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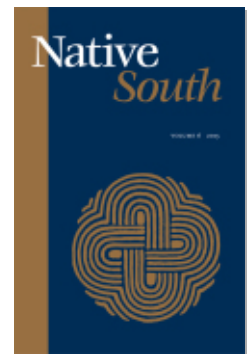
A Community of Convenience: The Saponi Nation, Governor
Spotswood, and the Experiment at Fort Christanna, 1670-1740

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A Community of Convenience

*The Saponi Nation, Governor Spotswood, and
the Experiment at Fort Christanna, 1670–1740*

STEPHANIE GAMBLE

Fort Christanna, built in 1714, was the product of the overlaps in and tensions between Virginia's colonial policies and piedmont Indians' goals. In the decades leading up to the creation of Fort Christanna, the various groups that became the Saponi peoples migrated throughout the piedmont and merged with other peoples in a continual effort to secure themselves from a variety of Native enemies. Though historians acknowledge the mobility of piedmont Natives, this article contributes to an enhanced understanding of the migrations and mergers of Virginia's Siouan speakers by addressing the factors that drove these Natives from their existing towns and induced them to inhabit new locations and to adopt new living arrangements. In particular, this article illuminates the ways in which the Saponis, Occaneechees, and Tutelos who came to inhabit Fort Christanna negotiated a rapidly changing political landscape.¹

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Saponis, Occaneechees, Tutelos, and Stuckanox had ventured a combination of migrations and mergers in a vain attempt to find security. They sought new alternatives. At the same time, Governor Spotswood developed his plan for Fort Christanna, devised to fulfill colonial interests for defense, trade, and Christianizing the Natives. The Saponis acceded to the plan, and for four years Christanna served the interests of both parties, albeit asymmetrically.

Relations between Virginians and piedmont Natives revolved largely around trade and security. For Virginians, Native trading partners could be called upon as allies in times of need, especially when those trading partners were tributaries, that is, officially tied to the colony as subject peoples.² Virginia's forts, although colony-run during periods of

war, were usually in private hands during peacetime, when they doubled as trading posts. Throughout Virginia's history, trade with Indians occurred primarily, or at times exclusively, at forts, which became locations not only for defense, but also for commercial and more general interactions between Natives and colonists. The Saponi peoples learned how to interact with colonists, often through trade, in their search for reliable allies. Their migrations owed much to their search for a haven safe from raids and attacks by northern Iroquois, southern slavers, and disruptive neighbors. Closely linked to this imperative was access to European goods—particularly guns, powder, and ammunition.

This article demonstrates how these interests combined to create Fort Christanna by tracing their evolution, beginning around 1670, when interactions between Virginians and piedmont-dwelling Natives intensified. The community forged at Christanna reveals a brief period of cultural cooperation between colonists and Natives. As Virginian policies changed and Indians' goals no longer coincided with those of the colony, however, the opportunity that created Christanna passed, and the community of convenience dissolved.

Although the colonists' policies and Natives' goals aligned briefly, they were not identical. The parties did not value defense, trade, and intercultural engagement equally or for the same ends; neither party was unified. Christanna was a precarious location for piedmont Indians and Virginians to handle changing and divided interests. However, instead of viewing the demise of Fort Christanna as inevitable, it is illuminating to address the way colonial and Native leaders worked to establish a functioning relationship and how they responded when that relationship failed.

In recent years a rich literature in the ethno-historical tradition has developed around the concept of the Mississippian Shatter Zone. The Mississippian Shatter Zone encompassed the entire Eastern Woodlands from about 1620–1720, and was the result of the introduction of European market practices to the region, particularly the slave and fur trades. According to Robbie Ethridge, “an initial result was the generation of a handful of militaristic Indian slaving societies that held control of the trade, and that, through their slave raiding, caused widespread dislocation, migration, amalgamation, and in some cases, extinction of Native peoples.”³ These militaristic Indian slaving societies dominated for a century. Although the Mississippian Shatter Zone, as articulated by Eth-

ridge, affected the entire Eastern Woodlands, works regarding the Mississippian Shatter Zone have primarily focused on the former Mississippian world.

