuscarora and some Core warriors were assigned under the command of Col. Maurice Moore. Ironically, for Blount and Moore, Col. Maurice Moore was Col. James Moore's brother. Colonel Maurice Moore also fought against the Tuscarora throughout 1712-1713. A few years prior, the Tuscarora warriors had been fighting against Col. Moore's militia and the Yamasee warriors; now the two parties were united to bring war to Col. Moore's old allies, the Yamasee.

The assignment under Col. Moore may have made Chief Blount and the Tuscarora and Core warriors bitter due to their past. Still, they seemed to have understood the importance of their participation in this conflict on the side of North and South Carolina. For one, this conflict created an opportunity to gain trust and earn rewards from North Carolina. After several years of war with the Carolinians, the Tuscarora's arrival to aid them may have helped alleviate the fears that the settlers still harbored for their Tuscarora neighbors. The Tuscarora were not the guilty party in their war with the Carolinians; they were the original inhabitants of the land on which the Carolinians built their settlements and suffered slavery and molestation at the hands of the colonists until they finally went to war with them in 1711. However, as Chief Blount and the other Tuscaroras already knew, the colonists seldom regarded themselves as the aggressors in their conflicts. Another bonus for Blount and the Tuscaroras was that this time they could fulfill their warrior duties, pick up their weapons, and bloody the ground of the Yamasee and other ancestral enemies, with the full support of the Carolinians. Lastly, South Carolina officials deemed it appropriate to incentivize the Tuscarora to join the fight on the colonial side by

⁸³ Minutes of the North Carolina Council, May 25, 1715, North Carolina Council.

enacting a piece of legislation that for every Tuscarora life lost or enemy Indian killed or captured by the Tuscarora, a Tuscarora slave would receive freedom and be sent back to Blount and the Tuscarora in North Carolina.⁸⁴ This piece of legislation from South Carolina further motivated the already willing Tuscarora into this new war. This conflict was their chance to bring home the stolen relatives of Blount's Tuscarora. For the Tuscarora, it was time to go on the warpath once again, and this time their results at the end of the war were drastically different compared to their previous ones. Around mid-July 1715, Col. Maurice Moore and his company of militiamen, Tuscarora, and Core warriors began their trek south to join forces with Gov. Craven's forces under Lt. Gen James Moore to the north of Charles Town.⁸⁵

Before Col. Maurice Moore could get his forces underway, his brother, Lt. Gen. James Moore, in South Carolina, had already raised three regiments of militia and fortified the city of Charles Town in preparation for the next attack.⁸⁶ After fortifying the city of Charles Town, Lt. Gen. Moore sent out his militia regiments to engage the Yamasee south of the city. During these skirmishes, the militia was able to eliminate key leaders of the Yamasee, leading to their reprieve from the conflict.⁸⁷ With the Yamasee retreating from the conflict, this ensured the southern front of Charles Town was secured. However, other Siouan tribes to the north of the city, mainly the Cheraw, continued to carry out raids and wage war. The Cheraw's raids were the primary focus for the North Carolinian forces coming south. Col. Hastings' company was ordered to depart south immediately by water. At the same time, Col. Maurice Moore took his company by land

⁸⁴ Acts of the South Carolina General Assembly, March 24, 1715, South Carolina General Assembly.

⁸⁵ Enoch Lawrence Lee, *Indian Wars in North Carolina, 1663-1763*, United States: Literary Licensing, LLC, 2011, 40-41.

⁸⁶ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 179.

⁸⁷ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 180.

along the coast of North Carolina.⁸⁸ Col. Moore's route by land took him along the Cape Fear River in southeastern North Carolina.

The Cape Fear River basin served as the traditional dividing line between Tuscarora and Siouan territories. At the onset of the Tuscarora War in 1711, Major Christopher Gale wrote a letter pleading for southern reinforcements to "fall upon those Indians our enemies, whose families are since fled down to the seaboard between Weatuck and Cape Fare rivers, whilst their men are still ravaging and destroying all before them."⁸⁹ Gale's letter confirms two things: first, at the time of the Tuscarora War, the Tuscarora sought refuge alongside the Cape Fear River; and second, they did so without the presence of their warriors, which suggests that the land was within their territorial control. The Tuscarora's history with this region was a significant asset for Col. Moore's forces, as they knew the land better than he and his white militia. The presence of the Tuscarora proved vital, as unbeknownst to Col. Moore, his forces were marching towards a trap.

While scouting ahead of Col. Moore's forces, some Tuscarora scouts discovered an ambush lying in wait for the company. The ambush was planned by a force of Cape Fear and Waccamaw warriors who had aligned themselves with the Cheraw.⁹⁰ The scouts brought this information back to Col. Moore to prevent a massacre of his forces, including the Tuscarora and Core warriors accompanying him. With this new information, Col. Moore devised a strategic plan to abandon the forward march towards the ambush and instead altered their route so that they surprised both the Waccamaw and Cape Fear warriors lying in wait and continued into their

⁸⁸ Lee, *Indian Wars in North Carolina*, 40.

⁸⁹ Christopher Gale to His Sibling, "Letter from Christopher Gale Including a Memorial Concerning Attacks by Native Americans" Charleston, South Carolina, September 2, 1711.

⁹⁰ Lee, *Indian Wars in North Carolina*, 41.

villages. This plan relied on the assumption that the majority of the Cape Fear and Waccamaw fighting forces at the ambush site were too focused on the proposed route of Col. Moore's company to respond to a surprise attack. Col. Moore's plan was successful, and his forces caught the Waccamaw and Cape Fear warriors off guard, resulting in their swift defeat.⁹¹ Col. Moore did not stop there; he continued his march into their villages and took their weapons and ammunition that they had stockpiled. Col. Moore interrogated the Cape Fear to learn how they had stockpiled firearms and ammunition. According to the Cape Fear, they had received their weapons and ammunition from the Cheraw, who were pushing for their involvement in this conflict.⁹² Another part of Col. Moore's attack and visit to the villages was to secure captives for enslavement, and he did just that, collecting around eighty Cape Fear and Waccamaw as prisoners.⁹³ For the Tuscarora warriors accompanying Col. Moore, this action must have felt reminiscent of their own experiences at Col. Moore's hands during their war prior. This event signified the first recorded time the Tuscarora had participated in the Indigenous Slave Trade as enslavers and not the enslaved. This event acted as a sobering reminder for the Tuscarora of their new allies.

Following the skirmishes with the Cape Fear and Waccamaw, Col. Moore's company continued their march to Charles Town. The rest of the trip was uneventful for Col. Moore and his forces. After a rendezvous with Col. Hasting and the troops from South Carolina, strategic planning began to put an end to the war. The Yamasee and the majority of the other Siouan forces were subdued and unable to continue a large-scale conflict with the colony. However, the Cherokee and Creek seemed to have allied against the colonists, and their forces combined

⁹¹ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 180.

⁹² Lee, *Indian Wars in North Carolina*, 41.

⁹³ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 180.

meant inevitable devastation for South and North Carolina. South Carolina officials determined that the forces of North and South Carolina needed to march into Cherokee country and negotiate for Cherokee neutrality. The leader of this meeting was Col. Maurice Moore, who brought around five hundred militiamen and Indigenous allies as a show of force in January 1716.⁹⁴ This force included the Tuscarora and Core Warriors. The meeting between Col. Moore and the Cherokee went exceptionally well. The Cherokee decided to partner with the English settlers in the conflict. To show their allegiance to the settlers, they killed the Creek ambassadors amongst them. The meeting with the Cherokee ultimately led to the end of the Yamasee War, as the majority of the belligerents were too exhausted to continue fighting without the assistance of the Cherokee and Creeks. The Yamasee, having lost the war, relocated to Spanish Florida, escaping the grasp of North and South Carolina.⁹⁵ Although North and South Carolina emerged victorious, they learned a valuable lesson from their dealings with Indigenous people. The Yamasee were the major collaborators of the Southeast Indigenous Slave Trade. Now that they had turned against the traders and colonists, there was no one else willing to fulfill their position, and the war had cost far too much for South Carolina. The end of the Yamasee War also represented the end of the Indigenous Slave Trade, which was the ultimate cause of both the Yamasee and Tuscarora Wars.

Although the fighting was essentially over, South Carolina remained vulnerable, especially at the southern frontier of Charles Town. Their Indigenous allies, the Yamasee, who originally guarded the southern frontier for South Carolina, were gone, having lost their war with the colonists. It was also impossible to believe that the Yamasee would have wanted to rekindle a

⁹⁴ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 181.

⁹⁵ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 181.

relationship with South Carolina, or that the South Carolinians would trust the Yamasee to protect them after the Yamasee had attacked their settlements. Still, the southern frontier needed protection from possible future raids of hostile Indigenous warriors or Spanish soldiers. The Tuscarora, under the command of Col. Moore, were asked if they would stay and patrol the southern frontier, keeping the South Carolinians along the Savannah River safe.⁹⁶ The Tuscarora warriors agreed and fulfilled their duty so well that they were eventually offered land grants for themselves and their families to stay and continue guarding the southern frontier, keeping Charles Town safe from surprise attacks. The Tuscarora warriors, once again, agreed and seemed to have fallen under the leadership of a Tuscarora named Chief Foster, and ironically, Col. Barnwell, their new neighbor, who befriended them. Unfortunately, little is known about the future of this group of Tuscarora, as they are last mentioned in the historical record in 1718. The last known recording of this band of Tuscarora is when Chief Foster and a colonist named Daniel Callihaun appeared in a dispute after Callihaun stole a canoe and threatened Foster.⁹⁷ The court ruled in favor of Foster and granted him trade goods, while reprimanding Callihaun. After this, the future of Chief Foster and his Tuscarora band is lost in history.

Although the majority of the Yamasee allied belligerents made peace with the colonists, one remained a threat to North Carolina and Chief Blount's Tuscarora. The Cheraw were still inhabiting abandoned Tuscarora towns and, according to Blount, were reportedly attacking settlers and had captured a Tuscarora.⁹⁸ At the behest of Blount and in their own good interest, North Carolina officials sent militia and some Tuscarora to investigate and disrupt the Cheraw in

⁹⁶ Acts of the South Carolina General Assembly, March 24, 1715, South Carolina General Assembly.

⁹⁷ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 183.

⁹⁸ Saunders, *The Colonial Records of North Carolina 1713-1728*, Vol. 2, 288-289.

the old Tuscarora villages. The Tuscarora soon learned that these Cheraw were well-armed and posed a significant threat not only to North Carolina but also to themselves.⁹⁹ After the Yamasee War subsided, the Cheraw sought peace with the colonists in North Carolina and desired to relocate to the colony permanently.¹⁰⁰ Thankfully for Blount and his Tuscarora, North Carolina officials declined this offer from the Cheraw. North Carolina officials created a mixed militia and Tuscarora force to patrol the area between the Core Sound, Neuse River, and the Forks of the Neuse, looking for Cheraw warriors to kill or capture.¹⁰¹ Eventually, after 1718, the Cheraw relocated and lived with the Catawba in their territory to the west.¹⁰² With the threat of the Cheraw gone, North Carolina no longer felt the need to patrol the territory along the Neuse. However, for Blount and his Tuscarora, the presence of the Cheraw demonstrated how they were in a strategically bad location for defense. Blount needed to assure the survival and safety of his people, so he once again pursued the North Carolina government with a request.

In 1717, Chief Blount requested that North Carolina officials grant land for a new reservation off the Roanoke River. This land was also a part of traditional Tuscarora territory and served as a strategically defensible location for Blount and the Tuscarora.¹⁰³ Another strategic point of this location was its proximity to the Governor of North Carolina. Living closer to the Governor of North Carolina meant Blount had more opportunities to meet and discuss the future of his people while continuing to act as a tributary nation. The North Carolina Council convened in June 1717 and discussed Blount's request.¹⁰⁴ After deliberation, Governor Charles Eden

⁹⁹ Lee, *Indian Wars in North Carolina*, 41.

¹⁰⁰ Lee, *Indian Wars in North Carolina*, 44.

¹⁰¹ Lee, *Indian Wars in North Carolina*, 44-45.

¹⁰² Lee, *Indian Wars in North Carolina*, 45.

¹⁰³ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 91.

¹⁰⁴ Minutes of the North Carolina Council, June 4, 1717 – June 5, 1717, North Carolina Council.

decided to grant the land to Blount and the Tuscarora. A significant rationale for Governor Eden's decision was Blount's service to the colony both during the Tuscarora War and the Yamasee War.¹⁰⁵ The Tuscarora warriors proved themselves brave and true to their word for North and South Carolina against the Waccamaw, Cheraw, and Cape Fear. The warriors also maintained patrols and security for South Carolina south of Charles Town. Tactically, it was smart for Governor Eden to keep the Tuscarora appeased and nearby for his beckoning, just in case an issue may arise. Satisfied, Blount and the Tuscarora relocated by December 1717.

The In-Between Stage: Appeasing North Carolina Between Wars

The new reservation that Blount secured was known as the Indian Woods Tuscarora Reservation, and it demonstrated to the Tuscarora that if they adhered to their obligations as tributaries, the colonists would listen to their grievances and work with them for mutual benefit. The new reservation had incorporated the villages of Ooneroy and Resootskeh and spanned 41,000 acres across the Roanoke River in present-day Bertie County.¹⁰⁶ This reservation afforded the Tuscarora great opportunities to continue practicing their traditional lifeways. Their new home had expansive traditional hunting grounds filled with White-tailed Deer, Black Bear, Beavers, and other animals to trap and hunt, allowing the men to continue their roles as hunters and provide for the people.¹⁰⁷ This land was also situated between several waterways, where they could catch fish and use the rivers for travel.¹⁰⁸ For the women, this land was promising for farming, allowing them to continue growing and sustaining the two towns within the reservation

¹⁰⁵ Minutes of the North Carolina Council, June 4, 1717 – June 5, 1717, North Carolina Council.

¹⁰⁶ Woods, "Tuscarora Roots Historical Report," 28.

¹⁰⁷ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 92.