Nevertheless, the actions of militaristic slaving societies reached well beyond the former Mississippian world. Militaristic societies developed outside the south, most obviously among the Iroquois, and it was these northern raiders who primarily harassed the Siouans of the Virginia piedmont. Following the call for scholars to continue to identify the “full sweep of internal and external forces at work” and the “reorganization of Native societies that followed,” and to connect “the reorganization to widespread colonial disturbances,” this article addresses the heretofore peripheral nations of what became the Virginia piedmont.⁴ Through a focus on the various nations who combined under the name Saponi, this article explores how the Mississippian Shatter Zone can be used to better understand the action of Native peoples who were not part of the Mississippian world prior to European contact nor central to the militarization of Native societies, but were nevertheless deeply affected by the militarization of distant societies and the development of colonial-Indian trade.

In the decades between Bacon's Rebellion and the Tuscarora War, Siouans and colonists in Virginia both sought advantages in colonial-Indian trade and faced various issues of physical security that culminated in the creation of Fort Christanna at the hands of Governor Spotswood in 1714. At the time of European contact, the Virginia piedmont, a hilly and fertile region crossed by many rivers, was home primarily to Siouan language speakers—Tutelos, Saponis, Occaneechees, Nahyssans, and Stuckanox, among others.⁵ The Siouans of the piedmont region, which extended from Virginia south into the Carolinas, shared what James Merrell characterizes as a “fundamental unity.” Although language differed from town to town, all spoke a form of Siouan. Piedmont Indians also generally practiced the same seasonal patterns of subsistence, “farming the rich alluvial soils in the bottomlands, fishing the nearby waterways, hunting in the hills or canebrakes, and gathering wild plants at selected spots.”⁶ Movement comprised a central feature of their life, whether locally for seasonal subsistence, or farther afield to elude persistent enemies. Siouans preferred to build their towns on riverine terraces enclosed by wooden palisades. Most piedmont

Siouan polities “tended to be small, homogeneous, and egalitarian,” consisting of only one township. The small size of Siouan groups made defense a problem—increasingly so after the introduction of European diseases—and contributed to frequent cycles of integration and fragmentation. Yet while Siouans typically sought out other Siouans, Virginia piedmont Indians were distinct from their neighbors in Carolina, where Mississippian-influenced styles of pottery, agriculture, and other aspects of culture had infiltrated from farther south. Siouans further acknowledged their shared affinity by defining themselves in opposition to others. Warfare was a part of piedmont life, and Siouans targeted only piedmont Iroquoian- or Algonquian-speaking groups as their enemies.⁷

Their closest neighbors were Iroquoian-speaking peoples, most notably the Tuscaroras, Meherrins, and Nottoways. The Meherrins and Nottoways lived at the fall line of the rivers bearing their names and ranged into both the piedmont and coastal plain. They were largely sedentary, rarely engaging in corporate moves over long distances, and avoiding mergers with other groups.⁸ The Tuscaroras, the most formidable and populous nation in the immediate vicinity of the Saponis, lived within the colonial bounds of North Carolina, but maintained close ties with the Meherrin and Nottoway settlements.⁹ Like the Meherrins and Nottoways, the Tuscaroras generally lived in permanent villages along the fall line. Although their population was declining, they numbered about five thousand in 1700, significantly larger than any of the Siouan groups of the piedmont.¹⁰

Siouans responded to the small size of their populations and the proximity of formidable adversaries by moving at regular intervals and merging with neighbors in order to bolster security.¹¹ In the first decade of the seventeenth century, the Nahyssans and Saponis inhabited the area served by the headwaters of the James River. By mid-century the Saponis had moved to the Staunton River, and lived in two towns, Sapon and Sapony West (near present-day Charlotte Court House). Meanwhile, the Occaneechees had established themselves on an island in the Roanoke River, which served as a nexus of Native trade. Also at mid-century another group of Nahyssans as well as Tutelos moved briefly east to the falls of the James River, but they soon migrated farther west, away from the colony. During the 1670s the Nahyssans, Saponis, and Tutelos moved again, this time to the Roanoke River by Occaneechee Island.¹²