¹⁰⁸ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 92.

with crops such as Tuscarora White Corn, beans, and squash.¹⁰⁹ It seemed that this new reservation had potential for the Tuscarora to continue preserving their nation and promoting their traditional lifeways. For Chief Blount, this new land represented a promising future for his people, with their position as a tributary nation for North Carolina. Securing this land enhanced his leadership position amongst his people. Although he was not chosen as the supreme leader of all the Tuscarora by his own people, he demonstrated his ability to work with North Carolina officials in securing a new life for his people in this foreign tributary existence. Whether the Tuscarora people wanted him as their leader, he was, and nothing changed as long as he was alive and in good standing with the colonists.

Although the new reservation was promising for the Tuscarora, it was still a far cry from their old lifestyle. While the Indian Woods Reservation was in a portion of their traditional territory, they were still limited on the new land. Previously, hunters and fishermen could trek for miles in any direction of their traditional territory to find game or fish. Now the Tuscarora had to be mindful of their English neighbors surrounding them. A condition of Governor Eden's for Blount to obtain this new reservation was that his people would not "molest nor disturb the Inhabitants nor their stocks in Hunting in any of the adjacent Grounds."¹¹⁰ Governor Eden likely understood the probable issues that may arise from granting the Tuscarora this land. This land, and most of eastern North Carolina, was traditionally home to the Tuscarora. Placing imaginary borders for where hunters could hunt and fishermen could fish was a strange concept for the Tuscarora. The idea of fixed borders is European, so it was inevitable that the Tuscarora eventually crossed them. Also, as Gov. Eden himself stated, they just assisted the colonists in

¹⁰⁹ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 92.

¹¹⁰ Minutes of the North Carolina Council, June 4, 1717 – June 5, 1717, North Carolina Council.

their war against the Yamasee and their allies. Had the Tuscarora not demonstrated that they were friends to the colonists? Even before the Yamasee War, the Tuscarora had engaged in trade with the English and, on occasion, served as guides for them. The Tuscarora also allowed for Christoph De Graffenried's settlement of New Bern near Chief Taylor's village of Chattooka.¹¹¹ Regardless of the friendship the Tuscarora provided the colonists, they still went to war against them in 1711, and the settlers did not forget the conflict. This new reservation presented great opportunities for Blount's Tuscarora; unfortunately, it also brought misfortune built on misunderstanding and greed on the part of the colonists.

Issues for Chief Blount and the Tuscarora presented themselves soon after settling down in their new home. In 1722, a Tuscarora man went hunting and ended up killing a deer outside the bounds of the Indian Woods Reservation.¹¹² He was confronted by a colonist named Luke Measel, who was displeased that a Tuscarora man was hunting on his land and essentially killed one of his deer. An altercation broke out, and by the end of it, the Tuscarora man was wounded, having sustained blunt force trauma from his own musket, which Measel apprehended, and was suffering from a bite wound on his leg, inflicted by Measel's dog.¹¹³ Similarly, in the same year, a Tuscarora hunter named Sighacka Blount was attacked by Christopher Dudley after he caught Sighacka hunting beaver with dogs on his property outside of the reservation. Similar to the previous incident, Sighacka was struck with a blunt object and, by the end of the skirmish, also broke his arm.¹¹⁴ For both incidents, Chief Blount traveled and reported the assaults to the North Carolina Council. The Council found both settlers at fault for the incidents.

¹¹¹ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 31.

¹¹² Minutes of the North Carolina Council, June 14, 1722, North Carolina Council.

¹¹³ Minutes of the North Carolina Council, June 14, 1722, North Carolina Council.

¹¹⁴ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 110.

As these two incidents show, the neighbors of the Tuscarora were not very friendly, especially when they found a member of the nation on their property. Anytime a Tuscarora left the reservation, they were susceptible to abuse by settlers.¹¹⁵ It is also telling how much influence Blount had on the North Carolina Council, as both incidents, along with others, ended with Blount's Tuscarora not facing any charges from the colonists. A significant factor in this may have been the North Carolina Council's unwillingness to anger the Tuscarora people. Although the Tuscarora War resulted in a substantial decrease in their population, the Tuscarora remained the largest and most prominent nation within the bounds of the growing colony, still able to field a few hundred warriors.¹¹⁶ The North Carolina Council was aware that the Tuscarora still held significant power. If they chose to, they could initiate a new war with the colony while receiving reinforcements from their northern allies. The Tuscarora were also a tributary nation of the Colony of North Carolina, and their services were very much needed, as the Yamasee War demonstrated. The last thing the council needed was to upset their valued tributaries. The Council's fears were justified as the Tuscarora on the Indian Woods Reservation were known to go on the warpath along with their Seneca brethren against other Indigenous nations in the Southeast.

Although on the surface the war between the colonists and the Tuscarora Nation seemed settled, it was far from that. The Tuscarora, especially under Blount's leadership, seemed to quickly recover and shake hands with the colonists, then rush into battle against the Yamasee and their new enemies at the behest of the colonial powers. However, the Tuscarora did not easily forget the actions of the colonists, and losing a significant portion of their people at the hands of

¹¹⁵ Woods, "Tuscarora Roots Historical Report," 29.

¹¹⁶ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 107.

the colonists during the Tuscarora War was seared into their collective memory. Unfortunately, the dead could not be brought back, but the colonists did not kill all their people either; a few hundred were captured and enslaved by the colonists. Portions of those captured during the war were already shipped off to the Caribbean, forever lost across the vast ocean, never able to return home.¹¹⁷ The only thing Blount's Tuscarora could do for their kin who took those dreadful voyages was send them prayers of love and compassion, hoping they found ways to survive in the dreaded sugar cane plantations.

Nevertheless, a portion of the Tuscarora captives were not sent to the Caribbean. These other Tuscarora were sent to South Carolina and put on local plantations in the colony.¹¹⁸ While serving in the Yamasee War, Tuscarora warriors fought not only to avenge the bloodshed caused by the Yamasee a few years prior, but also to free their kin who were enslaved in South Carolina, as an incentive for the commitment to the fight by South Carolina legislators.¹¹⁹ Unfortunately, the war ended, and not all of their kin had been freed. It would have been a hard pill to swallow for Tuscarora warriors to know they still had enslaved kin within a few days' journey of them, and they could not go and free them. So, they did not swallow that pill and made frequent incursions into South Carolina following the end of the Yamasee War to free their cousins and vent some of their rage onto the unsuspecting enslavers running the plantations.

The raids into South Carolina began before the Yamasee War and intensified after its conclusion. Tuscarora warriors were known to depart from their reservation land and journey south to plantations to free their kin and wreak havoc on the enslavers of their people.¹²⁰ It was

¹¹⁷ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 99.

¹¹⁸ Woods, "Tuscarora Roots Historical Report," 27.

¹¹⁹ Ramsey, *The Yamasee War*, 164-165.

¹²⁰ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 104.

common for Tuscarora warriors to kill or steal livestock off these plantations, steal clothing or other valuable items, and free their enslaved kin, along with some enslaved African Americans.¹²¹ During these incursions by the Tuscarora, they were usually accompanied by Seneca from the North, who wished to continue conducting warfare against the Siouan tribes in the Southeast. These incursions were frequent enough after the Yamasee War that on May 10th, 1731, William Waites, South Carolina Representative, held a meeting in Edenton, North Carolina, with Tuscarora Headman William Blunt, unknown relation to Chief Tom Blount, War Captain George, and six other Tuscarora men, along with North Carolina Governor Burrington. Waites called this meeting on behalf of South Carolina Governor Robert Johnson, who grew tired of reports of Tuscarora raiding plantations and killing South Carolina's peaceful Indigenous allies, mainly the Catawba.¹²²

Throughout this meeting, Waites detailed eyewitness testimony of Tuscarora and Seneca warriors liberating enslaved Tuscarora people, injuring or killing friendly Indians, stealing and killing horses and cattle, and taking clothing and valuable items from plantation owners.¹²³ The Tuscarora representatives denied any fault in the matter and blamed the Senecas. The Tuscarora also reported that they themselves were under attack previously by warriors from South Carolina who killed their War Captain Jack, injuring another Tuscarora man, and stealing and killing their livestock.¹²⁴ In their eyes, they were justified in exacting revenge against the southern Indians

¹²¹ Robert Johnson, "Instructions to William Waties concerning the relationship between North Carolina and South Carolina and Native Americans," April 10, 1731.

¹²² William Waties, "Report by William Waties concerning the actions of the Tuscarora Nation," May 10, 1731.

¹²³ William Waties, "Report by William Waties concerning the actions of the Tuscarora Nation," May 10, 1731.

¹²⁴ William Waties, "Report by William Waties concerning the actions of the Tuscarora Nation," May 10, 1731.

who attacked them first. Quickly, Waties realized this meeting was going nowhere. He tried to threaten the Tuscarora by claiming South Carolina would send the Cherokee and Catawba to conduct war with them. This threat fell quickly when the Tuscarora delegates explained to Waties that those two nations “were at warr and they killed one another which they knew and did not fear they would both come against them.”¹²⁵ The meeting ended with Waties threatening that if the Tuscarora did not pay for their damages, South Carolina would recruit the Saponi and both parties would come to their reservation and wipe them out. Once again, this threat had no effect on the Tuscarora representatives, who continued to deny any involvement in the issues raised during the meeting.¹²⁶

The meeting with Waties demonstrated a few things about the Tuscarora during their early tributary period. For one, the Tuscarora were masters at denying any involvement in the raids in South Carolina. The delegates consistently rejected the participation of their people and blamed the Seneca for the issues Waties raised throughout the meeting. Although the Tuscarora and Seneca were close allies, the Tuscarora could not let any blame fall onto them, even though they participated in the southward raids. Additionally, the Tuscarora recognized that the Seneca in the North held a more advantageous position than they did. The Seneca were still a numerous nation with prestige built from their interactions with their colonial government of New York, as well as their position in the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. Although South and North Carolina may have had issues with the Seneca, they were seldom willing to commit to a war with them, knowing the power of the Haudenosaunee and afraid that the Tuscarora would join sides against

¹²⁵ William Waties, “Report by William Waties concerning the actions of the Tuscarora Nation,” May 10, 1731.

¹²⁶ William Waties, “Report by William Waties concerning the actions of the Tuscarora Nation,” May 10, 1731.

the colonists in such a conflict. Another critical part of the meeting was that at no point did Waties complain that the Tuscarora harmed or killed a white person. Waties mentions the killing of friendly Indians by the Tuscarora and Seneca, but never an attempt to kill a white person. In one of the testimonies, Waties recalls the Tuscarora killing some horses and taking a Tuscarora slave in front of Mr. Masho.¹²⁷ This retelling from Mr. Masho's eyewitness testimony shows that the Tuscarora were selective with their raids and did not intend to kill or harm any colonist, knowing it would cause war with South Carolina and probably North Carolina. Ultimately, the Tuscarora tactically conducted their raids and learned how to navigate the delicate balance between threats and full-scale war with South Carolina.

Following the end of the Yamasee War, the Tuscarora not only sought to free their enslaved relatives but also wished to continue conducting warfare against their traditional enemies. Warfare was a ceremonial aspect of Tuscarora life. After suffering a population loss at the end of their own war, according to tradition, they needed to enact revenge against their assailants and capture members from enemy tribes to replenish their own population. Tuscarora warriors were able to bloody their tomahawks during the Yamasee War, which must have helped satisfy some of their grief. When the Yamasee War ended, the Tuscarora continued to enact revenge against their enemies without the support of the colonists. They received plenty of assistance from the Haudenosaunee, particularly the Seneca, who came down to engage in war away from their own colonies' borders. The main nation the Tuscarora and Seneca attacked was the Catawba. The Catawba were ancestral enemies of the Tuscarora, so it was not uncommon for the two nations to engage with one another in combat. In 1717, outside Fort Christanna, a party

¹²⁷ William Waties, "Report by William Waties concerning the actions of the Tuscarora Nation," May 10, 1731.

of unarmed Catawba were surprised and attacked by Seneca and Tuscarora warriors who killed five, captured another five, and injured several more.¹²⁸ War between the Tuscarora and Catawba persisted for decades following the 1717 attack.

South Carolina, already upset with the turnout of Waties' meeting, grew tired of the violence brought onto the Catawba and other Siouan nations in their colony. South Carolina officials mandated that any Tuscarora caught crossing into their colony were lawbreakers and considered enemies of the state.¹²⁹ South Carolina also incentivized their allied Indigenous nations, claiming that they would pay if a Tuscarora warrior were brought in dead or alive.¹³⁰ Aggression continued between the Tuscarora and Catawba up into the 1750s. Outside of the Catawba, the Tuscarora also attacked and captured the Saponi. Raids against the Saponi eventually led to the scattering of that nation, similar to the Tuscarora, with some Saponi families fleeing to join the Catawba, others moving north to the Haudenosaunee, and a few relocating near Indian Woods and eventually absorbing into the Tuscarora, along with some Chowan and Core families.¹³¹

In 1752, Moravian Minister Bishop Spargenberg visited the Indian Woods Reservation. Spargenberg recorded that the Tuscarora population was "few in number," along with their land, wealth, and overall status as a nation on the reservation.¹³² Spargenberg recorded that although the Tuscarora suffered greatly because of it, they still felt persistent in their fight against the

¹²⁸ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 105-106.

¹²⁹ Johnson, *The Tuscaroras: History-Traditions-Culture*, Vol. 2, 176.

¹³⁰ Johnson, *The Tuscaroras: History-Traditions-Culture*, Vol. 2, 177.

¹³¹ Minutes of the North Carolina Council, April 3, 1733, North Carolina Council.

¹³² Adelaide L. Fries, ed, *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina*, Vol. I, Raleigh NC: Edwards and Broughton, 1922, <https://archive.org/embed/recordsofthemora01frie>, 41.

Catawba alongside their Haudenosaunee brethren.¹³³ The Moravian minister also noted that the Tuscarora on the reservation were somehow still ignorant of the Christian God and spoke their own language.¹³⁴ The brief entry provides evidence that the Tuscarora continued to practice their traditional language and religion into the 1750s, despite being under tributary service. At the end of his entry, Spargenberg records that the Tuscarora wish he would send a message to the Catawba on their behalf. The message was short and clear: the Tuscarora wanted the Catawba to know they still had enough capable young men willing to travel to Catawba country and descend upon them if needed.¹³⁵ The Tuscarora and Seneca apparently applied enough pressure that in 1737, the Catawba requested that South Carolina allow them to relocate their reservation out of their traditional territory and into the old Waxhaw villages, which were safer from disruption by their enemies.¹³⁶ This move was reminiscent of Chief Tom Blount's request in 1717, when the Tuscarora relocated to the Indian Woods Reservation for a more strategically defended location. While Indian Woods was better for protecting against enemy tribes, the Tuscarora learned shortly after their move that the greatest threat to them was their colonial neighbors.

The Tuscarora were constantly struggling to get along with their neighbors. Settlers living near the reservation viewed the Tuscarora as inferior to them. They fought a war and beat the Tuscarora, and maybe they were in the wrong in the first place, but that did not matter to them. The English neighbors must have also forgotten the new status the Tuscarora held as tributaries to their government, having rushed to the colonists' aid in the Yamasee War. Nevertheless, the English settlers surrounding Indian Woods were not known to respect the

¹³³ Fries, ed, *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina*, Vol. I, 41.

¹³⁴ Fries, ed, *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina*, Vol. I, 41.

¹³⁵ Fries, ed, *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina*, Vol. I, 41-42.

¹³⁶ Johnson, *The Tuscaroras: History-Traditions-Culture*, Vol. 2, 177.

Tuscarora. Issues arose with traders selling and distributing alcohol on the reservation.¹³⁷ It was far too common during dealings between Natives and traders for alcohol to get passed around, usually leading to dishonest dealings, land sale theft, or violence. The alcohol, according to Blount, made the men weak and unable to fulfill their traditional duties of providing for their families by hunting, fishing, or working.¹³⁸ The Tuscarora also faced discrimination by local businesses, such as ferrymen who overcharged them or refused to lend them any service at all.¹³⁹ Chief Tom Blount was enraged by such sales and abuse suffered by his people, so he sought better accountability from the North Carolina Officials.¹⁴⁰ In 1735, Chief Blount invited Governor Gabriel Johnston to the reservation so he could complain about the injustices.¹⁴¹ Governor Johnston listened to all of Blount's complaints regarding the ill-treatment by the neighboring English settlers. Still, he ultimately did not assist the Tuscarora beyond requesting that the Commission of Indian Affairs investigate the complaints.

Another consistent issue plaguing the Tuscarora at Indians Woods was the squatting and illegal land sales by the English. In 1717, when the Tuscarora were given the reservation land, it was dictated to fall between "Mr. Jones's Lower land on the northside of the Morratock river to Quitmak Swamp."¹⁴² Unfortunately, this was not specific enough, and the Tuscarora were constantly in disputes over their land with nonnative settlers. Shortly after their move to the land in 1722, it was re-surveyed at the behest of Blount by the NC Council. This new survey

¹³⁷ Minutes of the North Carolina Council, March 22, 1735, North Carolina Council.

¹³⁸ Arwin D. Smallwood, *A History of Three Cultures: Indian Woods, North Carolina, 1585 to 1995* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI, 1999), 102.

¹³⁹ Minutes of the North Carolina Council, March 22, 1735, North Carolina Council.

¹⁴⁰ Minutes of the North Carolina Council, March 22, 1735, North Carolina Council.

¹⁴¹ Smallwood, *A History of Three Cultures*, 102.

¹⁴² Minutes of the North Carolina Council. June 4, 1717 – June 5, 1717. North Carolina Council.

concluded with the 41,000-acre agreement from Gov. Eden in 1717.¹⁴³ Settler encroachment onto and around the Indian Woods Reservation was a persistent issue for the Tuscarora after 1722.

Throughout Chief Tom Blount's life, he fought for his people's land rights against the local settlers and used his connections with the NC Council and the various NC Governors. After the Yamasee War, there was no fighting that North Carolina needed Tuscarora warriors in for several decades. So, the main tributary that the Tuscarora paid to North Carolina was their annual visits to the Governor, in which the headmen dined with the Governor and promised another year of loyalty to the colony.¹⁴⁴ These occasions always highlighted the master politician that Chief Blount was, who always dressed in English fashion, pledging his allegiance to North Carolina. But Blount was not stupid; he knew that his people's issues stemmed from the creation of the colony. At one time, his people could have stopped North Carolina from existing entirely, but due to his own choices to remain neutral, they did not, and now they served their oppressors. Still, Blount knew that his choices also saved his people, at least momentarily, so he continued to play nice with North Carolina officials; however, this did not mean he could not be a thorn in the side of North Carolinians.

Chief Tom Blount committed minor rebellious acts against the colonists throughout his time as leader. On several occasions, Chief Blount apprehended enslaved Tuscaroras from white settlers and sent them with the Seneca on their trek back north. A famous example of this occurred in 1724 when Chief Blount took John Royalls' Tuscarora slave named March, while

¹⁴³ Minutes of the North Carolina Council, June 4, 1717 – June 5, 1717, North Carolina Council.

¹⁴⁴ John Brickwell, *The Natural History of North-Carolina: With an Account of the Trade, Manners, and Customs of the Christian and Indian Inhabitants*, Ireland: 1737, 282-283.

Royalls was visiting the reservation.¹⁴⁵ Royalls complained to the NC Council, but Blount, much like he did throughout his life, denied any responsibility and blamed the Seneca. Blount knew that if the enslaved Tuscarora made it north, there was little North Carolina officials could do. No one wanted to anger the Seneca, especially over a couple of freed enslaved Tuscarora. Blount never faced any actual repercussions throughout his life, which demonstrates the master negotiator he was. Eventually, Blount passed away due to an unknown reason in 1739 on the reservation.¹⁴⁶ He was a controversial figure among the Tuscarora due to his neutrality in the Tuscarora War and his leadership position over all Tuscarora in the colony, which was bestowed upon him by the North Carolina Council. Still, Chief Tom Blount fought for his people and, to his credit, did a great job negotiating for his people, particularly his warriors, out of tight spots throughout his life.

The time to grieve came and went, and eventually a new leader was needed to represent the Tuscarora on Indian Woods. Surprisingly, the North Carolina Council allowed the Tuscarora people to select their new leader, and Chief James Blount was chosen. Along with selecting Chief James Blount, the Tuscarora asserted the power of a council on the reservation, which was a little closer to their traditional governing style, outside of recorded leadership positions for women who, after the Yamasee War, lost most of their traditional prestige in the nation.¹⁴⁷ Due to the Tuscarora's tributary status with the colonists, they were required to adhere to English rules of leadership and negotiation, which ultimately eroded the traditional aspects of women's

¹⁴⁵ Minutes of the North Carolina Council, October 28, 1724, North Carolina Council.

¹⁴⁶ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 153.

¹⁴⁷ Johnson, *The Tuscaroras: History-Traditions-Culture*, Vol. 2, 184.

leadership among the Tuscarora. With Chief Tom Blount dead, it was now Chief James Blount's turn to represent and prove his leadership capabilities for the Tuscarora Nation.

In 1748, another survey was conducted at the behest of Chief James Blount. The survey concluded that, after land sales within the reservation, the reservation was 30,000 acres, reducing its size by 11,000 acres from its original 1717 size.¹⁴⁸ This was not the first time Tuscarora witnessed land loss at the hands of the colonists. Before their war, the Tuscarora witnessed the encroachment of settlements onto their lands, which began with the establishment of colonial satellite forts along the coast. Then the settlements moved closer to Tuscarora villages, such as New Bern, which disrupted Chief Taylor's village. The difference now, though, was that the colonists promised this reservation land to the Tuscarora and their future generations.¹⁴⁹ Over the years, it seemed that the colonists had forgotten all the efforts on the Tuscarora's behalf to serve as honest tributaries to the colony. To the credit of the NC Council, they did enforce the land rights of the Tuscarora whenever a complaint was sent to them. But North Carolina was still suffering from generations of conflict even before the Tuscarora War. Unlike its sister colonies, permanent settlements in the region of North Carolina were held back from expansion during the 16th and 17th centuries, which, ironically enough, was due to the Tuscarora acting as a “cork” preventing further settlements into the interior.¹⁵⁰ Due to this lack of growth, the governing sphere of the colony held little to no proper authority over the settlers for decades after the Tuscarora War.

¹⁴⁸ Acts of the North Carolina General Assembly, October 15, 1748, North Carolina General Assembly.

¹⁴⁹ Minutes of the North Carolina Council. June 4, 1717 – June 5, 1717. North Carolina Council

¹⁵⁰ La Vere, *The Tuscarora War*, 16.

Chief James Blount inherited another problem from his predecessor. The Tuscarora population at Indian Woods had declined significantly over the years. Before the Tuscarora War, their population was estimated to be nearly 5,000, with around 1,400 warriors.¹⁵¹ By the end of the war, the population had dwindled to around 3,000 under Chief Tom Blount's control, with a few hundred others scattered throughout North Carolina and Virginia.¹⁵² Soon after the war, some Tuscarora families decided to relocate to the North, joining the Haudenosaunee officially in 1722, although the exact number is unknown.¹⁵³ The other families decided to stay in North Carolina, either on the reservation or by relocating to the swampland hideouts further east. After 1715, the population living on the reservation steadily decreased, with more families deciding to head north or into the interior of North Carolina after further harassment from settlers or feeling displeased with the leadership of the Indian Woods Reservation. By 1754, the Tuscarora population living on the reservation was approximately 301 in total, comprising 100 men and the rest women and children.¹⁵⁴ These new population numbers suggest a drastic decrease from the original population that remained on the Indian Woods Reservation in 1717. The population decrease led to further mistreatment by settlers, as the threat of significant retaliation from the warriors was unlikely. Chief James Blount, like his predecessor, found himself in a challenging position; he had the future of the nation in his hands, with seemingly everything stacked against him and his people. Lucky for him, though, a new war was about to break out in 1754 that would change the trajectory of history in North America. Like the Yamasee War presented an

¹⁵¹ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 64.

¹⁵² La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 74.

¹⁵³ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 87-88.

¹⁵⁴ William L. Saunders, *The Colonial Records of North Carolina 1752-1759*, Vol. 5. Raleigh, NC: Joseph Daniels, 1887, 161.

opportunity to Chief Tom Blount, the coming of the French and Indian War also presented an opportunity for Chief James Blount's Tuscarora to regain prestige with the colony.

Chapter 3: Taking up the Hatchet: Tuscarora Joining in the French and Indian War and Anglo-Cherokee War

Tuscarora tributary status was put to the test once again when two new conflicts erupted in the 1750s. The Tuscarora world changed dramatically after the first English ships arrived off the Carolina shores. Minor conflicts and larger-scale wars were constant in North America. The Tuscarora participated in most of the disputes or were allies of nations that did. The Tuscarora had some connection or involvement in the Tuscarora War, the Yamasee War, the Anglo-Powhatan War, and King Philip's War. However, soon the Tuscarora, both in North Carolina and New York, bore witness to a war on a scale unlike any they had previously experienced. The French and Indian War broke out in North America in 1754 and did not end until 1763. The French and British were constantly engaged in conflict with one another, trying to secure more land for their empires in North America. Leading up to what became a global war, the French and English typically used their negotiations and diplomacy with Indigenous nations to secure land and, if need be, deliver a blow against their European adversary. Minor conflicts on the frontier were not uncommon. Indigenous people also recognized their place between the two European nations. They exploited the feuding between French and English traders to secure goods and weapons for themselves through the playoff system, which involved bargaining between French and English traders to determine who could offer the best deal. However, in May 1754, an event occurred in the Ohio River Valley that led to a global war between France and England. The Tuscarora had to decide whether they wanted to stay out of this new war and risk losing their faltering influence and tributary status with the North Carolina colonists or join and possibly lose more of their dwindling warrior population.

Dispute over the Ohio River Valley was heating up in the early 1750s. The issue over the lands and borders between the English and French came to a boil in 1753 when Virginia Governor Robert Dinwiddie was informed that the French had begun building several forts in the Ohio River Valley that crossed into Virginia's boundaries.¹⁵⁵ Gov. Dinwiddie authorized a military force to confront the French and instruct them to cease their construction of forts and encroachment into English territory. He selected a young Lieutenant Colonel George Washington to lead the expedition.¹⁵⁶ Washington began his journey to the Forks of the Ohio, and along the way was accompanied by Tanaghrisson, a Seneca headman assigned by the Haudenosaunee to act as a liaison for the confederacy with the Indigenous tribes in the region.¹⁵⁷ On May 28, 1754, Washington and Tanaghrisson's combined force attacked a small party of French soldiers camping nearby. The French soldiers were from the newly constructed Fort Duquesne. They were on their own mission to deliver a message to Washington's forces, demanding that they leave the Ohio River Valley or face the consequences.¹⁵⁸ When the skirmish was finished, only one French soldier was left alive. Washington, whether he knew it or not, had fired the first shots of the French and Indian War.

After the attack on the French encampment, Washington pushed for the quick construction of Fort Necessity. In July 1754, the French besieged Fort Necessity.¹⁵⁹ Washington's forces were defeated, resulting in the destruction of Fort Necessity and the withdrawal of the English forces from the Forks of the Ohio. Eventually, General Edward

¹⁵⁵ Fred Anderson, *The War That Made America: A Short History of the French and Indian War*, United States: Penguin Publishing Group, 2006, 37.

¹⁵⁶ Anderson, *The War That Made America*, 37-39.

¹⁵⁷ Anderson, *The War That Made America*, 23.

¹⁵⁸ Anderson, *The War That Made America*, 47.

¹⁵⁹ Anderson, *The War That Made America*, 50.

Braddock, accompanied by Washington, led a force of nearly 1,500 back to the Forks of the Ohio in an effort to capture Fort Duquesne.¹⁶⁰ Unfortunately for Braddock and Washington, a force of almost 900, mostly French-supported Indigenous Warriors, departed from Fort Duquesne to halt the incoming English force. What followed was a disaster for General Braddock as the French allied Indigenous warriors ambushed and hunted down his fleeing forces. When the attack was over, around two-thirds of Braddock's force were dead or dying, including himself.¹⁶¹ Braddock's defeat was disastrous for the English and marked a pivotal sway in the indigenous nations' desire to ally with the French. If the English learned anything from the catastrophic defeat of Braddock's forces, it was their need for more Indigenous allies.

In North Carolina, the Tuscarora were still suffering from decades of land theft, assaults, and molestation on their reservation lands in Bertie County. Newly assigned Governor Arthur Dobbs' census record estimated the Tuscarora population was only 301 individuals in 1754.¹⁶² The population of Tuscarora on the reservation continually decreased over the years due to Chief Tom Blount's leadership and mistreatment at the hands of the colonists. Over the years, families gradually left, and by 1754, according to the same census, approximately 50 families were recorded in Bladen County, along Drowning Creek.¹⁶³ The individuals recorded on Drowning Creek in 1754 were a mix of Tuscarora families who left the reservation to settle in the area.¹⁶⁴ The total number may have been larger than that, but the surveyors were unable to collect an exact population size for the militia muster records because the families living there shot at them. The Drowning Creek area was a safe refuge for the Tuscarora people because the land was not

¹⁶⁰ Anderson, *The War That Made America*, 70-71.

¹⁶¹ Anderson, *The War That Made America*, 71.

¹⁶² Smallwood, *Bertie County*, 61.

¹⁶³ Saunders, *The Colonial Records of North Carolina 1752-1759*, 161.

¹⁶⁴ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 193.

considered valuable for settlement due to its swampy environment. Other Tuscarora families left but remained closer to the reservation in the lands of the current-day counties of Northampton, Halifax, Edgecombe, and Granville.¹⁶⁵ There were also the continued expeditions to the north, which shrank the population remaining on Indian Woods. The population decline only made living on the reservation more difficult for the families that decided to stay. Chief James Blount, like his predecessor, was fighting an uphill battle to keep his Tuscarora people engaged in diplomacy and tributary work with the colony, while also protecting them from settlers and enemy Native Americans. The shrinking number of families still on the reservation meant the Tuscarora had to work twice as hard to maintain their land claims, provide for their families, and serve as dedicated tributaries to the colony.

Blount and the Tuscarora in Indian Woods had likely heard of the war going on between England and France in North America. Whether it was from their Tuscarora and Seneca cousins from the North, traveling down with the news, or local colonists recounting the battles themselves. North Carolina provisional troops had served under General Braddock during the campaign to Fort Duquesne in 1755.¹⁶⁶ The North Carolinian troops surely returned home after the campaign, with horrific stories of the defeat experienced by General Braddock's troops. Although the conflict was primarily occurring on the northern frontier, North Carolina experienced some raids by French-backed Native warriors on the western frontier of the colony, along with frequent negotiations with the Cherokee aimed at securing their loyalty from both the French and the English.¹⁶⁷ James Blount's Tuscarora were too busy maintaining their reservation to concern themselves with the conflict between the two colonial powers. Additionally, the

¹⁶⁵ Woods, "Tuscarora Roots Historical Report," 37.

¹⁶⁶ Anderson, *The War That Made America*, 64.

¹⁶⁷ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 161.

Tuscarora were already dedicated English allies due to their status as tributaries to the English Colony of North Carolina. Why should the Tuscarora volunteer to help the colonists who obviously viewed them with contempt? This war was not theirs to enter, and it must have served as a needed reprieve to hear the struggles the English faced in the first years of the war. In August 1756, however, a close ally of the Tuscarora visited their reservation with wampum and a letter.

A renowned figure among the Nottoway, Captain Tom Step was sent to the Tuscarora on Indian Woods Reservation by Lt. Col. Washington.¹⁶⁸ Step, along with other Nottoway warriors, served alongside English and Cherokee forces on the frontier under the command of Washington during the summer of 1756. They fought the Shawnee and French well, proving their service invaluable to the English, especially Washington.¹⁶⁹ Apparently, Step was invested in the English plight and was willing to help with the recruitment of other Indigenous warriors in Virginia and North Carolina to come to the assistance of the colonies and their English crown. In a letter from Washington to Gov. Dinwiddie, Washington states, "Captain Tom has promised to go to the Tusks with a Speech and Wampum, which I have given them—He says they have an hundred fighting men to spare—They would be a great assistance to us, if they could be engaged to come."¹⁷⁰ It seems that Step was either not aware or exaggerated the warrior element the Tuscarora could produce, as the total population of men on the reservation was 101, which included old men. It is also likely that, due to the Tuscarora and Nottoway's ancestral and continued friendship, Step wanted his Tuscarora brothers to join the warpath alongside them,

¹⁶⁸ "Speech to the Tuscarora Indians, 1 August 1756," Founders Online, National Archives, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/02-03-02-0283>.

¹⁶⁹ Woodward and Moretti-Langholtz, "The Millie Woodson-Turner Nottoway Reservation," 24.

¹⁷⁰ George Washington, Letter to Robert Dinwiddie, "Washington to Dinwiddie," Winchester, Virginia: North America, August 4, 1756.

thereby continuing traditional practices of going to war and earning prestige and goods, like those of the Nottoway. Whatever the reason, Washington took credence in his words and wished to gain the trust and support of the Tuscarora against the English and Nottoway's common enemy, the French.

Washington's letter to the Tuscarora was a desperate bid for their assistance against the French and hostile Native warriors. At the beginning of the letter, Washington recounts the heroism of Step and the Nottoway's vital assistance to the raging war on the frontier.¹⁷¹ Throughout the opening of the letter, Washington states the intent is to "Assure you of our real Friendship and Love," and "to confirm & Strengthen that chain of Friendship."¹⁷² These statements must have been ironic to the Tuscarora, who frequently found themselves in disputes with their colonist neighbors, seeing little done on their behalf to prevent or end the molestation. The next section of the letter discussed how evil and conniving the French were to "corrupt the minds of our Friendly Indians," and that they "have Stirr'd up the Shawnese & Delawares, with severall other nations to take up the hatchet against us."¹⁷³ Interestingly, for the Tuscarora, the Shawnee had been allies with the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Tuscarora in the Carolinas for generations. A few years prior, in 1752, when Moravian Minister Bishop Spargenberg visited the reservation, the Tuscarora asked him to send their "greetings" to the Shawnee.¹⁷⁴ Hearing that the Shawnee had joined the French, if they already had not known, must have made them second-guess the proposition of voiding their neutrality and going to war for the English.

¹⁷¹ "Speech to the Tuscarora Indians, 1 August 1756."

¹⁷² "Speech to the Tuscarora Indians, 1 August 1756."

¹⁷³ "Speech to the Tuscarora Indians, 1 August 1756."

¹⁷⁴ Fries, ed, *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina*, Vol. I, 42.

Washington, understanding the audience of the letter, included that the "Six Nations, Cherokees, Nottoways, Cattawbas," had joined the English in their fight against the French.¹⁷⁵ The mention of the Indigenous allies the English had to the Tuscarora is critical. Washington informed the Tuscarora that the Nottoway and Haudenosaunee (Six Nations) were allied and actively fighting for the colonists; in turn, the Tuscarora should join them, as they had a strong and ancestral bond with both. The inclusion of the Catawba and Cherokee was also deliberate and cunning. Washington, possibly through Step, knew the Tuscarora despised both the Catawba and Cherokee with a violent history spanning generations. Hearing that the two enemy nations were allied with the English may have led the Tuscarora to forgo assisting the English in the war effort, even if the Haudenosaunee and Nottoway were also involved. Once again, Washington knew how to engage with the Tuscarora as he mentions "to encourage Your brave Warriors, I promise to furnish them wt. Arms, Ammunition, Cloths, provision, and every necessary for War."¹⁷⁶ Along with the promise of arming, clothing, and providing goods for the Tuscarora warriors to go to war, Washington also indicated that the sooner their participation, the more symbolic it would be to the English of their friendship.¹⁷⁷ Lastly, Washington sent a string of Wampum to Step to show their friendship and willingness to welcome the Tuscarora into the War.¹⁷⁸ Washington presented the Tuscarora with a loaded offer.

Washington's proposal put Chief James Blount and the Tuscarora in an interesting position. Washington offered them a chance to enhance their nation's prestige, arm their warriors, and permit their warriors to continue their traditional practice of going to war and earning valor

¹⁷⁵ "Speech to the Tuscarora Indians, 1 August 1756."

¹⁷⁶ "Speech to the Tuscarora Indians, 1 August 1756."

¹⁷⁷ "Speech to the Tuscarora Indians, 1 August 1756."

¹⁷⁸ "Speech to the Tuscarora Indians, 1 August 1756."

among their peers. This offer is reminiscent of North and South Carolina's offer to Chief Tom Blount in 1715 to join the colonists' side and attack the Yamasee. Similarly, this proposition would seemingly help the Tuscarora regain a sliver of their prewar autonomy with the colonies and regain the prestige lost over decades of incidents between the Tuscarora and settlers. A significant difference between the Yamasee War and the current French and Indian War was the enemy the Tuscarora had to face. The French had never committed any atrocities against the Tuscarora, and the French allied Indigenous Nations, such as the Shawnee, were friends of the Tuscarora. Additionally, if they joined the English, it meant they would fight alongside their enemies, the Catawba and Cherokee. Allying with the two would seemingly betray the ancestral rivalry that the Tuscarora had long maintained. Still, though, why should the Tuscarora sit around while their enemies were resupplied and strengthening their position with the colonists? It was unlikely that the Tuscarora would forfeit all their guaranteed goods from Washington to the Catawba and Cherokee. The Tuscarora once again came to the aid of the colonists, adhering to their tributary status, picked up their weapons, and went on the warpath against the enemies of the English.

The French and Indian War: Tuscarora Warriors Answer the Call of the English

The Tuscarora's decision to enter this new war heavily relied on their need to maintain positive nation-to-nation relations with the English as a tributary to the Colony of North Carolina. Nottoway War Captain Tom Step arrived with Washington's letter to the Tuscarora towards the end of the summer in 1756. The date of the letter is important as, traditionally, Indigenous warriors only engaged in war during the spring and summer seasons. Fall was reserved for hunting and harvesting the last bounty of crops before winter. During the winter season, the primary focus was on survival and participating in some of the more significant

ceremonies, such as Midwinter and the Feast of the Dead. The spring season was the time for the people to plant new crops, although it was also open for warriors to start the warpath. With all their primary duties out of the way, summer meant the men were free to go on the warpath and engage in traditional warfare or the new incentivized warfare against the colonists. When Step arrived at his Tuscarora relatives' reservation in August, his Nottoway warriors were already at the tail end of their service for that summer. The Tuscarora had just over a year to plan and prepare for their men's departure the following summer. The next couple of months, the Tuscarora men ensured that their women, children, and elders, who would be left behind, were fed and prepared for their departure.

In December 1756, Governor Dinwiddie wrote to Lt. Col. Washington concerning his desire to ascertain provisions for the Tuscarora and Nottoway, which he expected to receive that spring. In the letter, Dinwiddie mentioned that he believed he had secured the assistance of both Iroquoian nations in the war effort.¹⁷⁹ Although the Nottoway had already served the previous summer, colonists understood that Indigenous nations' alliances could easily waiver throughout the months without fighting. Dinwiddie knew this and requested that Washington keep his Indigenous warriors busy on scouting missions because if idle, "they will be thinking of Home."¹⁸⁰ If the English wanted to keep their warriors in high spirits, they had to keep them occupied and assured that their families were safe and cared for. Dinwiddie complained to Washington that he still needed clothing and provisions to arrive on time to fulfill his part of the deal with the Tuscarora and Nottoway, as promised by Washington to the Tuscarora.¹⁸¹ A major

¹⁷⁹ Robert Dinwiddie, Letter to George Washington, "Letters to Washington and Accompanying Papers," Williamsburg, Virginia: North America, December 27, 1756.

¹⁸⁰ Dinwiddie, Letter to George Washington, December 27, 1756.

¹⁸¹ Dinwiddie, Letter to George Washington, December 27, 1756.

incentive for Tuscarora involvement in this conflict was the promise of goods, such as clothing, in exchange for their alliance with the English. It would not be an excellent start for the English if the Tuscarora and Nottoway showed up for service without their promised goods. To remedy these issues, Dinwiddie requested that Washington supply blankets for the warriors arriving soon to "keep them in Spirits for a short Time longer."¹⁸² Dinwiddie and Washington worked to ensure that when their contingent of Indigenous warriors arrived in the spring, they would not be disappointed and would not debate remaining with the English or withdrawing from the war altogether.

On March 29, 1757, the Tuscarora arrived in Williamsburg, Virginia, as promised.¹⁸³ The Tuscarora did not come alone; they were accompanied by their allies, the Nottoway, Meherrin, and Saponi. The Meherrin, like the Nottoway, were ancestral allies of the Tuscarora, often serving as intermediaries between the Nottoway and Tuscarora. The Saponi had since been incorporated into the alliance after the troubles between them and the Tuscarora subsided by the 1730s.¹⁸⁴ In 1755, the Meherrin were recorded as having approximately eight warriors at their disposal, with a total population estimated to be around 30.¹⁸⁵ All four nations spared as many warriors as they could without leaving their people defenseless. In March, there were 33 Tuscarora, 13 Nottoway, 7 Meherrin, and 2 Saponi warriors in Williamsburg.¹⁸⁶ Altogether, the warriors from Northeastern North Carolina and Southeastern Virginia sent 55 warriors to fight for the English in the spring and summer of 1757. According to the census taken in 1755, the Tuscarora only sent a third of their total warrior population. The warriors who did not join the

¹⁸² Dinwiddie, Letter to George Washington, December 27, 1756.

¹⁸³ Minutes of the Virginia Council, March 29, 1757. Virginia Council.

¹⁸⁴ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 147-149.

¹⁸⁵ Minutes of the Virginia Council, March 29, 1757. Virginia Council.

¹⁸⁶ Minutes of the Virginia Council, March 29, 1757. Virginia Council.

fight were needed at the reservation to defend their population in case the war somehow came to their doorstep. Obviously, the Tuscarora wished to fight and earn the goodwill of the English in this war and protect their communities from settler encroachment, but in no way did they want to leave their families unsupported if Indigenous warriors allied with the French found their way to their reservation.

The contingent of warriors was led by Chief Blount, who wished to speak with the Council of Virginia. In the meeting, the President of the Council, William Fairfax, asked Blount what he wanted in exchange for his allegiance.¹⁸⁷ Accompanying Blount was the elected War Captain, or War Chief, from the Tuscarora named Captain Jack. Captain Jack's appointment as War Chief demonstrated the continued adherence to traditional warfare procedures among the Tuscarora. Chief Blount presented the letter that the Tuscarora received from Lt. Col. Washington in August 1756.¹⁸⁸ Chief Blount informed the council that they "heartily accepted the Invitation, all they wanted was to be assisted with Arms, Ammunition, Cloathing, and Paint."¹⁸⁹ The articles mentioned were promised by Lt. Col. Washington to the Tuscarora in his letter if they joined to fight the French, all of which were necessary if the English wanted the Tuscarora and company to serve as true warriors for the colonists. Like the selection of a War Chief, for warriors to go to war, they needed supplies such as paint to distinguish themselves and to ascertain spiritual power to weaken their enemies.¹⁹⁰ If the English wanted the Tuscarora to be at their deadliest, they had to provide the necessary supplies for them to fight and kill their enemy.

¹⁸⁷ Minutes of the Virginia Council, March 29, 1757. Virginia Council.

¹⁸⁸ Minutes of the Virginia Council, March 29, 1757. Virginia Council.

¹⁸⁹ Minutes of the Virginia Council, March 29, 1757. Virginia Council.

¹⁹⁰ Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 192-193.

Chief Blount stated that they have "a firm Peace with the Catawbas, Cherokees, and Nottoways."¹⁹¹ The Tuscarora were already allied with the Nottoway, but, as a part of the article in Lt. Col. Washington's offer, they made peace with the Catawba and Cherokee. Lastly, Chief Blount poetically detailed that the Tuscarora had buried their weapons of war, but upon seeing and hearing of the attacks on their English allies, they decided to dig up their weapons and raise them against the French.¹⁹² The Tuscarora did not literally bury their weapons of war, but the phrase is symbolic, meaning that the Tuscarora had lived in peace, forgoing the need to fight until they learned of the English's call to action. The council, pleased with Chief Blount's words, joyfully agreed to arm the Tuscarora and other warriors who had accompanied them to Williamsburg.¹⁹³ The council also decided to offer rewards to the Tuscarora for their service upon their return from the campaign. The council concluded the conversation by declaring that the warriors would be accompanied by Captain Baker, who ensured their safe arrival at Fort Cumberland, where they awaited orders from Washington.¹⁹⁴ When the meeting with the council ended, both sides were pleased. For the English, specifically the Virginians, they had acquired a new supply of Indigenous allies on their side. Although the Tuscarora and their allies only accounted for 55 warriors, the English knew that after Braddock's defeat, one warrior was worth the price of two British soldiers in the forest.

The contingent of Tuscarora, Nottoway, Saponi, and Meherrin warriors were joined by the Cherokee and Catawba warriors later that spring.¹⁹⁵ The Catawba, long-time bitter enemies

¹⁹¹ Minutes of the Virginia Council, March 29, 1757. Virginia Council.

¹⁹² Minutes of the Virginia Council, March 29, 1757. Virginia Council.

¹⁹³ Minutes of the Virginia Council, March 29, 1757. Virginia Council.

¹⁹⁴ Minutes of the Virginia Council, March 29, 1757. Virginia Council.

¹⁹⁵ Jessica Lynn Wallace, "'Building Forts in Their Hearts': Anglo-Cherokee Relations on the Mid-Eighteenth-Century Southern Frontier," Dissertation, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses, 2014, 293.

of the Tuscarora, agreed to "join heart and hand against the enemies of the great King George," with the Tuscarora, Nottoway, and Cherokee.¹⁹⁶ It must have been strange for the Tuscarora to serve alongside the Catawba and Cherokee warriors. In any other time, if the three nations' warriors were on the battlefield, they would surely have their weapons of war turned against each other. The conflict for which the English recruited them demonstrates how all three nations were able to set aside their ancestral disputes so that they could assist the English in securing better goods, credibility, and autonomy. For the Tuscarora, their service was necessary, as they were tributaries, constantly under pressure from their colonist neighbors, and their need for goods. In May, the Tuscarora and Meherrin warriors were assured that 40 pounds worth of provisions had been allocated to their families for their service by the North Carolina Council.¹⁹⁷ Knowing that their people were cared for, the Tuscarora warriors could remain in the war.

Problems did arise, though, particularly from the Catawba and Cherokee. Lt. Col. Washington wrote from Fort Loudoun in May to Gov. Dinwiddie. Washington's letter opened with complaints from the two nations asking when they would receive their provisions for war, like the Tuscarora and their allies had received in Williamsburg.¹⁹⁸ In this letter, Washington pleaded for the prompt arrival of Mr. Edmond Atkin, the Imperial Indian Superintendent for the South, to assist with provisions and address the concerns of the disgruntled Natives.¹⁹⁹ Lt. Col. Washington stated, "I am teased incessantly by the Indians to know when he will come; and have put them off so long, that their patience is quite exhausted; and several of them are going off

¹⁹⁶ King Hagler, Letter to Governor William Lyttleton, "William Henry Lyttleton Papers at the William Clements Library," Watree: Watree, June 16, 1757.

¹⁹⁷ Minutes of the North Carolina Council, May 26, 1757, North Carolina Council.

¹⁹⁸ George Washington, Letter to Robert Dinwiddie, "Washington to Dinwiddie," Winchester, Virginia: North America, May 29, 1757.

¹⁹⁹ Washington, Letter to Robert Dinswiddie, May 29, 1757.

without waiting his arrival."²⁰⁰ If the English wished to keep their Indigenous allies, they needed to ensure they remained happy with their service. The lack of provisions and the wait for Mr. Atkins led some of the warriors to decide to return home. Some of these warriors threatened to pillage English homesteads to obtain the provisions promised.²⁰¹ A part of this letter also included Lt. Col. Washington's personal recommendation for Nottoway War Captain Tom Step to receive special provisions for his recruitment efforts among the Tuscarora.²⁰² According to Washington, Step had received no award for his efforts. Gov. Dinwiddie needed to act to save his relationship with their Indigenous warriors.

Gov. Dinwiddie had around 400 Cherokee, Catawba, Tuscarora, and Nottoway at his disposal by May 1757.²⁰³ However, pressures from the warriors and his inability to adequately lead them presented a danger that the warriors might return home and not provide service to the war effort. It also presented another threat, as noted in Lt. Col. Washington's letter regarding Atkins' late arrival. If the warriors sat idle for too long or did not receive necessary provisions for war, they had the capability of raiding English homesteads on their irritable return home. Gov. Dinwiddie had to make a decision that would appease their Indigenous allies while also protecting English homesteads. Ultimately, Dinwiddie gave the order for the Cherokee, Catawba, Tuscarora, Nottoway, Meherrin, and Saponi warriors to go "a scalping" with the English soldiers.²⁰⁴ In Dinwiddie's order, he acknowledged that the art of scalping was "barbarous." Still,

²⁰⁰ Washington, Letter to Robert Dinwiddie, May 29, 1757.

²⁰¹ Edmond Atkin, Letter to George Croghan, "Atkin to Croghan," Winchester, Virginia: North America, June 8, 1757.

²⁰² Washington, Letter to Robert Dinwiddie, May 29, 1757.

²⁰³ Archibald Henderson, *The Conquest of the Old Southwest: The Romantic Story of the Early Pioneers Into Virginia, the Carolinas, Tennessee, and Kentucky, 1740-1790*, United States: Century, 1920, 72.

²⁰⁴ Henderson, *The Conquest of the Old Southwest*, 72.

he believed he was justified in his decision because it was the French and their Indigenous allies who first committed such atrocities against their dead at Braddock's Defeat.²⁰⁵ The Tuscarora, with the other warriors, did as ordered and roamed in war parties across the frontier.

Eventually, the Tuscarora, along with the Catawba, grew dissatisfied and decided that they had no real use in the conflict that summer, so they returned home.²⁰⁶ Dinwiddie wrote to Gov. Dobbs regarding their retreat home but did not provide a reason for their departure outside of "they're not to be govern'd, or will they tarry any Time to do us any Service."²⁰⁷ The Cherokee were apparently the only party of warriors who stayed that summer, although they were dissatisfied with the lack of trade goods.²⁰⁸ The Tuscarora's first year of service in the French and Indian War ended in disappointment for both the Tuscarora and the English. The Tuscarora had answered the call from Lt. Col. Washington, but the English officers did not adequately lead them. The Tuscarora fulfilled their obligation by raiding the frontier and then departed from the conflict. The warriors had families to protect, and the English had little use for their skills, so they decided to return home and defend their families from possible French attacks or disputes with their English neighbors. It seemed, at least regarding Gov. Dinwiddie, the English had little to no understanding of how to lead their Indigenous allies like the French. The English also lacked the necessary provisions to keep their Indigenous warriors content and in the fight. Overall, the Tuscarora had received some of their desired provisions in the form of trade goods, ammunition, and payment to their families for their limited time in service. Their retreat from the

²⁰⁵ Henderson, *The Conquest of the Old Southwest*, 72.

²⁰⁶ Robert Dinwiddie, Letter to Arthur Dobbs, "Dinwiddie to Dobbs," June 20, 1757.

²⁰⁷ Dinwiddie, Letter to Arthur Dobbs, June 20, 1757.

²⁰⁸ Dinwiddie, Letter to Arthur Dobbs, June 20, 1757.

conflict brought discontent towards them by Gov. Dinwiddie, but they were once again called upon to take up their weapons of war for a campaign in the summer of 1758.

Marching with the English Drum: Tuscarora on Forbes Campaign to Fort Duquesne

Following Braddock's Defeat, the English continually strategized on how to recapture the Forks of the Ohio and, as always, the Tuscarora were considered indispensable allies for this mission by the Colony of North Carolina. General John Forbes was placed in charge of the campaign. Forbes' mission was to lead an expedition to Fort Duquesne, capture and kill the French and allied Indigenous Warriors residing at the fort, and regain the strategic point on the Forks of the Ohio for the English.²⁰⁹ Forbes' plan to accomplish this mission fell into two strategic goals. For one, Forbes planned to build a new road to Fort Duquesne, rather than following Braddock's route. Forbes' rationale behind this was that the new road would have strategic forts "placed every forty or fifty miles," and blockhouses placed between each fort.²¹⁰ Forbes learned from Braddock's defeat that his army needed secure places to retreat to if they suffered an overwhelming attack like Braddock's did. The creation of the new road, complete with forts and blockhouses, also facilitated the easier transportation of supplies for his army.²¹¹ Forbes' second strategic point was recruiting Indigenous allies to serve on his expedition.²¹² Braddock's Defeat was mainly due to his intolerance towards Indigenous warriors and the lack of recruitment of Indigenous scouts. If Forbes wanted his campaign to be successful, he had to secure a plentiful supply of trade goods and recruit willing and capable Indigenous warriors to serve alongside his forces.

²⁰⁹ Anderson, *The War That Made America*, 163.

²¹⁰ Anderson, *The War That Made America*, 163.

²¹¹ Anderson, *The War That Made America*, 163.

²¹² Anderson, *The War That Made America*, 163.

On May 4, 1758, the NC Council met to review several bills that ranged from establishing new warehouses in Halifax County to creating a new town off the Perquimons River. Towards the end of the day, the council discussed the request for a "number of Tuscarora Indians to march with the Troops of this Province, and join his Majesty's Forces in Virginia."²¹³ This request was due to the current military operation under General Forbes. Although it seems the Tuscarora had irritated Gov. Dinwiddie with their retreat home halfway through the summer in 1757, this new campaign under General Forbes meant that any ill will between the two parties had to be forgiven. If the English wanted Forbes Campaign to work, they needed to offer incentives, recruit, and keep their Indigenous warriors. The NC Council continued discussing the matter and proposed an incentive of "Forty Shillings, out of the Public Treasury, to each man."²¹⁴ The money from the NC Council was only an incentive offer for the Tuscarora to gauge who would take up their weapons of war once again for the English. The incentive did not end there, however, as the NC Council also stated they "will consider of their Behaviour, and reward them according to their Merit at their Return at the End of the Campaign."²¹⁵ It is evident that the inclusion by the NC Council to award further rewards based on "Merit" was to inspire the Tuscarora warriors to stay committed to the Campaign and work well with the English forces they would serve under. Additionally, the NC Council needed to specify "at the End of the Campaign," meaning the Tuscarora warriors could not leave halfway through, as they had done the previous summer, and expect a reward.

The Tuscarora had to decide if the incentives were worth their time, effort, and possibly their lives. They had participated the previous year in the war for the English but spent the

²¹³ Minutes of the North Carolina Council, May 4, 1758, North Carolina Council.

²¹⁴ Minutes of the North Carolina Council, May 4, 1758, North Carolina Council.

²¹⁵ Minutes of the North Carolina Council, May 4, 1758, North Carolina Council.

majority of their time listening to the complaints of the Catawba and Cherokee while waiting to utilize their skills for the English cause, as promised by Chief James Blount at Williamsburg in the spring of 1757.²¹⁶ When Gov. Dinwiddie finally opened up the frontier for the Tuscarora and other Indigenous allies to raid and fight their French enemies, they did so. With no other guidance, the Tuscarora returned home with what they had been given or collected during their service.

The Tuscarora decided to come to the aid of the English once again, as evident in a letter dated June 25, 1758. Francis Fauquier wrote to Lt. Col. Washington that a messenger encountered a group of 25 Tuscarora and Nottoway warriors on their way to join forces under Lt. Col. Washington.²¹⁷ Fauquier wrote that "We had no Guns for them so the General must supply them. I promised those that shd behave well and signalize themselves should be rewarded with a breast plate."²¹⁸ According to Fauquier, the warriors did not have any guns, or possibly only a few had them, which the promise of guns and breastplates certainly further motivated the Tuscarora and Nottoway to continue their service. A few days later, on July 6th, 1758, General Forbes recorded in a letter to his second in command, Colonel Henry Bouquet, that the Indian Agent Christopher Gist recorded that "there are now at Winchester 129 Catawbas, Tuscaroras, & Nottoways newly arrived."²¹⁹ Gist also attested that a force of Cherokee were nearing Winchester for the Campaign as well.²²⁰ The fighting force of warriors that Gist reported to

²¹⁶ Minutes of the Virginia Council, March 29, 1757. Virginia Council.

²¹⁷ Francis Fauquier, Letter to George Washington, "Fauquier to Washington," Winsborough, Virginia: North America, June 25, 1758.

²¹⁸ Fauquier, Letter to George Washington, June 25, 1758.

²¹⁹ John Forbes, Letter to Henry Bouquet, "Forbes to Bouquet," Carlisle, Pennsylvania: North America, July 6, 1758.

²²⁰ Forbes, Letter to Henry Bouquet, July 6, 1758.

Forbes meant he had plenty of warriors to scout and put in the field with his own English and Colonials to attack Fort Duquesne.

Unfortunately, it appears there was some miscommunication between Gist and General Forbes regarding the Indigenous force at Winchester. On July 14th, Captain Abraham Bosomworth wrote to Colonel Bouquet that no Catawba or Cherokee warriors were waiting at Winchester.²²¹ According to Captain Bosomworth's letter, Mr. Gist was "premature (as he generally is) in his intelligence."²²² Captain Bosomworth continued in his letter, mentioning that there were "28 Tuscaroras" at Winchester.²²³ Captain Bosomworth felt no need to separate the Tuscarora and Nottoway in his account, most likely due to them being so closely allied and the Tuscarora warriors outnumbering the Nottoway warriors. Another letter written by Mr. James Glen to Colonel Bouquet, the same day, recorded a "few Tuscaroras at Winchester."²²⁴ Glen, like Captain Bosomworth, found no Catawba or Cherokee at Winchester and experienced considerable frustration with Gist for writing to General Forbes without confirmation.²²⁵ Ultimately, these two letters confirmed that at least 28 Tuscarora and Nottoway were at Winchester and had remained there since their arrival, as recorded by Gist on July 6th.

Annoyed after receiving both Captain Bosomworth and Mr. Glen's letters, Colonel Bouquet wrote to General Forbes on the 15th of July that "Gist's Catawbas and Cherokees exist only in his imagination."²²⁶ Colonel Bouquet goes on to state that the Tuscarora and Nottoway at

²²¹ Abraham Bosomworth, Letter to Henry Bouquet, "Bosomworth to Bouquet," Camp Cumberland, Maryland: North America, July 14, 1758.

²²² Bosomworth, Letter to Henry Bouquet, July 14, 1758.

²²³ Bosomworth, Letter to Henry Bouquet, July 14, 1758.

²²⁴ James Glen, Letter to Henry Bouquet, "Glen to Bouquet," July 14, 1758.

²²⁵ Glen, Letter to Henry Bouquet, July 14, 1758.

²²⁶ Henry Bouquet, Letter to John Forbes, "Bouquet to Forbes," Bedford, Pennsylvania: Rays Town, July 15, 1758.

Winchester only accounted for 28 warriors and were “better fitted to carry off our presents than to fight.”²²⁷ Colonel Bouquet’s remark about the Tuscarora and Nottoway further proved his dissatisfaction with the reliance of Indigenous warriors in this campaign. Colonel Bouquet believed the limited number of warriors from the Tuscarora and Nottoway had little capability of helping the campaign and would probably run off once they received their trade goods. The Tuscarora and Nottoway had started the Campaign off, to no fault of their own, negatively. It was up to the warriors to prove themselves as valuable and needed. Although previously unaccounted for, a group of Catawba warriors arrived at Winchester under the command of their War Captain Bullen.²²⁸ Colonel Bouquet wrote to General Forbes a month later, informing him that 31 Catawba under Captain Bullen, as well as 27 Tuscarora and Nottoway, had embarked on their journey from Winchester heading towards Fort Cumberland.²²⁹ The inclusion of the new Catawba warriors put the total Indigenous fighting force close to sixty.

Along with the Tuscarora and other warriors was a caravan of supply wagons, accompanied by English troops, for which the warriors were responsible for scouting the road ahead and protecting the caravan. Tragedy struck on the journey to Fort Cumberland. When the caravan was six miles away from arriving at the fort, Catawba War Captain Bullen and Captain French, along with another warrior and three Catawba women, decided to journey further ahead without the protection of the caravan and other warriors.²³⁰ Once they got far enough ahead of the caravan, they were ambushed by French allied Indigenous warriors who killed both Captain

²²⁷ Bouquet, Letter to John Forbes, July 15, 1758.

²²⁸ Henry Bouquet, Letter to John Forbes, “Bouquet to Forbes,” Bedford, Pennsylvania: Rays Town Camp, August 11, 1758.

²²⁹ Bouquet, Letter to John Forbes, August 11, 1758.

²³⁰ George Washington, Letter to Henry Bouquet, “Washington to Bouquet,” Fort Cumberland, Maryland: North America, August 24, 1758.

Bullen and Captain French and injured one of the women.²³¹ When the caravan arrived at Fort Cumberland, Lt. Col. Washington allowed the Catawba to bury their captains, and the English gave them a funeral with “Military Honours.”²³² The Tuscarora, Nottoway, and Catawba were not allowed to rest long, as the next day they were sent back out to provide security for a caravan under the command of Captain William Trent to Rays Town.²³³ The incident involving Captain Bullen and Captain French proved that the English needed Indigenous warriors to scout and defend their caravans against ambushes by French-allied warriors.

The caravan arrived at Ray’s Town on August 27th without incident, thanks to the Tuscarora, Nottoway, and Catawba warriors. Once they arrived in Ray’s Town, Reverend Thomas Barton recorded a speech that one of their chiefs made. In the speech, the chief mentions that they had traveled several times to the territory of the French to fight and kill the English’s enemies, but had unfortunately failed each time due to limited supplies.²³⁴ However, after the death of Captain Bullen, the warriors all wished to travel to “Loyal Hannon,” a strategic camping point within distance of Fort Duquesne, so that they could attack Fort Duquesne and avenge their fallen brethren.²³⁵ Rev. Barton did not record what “Chief” gave this speech or which of the three nations they belonged to. It was likely a Catawba headman who was not recorded previously, or it may have been Captain Jack of the Tuscarora or Captain Step of the Nottoway. Although the Tuscarora and Nottoway were ancestral enemies of the Catawba, their shared interest in this campaign made that old bitterness die down, at least for the duration of the campaign, and the

²³¹ Washington, Letter to Bouquet, August 24, 1758.

²³² Washington, Letter to Bouquet, August 24, 1758.

²³³ Washington, Letter to Bouquet, August 24, 1758.

²³⁴ William A Hunter, “Thomas Barton and the Forbes Expedition,” *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 95, no. 4 (1971): 431–83, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20079531>, 459.

²³⁵ Hunter, “Thomas Barton and the Forbes Expedition,” 459.

deaths of the Catawba headmen Bullen and French had likely upset the Tuscarora and Nottoway warriors as well. Whatever the case may be, whoever made the speech committed the entire war party to stay with the Campaign until the end and until they avenged their fallen comrades. Soon, the Tuscarora warriors got their chance to earn their rewards, prove their credibility as a tributary nation to North Carolina, and avenge the death of their new friends Captain Bullen and Captain French.

After staying a little over a week, on September 4th, a number of Tuscarora, Nottoway, and Catawba warriors departed from Rays Town with their commander, Captain Trent, along with troops from Maryland, Carolina, and the Lower-Counties.²³⁶ According to Rev. Barton's journal entry, they had set out for Dagworthy's Camp on the Loyalhanna Creek so that the Tuscarora, Nottoway, and Catawba warriors, accompanied by some English and provisional soldiers, could scout out the current scale of French and enemy Natives at Fort Duquesne.²³⁷ According to Rev. Barton, not all of the Tuscarora, Nottoway, and Catawba left for the mission, presumably so the encampment at Rays Town did not go without warriors if needed for security or scouting. Rev. Barton also mentioned that the "Cherokees, after receiving all of the Presents they expected, refus'd to go, & are for returning to their own Country."²³⁸ Losing the Cherokee meant a significant decline in the number of available scouts and warriors in the field. The loss of the Cherokee also meant that the Tuscarora and other warriors who remained with the mission had to work harder to secure the roads ahead of the English forces and protect their caravans. Once again, the Tuscarora, along with the other warriors, English soldiers, and provisional troops, arrived at their destination and awaited further orders, which came on May 9th. Major

²³⁶ Hunter, "Thomas Barton and the Forbes Expedition," 466-467.

²³⁷ Hunter, "Thomas Barton and the Forbes Expedition," 466-467.

²³⁸ Hunter, "Thomas Barton and the Forbes Expedition," 467.

General Grant, under the command of Colonel Bouquet, convinced Bouquet to allow him a force of “300 Highlanders, 100 Royal Americans, 150 Virginians, 100 Marylanders, 100 Pennsylvanians, and all the Indians,” to recon Fort Duquesne and set an ambush to lure out the French and Indigenous warriors in the fort so they could kill and capture them.²³⁹ This mission was vital to the campaign, and the Tuscarora, who had already demonstrated their commitment, pursued with their companions forward towards Fort Duquesne.

Colonel Bouquet soon regretted his decision to approve Major Grant’s mission. A few days after Grant departed with his force, Bouquet received a letter from Lt. Col. John Dagworthy on September 14, in which he reported “Ensign Grant of the Highland Regiment, a number of Indians, & eight Soldiers are Just now come here from Major Grants Party.”²⁴⁰ Dagworthy goes on to explain that the newly arrived men had been in an “Engagement with a Considerable Body of the Enemy in sight of Fort Du Quesne.”²⁴¹ As the days passed, the events, known as “Grant’s Defeat,” became clear. Grant reconnoitered the fort and believed the enemy forces stationed at Fort Duquesne were significantly smaller than they were. In this critical assignment error, he split his forces and ordered Captain McDonald to march his Highlanders straight to the fort while playing their drums to draw out the enemy.²⁴² Due to Grant’s miscalculation, McDonald’s forces were swarmed by the enemy, leading to two more companies coming to their aid, which did little to help in the chaos.²⁴³ The fighting continued, which led to Major Lewis and his force also coming to assist with the retreating English and provisional soldiers.²⁴⁴ The English sustained

²³⁹ Henry Bouquet, Letter to John Forbes, “Bouquet to Forbes,” Camp Loyalhanna, Pennsylvania: North America, September 17, 1758.

²⁴⁰ John Dagworthy, Letter to Henry Bouquet, “Dagworthy to Bouquet,” September 21, 1758.

²⁴¹ Dagworthy, Letter to Bouquet, September 14, 1758.

²⁴² Bouquet, Letter to John Forbes, September 17, 1758.

²⁴³ Bouquet, Letter to John Forbes, September 17, 1758.

²⁴⁴ Bouquet, Letter to John Forbes, September 17, 1758.

heavy casualties with 22 Officers and 355 Soldiers killed or captured by the French and their Indigenous warriors, including Grant, who was captured.²⁴⁵ The entire battle amounted more to a massacre of the English forces reminiscent of Braddock's Defeat a few years earlier outside Fort Duquesne.

Colonel Bouquet wrote to General Forbes, explaining the incident while also taking credit for the order. In Bouquet's letter to Forbes, he highlighted the heroics of "Captain Bullet of the Virginians who with 100 men sustained the battle."²⁴⁶ Within this letter, Colonel Bouquet also wrote, "Our Catawbas did not fire a shot, and the Tuscaroras and Nattaways did very well."²⁴⁷ According to this testimony of the battle, it appeared that the Catawba decided to withdraw from the fighting, or they chose not to rush into the fray to aid the English and provisional soldiers, who were fighting for their lives. On the contrary, the Tuscarora and Nottoway proved themselves in the fight, coming to aid their battered and bleeding English brethren. Colonel Bouquet also noted that there were only 14 Tuscarora and Nottoway warriors in total during the engagement, indicating that they fought without regard for personal preservation.²⁴⁸ Bouquet was proven wrong in his initial assessment of the Tuscarora and Nottoway, who he had figured would take the presents offered to them and leave the campaign in July, never actually participating in combat. When the battle had ended, the French allied Indigenous warriors did not pursue the retreating English forces for long; instead, they decided to collect their scalps and bounty from the dead.²⁴⁹ After collecting their bounty, they withdrew

²⁴⁵ Douglas R. Cubbison, *The British Defeat of the French in Pennsylvania, 1758: A Military History of the Forbes Campaign Against Fort Duquesne*. United Kingdom: McFarland, Incorporated, Publishers, 2010, 138.

²⁴⁶ Bouquet, Letter to John Forbes, September 17, 1758.

²⁴⁷ Bouquet, Letter to John Forbes, September 17, 1758.

²⁴⁸ Bouquet, Letter to John Forbes, September 17, 1758.

²⁴⁹ Cubbison, *The British Defeat of the French in Pennsylvania*, 139.

from Fort Duquesne, heading home with their newly acquired goods and scalps.²⁵⁰ Although the French at Fort Duquesne had defeated the English force under Major Grant, their Indigenous allies departed, prompting Captain François-Marie Le Marchand de Lignery, the fort's commander, to order its destruction and the retreat of all remaining French forces to Fort Machault in November.²⁵¹ Following the French destruction and abandonment of Fort Duquesne and retreat from the Forks of the Ohio, General Forbes' forces marched to the remnants of the destroyed fort, finally securing the Forks of the Ohio.²⁵²

The Tuscarora and Nottoway warriors eventually returned home after finishing General Forbes's Campaign. As a testament to the Tuscarora's conduct during the campaign, in an NC Council meeting on May 12, 1759, the council mentioned that awards were in order for the Tuscarora warriors who traveled with General Forbes' Campaign.²⁵³ The NC Council stated, "It being Certyfyed to the House that Eighteen of the Tuscarora Indians behaved well on the Expedition against Fort Du Quesne."²⁵⁴ The NC Council's description of the Tuscarora efforts further proved that they adhered to their end of the agreement with the English. The NC Council ordered that a total of 105 pounds worth of presents should be given to Mr. John Campbell so he could present them to the 18 Tuscarora warriors.²⁵⁵ The Council never listed what the presents should be, but whatever they were, they would have been used by the warriors to show their payment of service as well as their credibility on the battlefield. For the Tuscarora men who did not go on the campaign, whether it was due to village needs, their age, or lack of interest, they

²⁵⁰ Cubbison, *The British Defeat of the French in Pennsylvania*, 139.

²⁵¹ Anderson, *The War That Made America*, 171.

²⁵² Anderson, *The War That Made America*, 172.

²⁵³ Minutes of the Lower House of the North Carolina General Assembly, May 12, 1759, North Carolina General Assembly.

²⁵⁴ Minutes of the Lower House of the North Carolina General Assembly, May 12, 1759.

²⁵⁵ Minutes of the Lower House of the North Carolina General Assembly, May 12, 1759.

were going to have another opportunity to join the war path without having to travel as far as the warriors did on the Forbes Campaign.

Blood in the Mountains: Tuscarora Service in the Anglo-Cherokee War

The Cherokee were a major ally of the British Empire during the French and Indian War. They served the English cause alongside the Tuscarora and other English-allied warriors, fighting the French, Shawnee, and Delaware on the frontier in 1756 and 1757.²⁵⁶ Due to their prior service, when it came time for Forbes' Campaign to Fort Duquesne in 1758, the Cherokee were a clear choice for the mission as they possessed the largest number of warriors in the field from the southern colonies. However, under the leadership of General Forbes, the Cherokees were harassed by the English for their late arrival into the campaign and their continued insistence on receiving more provisions and gifts for their participation in the expedition.²⁵⁷ Tensions grew between Forbes and the Cherokee warriors until they reached a breaking point. After the arrest and disarmament of the Cherokee leader Attakullakulla and his entourage by order of Forbes, the Cherokee removed themselves from the campaign, leaving the English force only with the Tuscarora, Nottoway, and Catawba warriors to continue the mission to Fort Duquesne.²⁵⁸

The Cherokee warriors were enraged at the English for their actions against them during the campaign; they had taken up the call to fight the French, leaving their families defenseless outside the protection of the colonists, vulnerable to possible French-allied warrior assaults. In an

²⁵⁶ Woodward and Moretti-Langholtz, "The Millie Woodson-Turner Nottoway Reservation," 24-25.

²⁵⁷ Wallace, "Building Forts in Their Hearts," 315.

²⁵⁸ Daniel J. Tortora, *Carolina in Crisis: Cherokees, Colonists, and Slaves in the American Southeast, 1756-1763* (Chapel Hill, NC: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2015), 57-58.

ironic circumstance, their allied English allies were just as much hostile to them as the French, as the Cherokee suffered thirty-seven casualties at the hands of the Virginians.²⁵⁹ Feeling betrayed by their English brethren, the Cherokee “attacked settlements and outposts in Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia in spring 1760, intent on killing.”²⁶⁰ While the French and Indian War was waning in North America, the Anglo-Cherokee War broke out, increasing fear amongst the settlers in the Southeast. Once again, the Carolinians needed Indigenous warriors to help fight the newly hostile Cherokee.

Another chance was presented to the Tuscarora on the Indian Woods Reservation to bloody their tomahawks and ascertain plunder at the service of the colonists. Although no current primary evidence is available to document the request for Tuscarora assistance, it is evident that Tuscarora warriors accepted whatever reward was offered to them by the colonists. According to the *Wachovia Church Book* entries for 1761, 50 warriors accompanied 400 North Carolinian provisional troops.²⁶¹ It is striking to see 50 Tuscarora warriors accompany this expedition in 1761, whereas only 33 had journeyed to fight on the frontier in 1757. In 1758, a combined force of only 28 Tuscarora and Nottoway warriors joined the Fort Duquesne Campaign. The influx of Tuscarora warriors for the Anglo-Cherokee War may have been due to the three-year gap between the Forbes Campaign and the war with the Cherokee, in which some Tuscarora youth may have matured into warriors. Another view is that the conflict was nearby, so they could lend more warriors for the shorter expedition. Lastly, the influx of warriors may have been a mix of Indian Woods Reservation Tuscarora and other Tuscarora scattered in the Southeast, or some from the North who decided to accompany the campaign, adding to their larger numbers.

²⁵⁹ Tortora, *Carolina in Crisis*, 59.

²⁶⁰ Wallace, “Building Forts in Their Hearts,” 370.

²⁶¹ Fries, ed, *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina*, Vol. I, 234.

Whatever the reason for the increase in warriors, their inclusion was beneficial for themselves and the colonists. The Tuscarora knew that assisting the colonists again meant they would receive rewards for their actions, as well as further promote their usefulness and prestige to the English as a tributary. Another incentive was to fight their old enemies, the Cherokee, and quiet old issues they had with the nation by resolving them on the battlefield. The colonists learned from the French and Indian War that they needed warriors for scouting ahead and providing security for their caravans, which the Tuscarora had ample experience in. The Tuscarora's participation was beneficial for both sides.

The Tuscarora warriors were attached to the North Carolina Provisionals under the command of Colonel Hugh Waddell. In the summer of 1761, the Tuscarora warriors and North Carolina troops were camped at the newly built Fort Dobbs, awaiting further orders and armaments.²⁶² By this point in the war, the Cherokee were suffering greatly due to Major James Grant's Campaign, in which his main goal was to punish the Cherokee for their perceived betrayal against the British.²⁶³ Grant's mission was successful, as by the end of his campaign, his troops and Indigenous warriors who accompanied him, mostly Mohawks, Catawba, Chickasaws, and Stockbridge Indians, had burned down fourteen Cherokee villages by midsummer.²⁶⁴ By the time the Tuscarora and North Carolina troops made it into the war in October 1761, the fighting was almost entirely over. By October 8th, Colonel Waddell's forces, along with the Tuscarora warriors, arrived at Fort Chiswell, VA.²⁶⁵ After the North Carolinian troops arrived, the priority was road construction. The Tuscarora warriors were reduced to providing security for the

²⁶² Tortora, *Carolina in Crisis*, 154.

²⁶³ Wallace, "Building Forts in Their Hearts," 394.

²⁶⁴ Wallace, "Building Forts in Their Hearts," 397.

²⁶⁵ Adam Stephen, Letter to Francis Fauquier, "Stephen to Fauquier," Fort Chiswell, Virginia: North America, October 8, 1761.

construction of the road, like their role in the Forbes Campaign several years prior. By mid-November, however, a contingent of Cherokee approached the North Carolina and Virginia forces, seeking to negotiate a peace treaty.²⁶⁶ The Cherokee were running low on ammunition and trade goods; peace was the only viable option.

The treaty meeting took place on the Great Island, located on the Holston River, on November 20, 1761. The transcription of this treaty included the Cherokee leaders who were accompanying the “near four Hundred Warriors & Cherokee Indians,” which were Conocotocko, Willinawa, Autassaty, Skiagunsta, and Connecaughte.²⁶⁷ Conocotocko was the prominent leader of the group of Cherokee who wished to pursue the treaty. The Tuscarora leaders Colonel Cross and Captain Blunt were also mentioned in the treaty.²⁶⁸ Colonel Cross was never mentioned again, either before or after this event. Perhaps Cross changed his name or went by a different one on other records, which was common during this time. Captain Blunt may have been Chief James Blount, but this is unlikely. In 1757, James Blount was recorded as “old and feeble” during the meeting at Winchester where the Tuscarora accepted Washington’s request to join the English against the French.²⁶⁹ Chief Blount was elderly by 1761 and unlikely to have gone on a war expedition. Captain Blunt was likely a relative of James Blount, who was younger and more fit to lead a war expedition. The first article of the treaty deliberately mentioned the Tuscarora as “His Majesty’s Faithful Allies.”²⁷⁰ This quote demonstrated the relationship between the Tuscarora and the English. By this treaty, the Tuscarora had gone to war on three separate

²⁶⁶ Tortora, *Carolina in Crisis*, 165.

²⁶⁷ Adams Stephen, Letter to Francis Fauquier, “Treaty with the Cherokees,” Great Island of Holston, Tennessee: North America, November 20, 1761.

²⁶⁸ Stephen, “Treaty with the Cherokees,” November 20, 1761.

²⁶⁹ Minutes of the Virginia Council, March 29, 1757. Virginia Council.

²⁷⁰ Stephen, “Treaty with the Cherokees,” November 20, 1761.

occasions on behalf of their English brothers as tributaries. For the Tuscarora and the English, their relationship was built on old services that had been provided. When the Tuscarora needed weapons, provisions, and money, the English needed proven warriors for scouting and raiding. The Tuscarora had solidified their relationship as a tributary nation for the English.

According to the treaty, “the Cherokee Warriors now here, are to bury the Hatchet, and make a Firm Peace with Colo. Cross, Capt. Blunt, And the Other Tuscarora Warriors in Camp.”²⁷¹ Leading up to this conflict, the Tuscarora and Cherokee had not made a formal peace agreement with one another. The Cherokee had been ancestral enemies of the Tuscarora, and their participation against the Tuscarora during the Tuscarora War was never punished. The two nations served alongside each other during the 1757 and 1758 campaigns for the English, but this was due to mutual benefit and unlikely to occur outside of the guidance of the English. Governor Bull, the person in charge of this treaty meeting, likely included this article to appease the Tuscarora who accompanied the English troops and to prevent any retaliatory engagements between the two nations at the meeting's conclusion.

The Tuscarora had gone all this way and had not gotten a chance to fight in a skirmish against the Cherokee, so Governor Bull may have been worried that the Tuscarora would ambush a few Cherokees to collect booty and appease their warrior tradition. The Cherokee still outnumbered the Tuscarora warriors and may have planned to attack them if they somehow managed to escape the English's gaze. Either way, an engagement between the two nations would render the entire treaty null and void, thereby reigniting the war. Ultimately, the first article declared peace between the two nations, which was beneficial for both parties, who had

²⁷¹ Stephen, “Treaty with the Cherokees,” November 20, 1761.

already suffered for generations from war and loss. The second article in the treaty mandated that if a Cherokee murdered a settler, the guilty person, or their head, would be taken to the nearest English fort.²⁷² The Cherokee and Tuscarora agreed to both of these articles. They placed their signatures on the treaty, followed by the signatures of the officers of the North Carolina and Virginia regiments.²⁷³ With the treaty signed and the conflict over, the North Carolina and Virginia troops, along with “52 Tuscarora Indians,” began their trek back home on November 28th.²⁷⁴

The Tuscarora warriors returned home from their expedition against the Cherokee. Luckily for them, they sustained no losses on their mission against the Cherokee. Some of the warriors were likely upset that they never got the chance to avenge the bloodshed against their ancestral enemies. Still, any skirmish against the Cherokee would have likely led to the loss of Tuscarora warriors. The total population of Tuscarora on the reservation was steadily dwindling, and the warriors did not need to lose anyone, even if it meant they would not get a chance to earn prestige in battle. The warriors received some form of payment for their efforts in the campaign, although some complained that they never received payment.²⁷⁵ The Tuscarora also signed a treaty with the Cherokee, which solidified their position as an honorable tributary nation and was a measure to prevent any Cherokee attacks against them.

The Tuscarora had come to the aid of the English on three separate occasions in the last five years. In 1757, the Tuscarora participated in raids against the Shawnee and Delaware near

²⁷² Stephen, “Treaty with the Cherokees,” November 20, 1761.

²⁷³ Stephen, “Treaty with the Cherokees,” November 20, 1761.

²⁷⁴ Adam Stephen, Letter to Francis Fauquier, “Return of Troops,” Great Island of Holston, Tennessee: North America, November 28, 1761.

²⁷⁵ Minutes of the North Carolina Council, November 19, 1762, North Carolina Council.

Fort Duquesne. In 1758, the Tuscarora accompanied the Forbes Campaign against Fort Duquesne as scouts, caravan security, and foot soldiers in Grant's Defeat. Lastly, when called once again in 1761, the Tuscarora accompanied the North Carolina troops against the Cherokee, acting as scouts and security for the force. The Tuscarora had proven their dedication to the English and colonists as tributaries, as they had a few decades prior, during the Yamasee War. For the Tuscarora, their service in these wars should have entitled them to greater support and friendship from the colonists. Their participation was a demonstration of their status as a separate nation supporting an ally in their time of need. The Tuscarora had significant reasons not to engage in these conflicts. Still, they did so, hoping to regain considerable status among the colonists while trying to protect their reservation lands and preserve what little autonomy they still held. Sadly, although they had proven their loyalty to the English, the Tuscarora on the Indian Woods Reservation continued to suffer hardship.

Chapter 4: The End of Tributary Status and the Indian Woods Reservation

After serving as tributaries in two wars in the mid-18th century, the Tuscarora continued to lose autonomy and reservation land. By the mid-1760s, following the Anglo-Cherokee War, life on the Indian Woods Reservation was continuing to worsen. Tuscarora warriors returning home from their expedition to Cherokee country were greeted with the harsh reality of their sad existence on the reservation. The land that they rightfully owned was decreasing, meanwhile the colonists' lands increased. Harassment of the Tuscarora people continued with far less room on their reservation for the Tuscarora to escape the constant molestation of their people. Alcohol ravaged the reservation, leading to further impoverishment and ill health amongst the Tuscarora living in Indian Woods. The Tuscarora fought hard to maintain a significant position within North Carolina as tributaries, but were quickly losing their remaining lands and themselves. More challenging times lay ahead for the Tuscarora on the reservation, and difficult decisions concerning the nation's future had to be made.

Fading in Time: The Demise of the Indian Woods Reservation and Tributary Status

The population of the Tuscarora people living on the Indian Woods Reservation by the early 1760s had decreased even further since the 301 recorded population in 1754. By 1761, only 259 Tuscarora were still living on the reservation.²⁷⁶ From 1754 to 1761, the Tuscarora population had decreased by 51 individuals. Some of those 51 Tuscarora may have been members of the Kersey family that relocated to the Drowning Creek area in southeastern North Carolina off the reservation with other Tuscarora families.²⁷⁷ The population decline was further evidence of the erosion of the reservation and the Tuscarora tributary influence. The population

²⁷⁶ William Tryon, Letter to the Earl of Shelburne, "Tryon to Shelburne," January 31, 1767.

²⁷⁷ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 193.

continued to decline when a Tuscarora delegation from New York arrived in North Carolina, hoping to relocate more of their population to the North in 1766.²⁷⁸ This delegation was sent at the behest of Sir William Johnson, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, who sought to encourage more Iroquoian people to join their cousins within the Haudenosaunee Confederacy.²⁷⁹ The delegation was able to convince 155 Tuscarora to relocate to the North by the summer of 1766.²⁸⁰

To travel the distance north, however, the Tuscarora needed to purchase supplies and wagons to help their journey. The Tuscarora were impoverished and could not buy the supplies without help from the colonists. A delegation of Indian Woods Tuscarora headmen agreed to lease reservation land out to Robert Jones, William Williams, and Thomas Pugh to help pay for their travel north.²⁸¹ The Tuscarora headmen agreed to lease 8,000 acres of their reservation for a period of 150 years to the three men, which further reduced the reservation's size.²⁸² After receiving payment for their land, the 155 Tuscarora, along with their northern delegation, ventured north to join the Haudenosaunee.

In November 1765, a few months after the 155 Tuscarora left to travel north, a few Tuscarora headmen traveled to visit North Carolina Governor William Tryon. The leader of the headmen was Thomas Basket, apparently replacing Chief James Blount after the French and Indian War. Chief Basket presented an offering of deer pelts to the Governor, showing they still

²⁷⁸ Minutes of the Upper House of the North Carolina General Assembly, November 4, 1766, North Carolina General Assembly.

²⁷⁹ Minutes of the Upper House of the North Carolina General Assembly, November 4, 1766.

²⁸⁰ Tryon, Letter to the Earl of Shelburne, January 31, 1767.

²⁸¹ Acts from the North Carolina General Assembly, November 3-December 2, 1766, North Carolina General Assembly.

²⁸² Acts from the North Carolina General Assembly, November 3-December 2, 1766, North Carolina General Assembly.

wished to meet their tributary obligation to the colony.²⁸³ In the meeting with the Governor, Chief Basket asked him to excuse “the smallness of this present, for we are mostly old men, unable to hunt, our young men having gone to the Northward.”²⁸⁴ The population of Tuscarora on the reservation was only 104, and according to Chief Basket, the remaining men were older and unable to provide a greater service to North Carolina. Chief Basket assured Gov. Tryon that the remaining Tuscarora wished to “assure you of our loyalty to the great King over the water and to desire your friendship and protection.”²⁸⁵ With all of the young men gone, the protection of the reservation had fallen onto the older Tuscarora men to keep the colonists appeased.

Chief Basket continued his speech to Gov. Tryon, explaining, “We are by education and custom, unable to acquire a livelihood otherwise than by hunting; and as ill natured persons frequently take away and break our guns, and even whip us for pursuing game on their land.”²⁸⁶ According to Chief Basket, the only credible job the Tuscarora could conduct was hunting, which became increasingly complex as their reservation lands shrank. The Tuscarora hunters had to pursue the deer off their reservation land, which frequently led to them losing their weapons and suffering abuse by white landowners who caught them on their property. The Tuscarora wished for Gov. Tryon to “appoint Commissioners to hear our complaints, and redress our grievances.”²⁸⁷ By this point, the Tuscarora had little to no means of defending themselves against

²⁸³ Thomas Basket, “The Speech of Thomas Basket and the Chief men of the Tuscarora Nation to Governor William Tryon,” New Bern, North Carolina: North America, November 1767.

²⁸⁴ Basket, “The Speech of Thomas Basket and the Chief men of the Tuscarora Nation to Governor William Tryon,” November 1767.

²⁸⁵ Basket, “The Speech of Thomas Basket and the Chief men of the Tuscarora Nation to Governor William Tryon,” November 1767.

²⁸⁶ Basket, “The Speech of Thomas Basket and the Chief men of the Tuscarora Nation to Governor William Tryon,” November 1767.

²⁸⁷ Basket, “The Speech of Thomas Basket and the Chief men of the Tuscarora Nation to Governor William Tryon,” November 1767.

colonists without the help of appointed officials from the Governor. The situation on the Indian Woods Reservation was in a grave state.

Over the next few years, there was a continuous decline in the Tuscarora's tributary status and the reservation land. By 1776, the Tuscarora population on the reservation had decreased to 80 individuals according to a new lease agreement between the Tuscarora headmen, led by Chief Whitmel Tuffdick, with Thomas Pugh, William Williams, and William Jones.²⁸⁸ This new lease agreement offered 2,000 additional acres to Thomas Pugh, William Williams, and William Jones, following their previous 8,000-acre lease in 1765. The new leased land agreement was made for ninety-nine years with an annual payment of “eighty Duffield blankets, eighty Ozanburg shirts, eight pairs of boots, 50 pounds of gunpowder, and 150 pounds of shot.”²⁸⁹ The decline in tributary services and the ability of the Tuscarora men to fight in wars for goods meant that the main contribution the Tuscarora had was leasing off their diminishing reservation lands. Over the next few decades, the Tuscarora continued to lease off more land, until they had only 4,000 acres left at the turn of the century.²⁹⁰ Life on the reservation continued to deteriorate for the remaining Tuscarora. Another delegation of Tuscarora from the North arrived in 1801 with a proposal to the remaining Tuscarora on the reservation and the North Carolina government.

The delegation in 1801 was led by a Tuscarora headman known as Saguaresa (Spear-Dragger), along with three other headmen recorded as Longboard, William Printup, and Thomas Green.²⁹¹ In a letter Saguaresa delivered to the General Assembly of North Carolina, the

²⁸⁸ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 173-174.

²⁸⁹ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 173-174.

²⁹⁰ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 182.

²⁹¹ Saguaresa, “A Letter from the Kings & Chiefs of the Tuscarora Indians to the Honorable General Assembly of North Carolina,” December 19, 1801.

delegation announced that they had arrived in North Carolina to “transact business of great importance, as it respects our Nation.”²⁹² The delegation included in the letter that the “Great Spirit” had led them back to “the ground where some of us first drew the breath of life.”²⁹³ The business they wished to conduct in North Carolina had two parts. The first portion of their business was to bring more of their kin to the North with them. The letter stated, “FIRST, videlecit to look up the small remains of our Nation, which we find much scattered from where we left them.”²⁹⁴ This sentence is interesting and likely refers to the Tuscarora who left the reservation to live in surrounding counties or moved further into the interior swamplands off of Drowning Creek. In the same section, the letter continued, “And some few of our blood that are mixt with the black people, which brings them into bondage by your laws; which is a great grief to us, and will be to our whole Nation, if we one forget, to leave them in this state of bondage.”²⁹⁵ This piece is interesting as the delegation admitted that some of the Tuscarora still living in North Carolina were unable to leave with them because they were mixed race with African ancestry, which limited their freedom of movement according to North Carolina laws. Unfortunately, due to the racially charged laws of the time, some Tuscarora did not have the option to leave the state.

After discussing the issue of the remaining Tuscarora on the reservation and those scattered away from it, the letter proceeded to the following and likely main reason for their visit.

²⁹² Saguaresa, “A Letter from the Kings & Chiefs of the Tuscarora Indians to the Honorable General Assembly of North Carolina,” December 19, 1801.

²⁹³ Saguaresa, “A Letter from the Kings & Chiefs of the Tuscarora Indians to the Honorable General Assembly of North Carolina,” December 19, 1801.

²⁹⁴ Saguaresa, “A Letter from the Kings & Chiefs of the Tuscarora Indians to the Honorable General Assembly of North Carolina,” December 19, 1801.

²⁹⁵ Saguaresa, “A Letter from the Kings & Chiefs of the Tuscarora Indians to the Honorable General Assembly of North Carolina,” December 19, 1801.

The letter stated, “SECONDLY, to look to the state of our lands, which appear to be withheld from us, also by your laws.”²⁹⁶ The Tuscarora who went north no longer had autonomy of the remaining reservation lands, which were firmly entrusted to the remaining Tuscarora on the reservation. The delegation required the support of the Tuscarora of Indian Woods to negotiate a deal with North Carolina regarding the remainder of their reservation lands. The delegation met with the leadership of the Indian Woods Reservation, then led by Chief Samuel Smith, and they agreed that the Tuscarora would sell the last remaining remnants of the reservation in 1803.²⁹⁷ The remaining 4,000 acres that the Tuscarora owned were sold for the amount of \$21,146 to help with the journey to New York and to assist with the financial difficulties of the Tuscarora in the North.²⁹⁸ Along with the sale, North Carolina’s General Assembly ruled that all previous leases made by the Tuscarora would end by 1916, and the lands would be transferred to the state.²⁹⁹ With this business done, the Tuscarora families who decided to depart north left to begin a new life in the lands their kin had made their new home.

Continued Existence: The Tuscarora Following the Sale of Indian Woods Reservation

Although the Tuscarora people no longer owned the Indian Woods Reservation, it did not mean that all Tuscarora in North Carolina had left. After the final migration to the North in 1803, approximately 650 families of Tuscarora remained in North Carolina.³⁰⁰ A few Tuscarora families remained around the reservation lands known today as Bertie County.³⁰¹ As previously

²⁹⁶ Saguaresa, “A Letter from the Kings & Chiefs of the Tuscarora Indians to the Honorable General Assembly of North Carolina,” December 19, 1801.

²⁹⁷ Johnson, *The Tuscaroras: History-Traditions-Culture*, Vol. 2, 185.

²⁹⁸ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 182.

²⁹⁹ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 182.

³⁰⁰ “Indigenous Land Acknowledgement,” Ledonia Wright Cultural Center, May 12, 2022, <https://lwcc.ecu.edu/indigenous-land-acknowledgement/>.

³⁰¹ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 216.

mentioned, some of these Tuscarora families left the reservation as early as the 1720s, deciding that the abuse from local settlers outweighed the benefits of living on a protected reservation. A few families relocated to the nearby areas that are now known as Halifax County and Warren County. The Tuscarora who relocated to these areas remained there and are the ancestors of the state-recognized Haliwa-Saponi Tribe, which derives its lineage from the Tuscarora, Nansemond, and Saponi people.³⁰² Some other Tuscarora families relocated to the land that is now present-day Sampson County, and their descendants are now recognized as the state-recognized Coharie Tribe.³⁰³ Lastly, the rest of the Tuscarora families who remained in the South relocated to the southeastern swamplands of North Carolina, with most creating a new home in Robeson, Bladen, Columbus, Cumberland, Scotland, Richmond, and Hoke counties of North Carolina, while other families traveled further south into Sumpter, Marlboro, and Dillon counties of South Carolina.³⁰⁴ The largest congregation of Tuscarora families settled in Robeson County, North Carolina. These families' descendants helped form the state-recognized Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina.³⁰⁵ However, not all Tuscarora descendants in Robeson County and the surrounding areas joined the Lumbee. Other families held on to their Tuscarora identity and reestablished the Tuscarora Nation of North Carolina, which comprises several Tuscarora communities, including the Maxton Longhouse, Prospect Longhouse, and Saddletree

³⁰² Marvin M. Richardson, *Racial Choices: The Emergence of the Haliwa-Saponi Indian Tribe, 1835-1971* (Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest LLC, 2016), 8.

³⁰³ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 215.

³⁰⁴ George Edwin Butler, *The Croatan Indians of Sampson County, North Carolina: Their Origin and Racial Status*, United States: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Library, 2018, 9.

³⁰⁵ La Vere, *Erasure and Tuscarora Resilience in Colonial North Carolina*, 215.

community.³⁰⁶ All of these tribes share the historic blood and resilience of their Tuscarora ancestors.

At the end of the Tuscarora War in 1715, the Tuscarora Nation was no longer as politically and militarily powerful as it had been. The Tuscarora had to adopt a new way of survival in this new reality. The Tuscarora understood that if they wished to remain in their homelands, they had to serve as an ally to the North Carolinians, not an enemy. Tuscarora warriors had to become mercenaries for hire in future conflicts that the settlers entered. When the Yamasee War began shortly after the Tuscarora War, the Tuscarora people had the opportunity to regain influence with the settlers, seek revenge for their dead and captured relatives, and receive gifts for their service. Tuscarora warriors' impact in the Yamasee War made them stand out as the new tributary nation for the Carolinian settlers. Tuscarora warriors once again answered the call to service for the settlers in the French and Indian War and the Anglo-Cherokee War. In both conflicts, Tuscarora warriors provided their military services as scouts, caravan security, raiders, and foot soldiers to the English. Outside of work as mercenaries, between conflicts, the Tuscarora offered gifts to the North Carolina Governor while renewing their allegiance to the colonists annually.

Although the Tuscarora affirmed themselves as tributaries and allies to the colonists, they still suffered abuse. Tuscarora hunters were at the mercy of colonists if they trekked too far from their reservation land. It was often that the Tuscarora were beaten and robbed by local colonists who felt the Tuscarora were their servants and should remain in the confines of their reservation.

³⁰⁶ Rahnà·wakə·w McDowell and Runəhkwa?čhe? Brayboy, "Home - Tuscarora Nation of North Carolina," Tuscarora Nation Of North Carolina, accessed October 16, 2025, <https://tuscaroranationnc.com/>.

Still, Tuscarora warriors were feared, especially when they left the reservation in war parties. These war parties were notorious for venturing to plantations that held Tuscarora slaves. Tuscarora warriors frequently attacked South Carolina's tributary Natives while also freeing their enslaved kin from plantations. The Tuscarora remained tactful, always maintaining plausible deniability in these situations and shifting the blame to their northern kin to avoid harming their own tributary status with North Carolina settlers.

Ultimately, after the Anglo-Cherokee War, the Tuscarora's tributary status came to an end. The shrinking of their reservation, along with the gradual relocation of Tuscarora families off the reservation, meant that the remaining older men were no longer able to provide the North Carolina settlers with adequate hunting and warrior services. With continued pressure to lease and sell the Indian Woods Reservation, the remaining Tuscarora families decided that they could no longer sustain the lands and status Chief Tom Blount gained following the end of the Tuscarora War. By the turn of the 19th century, the Indian Woods Reservation was wholly rid of Tuscarora ownership, and the remaining families traveled north or joined their other kin in various communities within the Southeast. The history of the Tuscarora in the Tributary period showcases the resilience and wisdom of the Tuscarora people, who, despite suffering significant casualties leading up to and after their War with the colonists, maintained a portion of their influence and power within their homelands for generations.

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