The Virginia colonists also faced problems of defense in the middle half of the seventeenth century, and their solutions took three forms: the building of forts, the deployment of Rangers, and the enlistment of tributaries. From at least 1614, Virginians had sought to incorporate individual Native groups as subordinate allies or tributaries.¹³ All others the colonists labeled as “foreign.”¹⁴ In the wake of the 1644 Powhatan uprising, the Virginia Assembly authorized the construction of a series of forts along Virginia’s fall line: Fort Royal on the Pamunkey, Fort James on the Chickahominy, Fort Charles on the James, and Fort Henry on the Appomattox. When, in 1645, the Powhatans became tributaries, the assembly deemed the forts unnecessary and a costly burden, so it granted the garrisons, and large tracts of surrounding lands, to private owners who agreed to maintain their upkeep and supply a sufficient defensive force.¹⁵ A further defensive measure was the formation of troops of Rangers to patrol the frontiers. Initially, the troops consisted of twenty men for each frontier county, “well furnished with horses and all other accoutrements,” who would “at the least once in every fourteen daies range and scout about the frontiers . . . and in such other places as shall be most likely for the discovery of the enemy.”¹⁶ Over time, their numbers and duties expanded.¹⁷

Although defense priorities dictated Virginians’ interaction with Natives, the two groups developed increasingly sophisticated trade relations. Virginia’s frontier forts, once in private hands, became important centers of exchange. The individuals who maintained them became the largest names in the Indian trade: Abraham Wood at Fort Henry on the Appomattox, William Byrd I at Fort Charles on the James, and Cadwallader Jones at the fort on the Rappahannock. They used these sites as bases to engage in extensive Indian trade hundreds of miles to the south and southwest, exchanging beads, pots and pans, blankets, rum, guns, and other goods for beaver, mink, otter, and particularly deerskins.¹⁸

Trade goods contributed to the wealth and power of Native communities, particularly if they were able to control distribution by positioning themselves as middlemen. Well-established trade routes connected Indians throughout the Eastern Woodlands, and piedmont Natives were as familiar with trade as their colonial counterparts.¹⁹ In jockeying for position as go-betweens, particular piedmont Indians rose to prominence. Until 1675, the Occaneechees controlled trade from their island home on the Roanoke, thereby gaining access to the best goods, and becoming a

military force in the region.²⁰ Native groups not as advantageously situated resented their leverage.²¹ As the seventeenth century drew to a close and more traders pushed into the piedmont, the increase in trade goods altered Natives' material culture, making them more dependent on European goods and even more eager for trade with colonists.²²

Events in the 1670s intensified the Siouans' problems. French officials in New France sought to weaken English-allied Indians by encouraging Iroquois warriors to attack Natives in England's southern colonies. The Susquehannock War, which broke out on the frontiers of Maryland and Virginia in 1675, resulted in the Susquehannocks moving north to join the Iroquois. With the Susquehannock buffer removed, Iroquois raids intensified, particularly as they had Susquehannocks to guide them as they moved ever southward.²³ Furthermore, Bacon's Rebellion was as much directed against piedmont Indians as the colony's rulers. In May 1676, Bacon and his men attacked the Occaneechees, killing men, women, and children and driving them and other piedmont groups away from Virginia. The Occaneechees fled their island home to settle on the Eno River (near present-day Hillsboro, North Carolina).²⁴

Driven from their town on Occaneechee Island in the wake of Bacon's Rebellion, the Occaneechees lost their central role as middlemen, but retained their desire for colonial goods. Archeological investigations on Occaneechee settlements after 1676 demonstrate that they continued to be heavy consumers of European merchandise in comparison to other piedmont Natives. Thoroughly enmeshed in the web of exchange, they could not extricate themselves from dependence on the English.²⁵

In the last quarter of the century, mounting pressures from Native enemies spurred further movement. Reacting to escalating pressures from Native enemies, the Saponis sought one desperate solution after another. In 1677, their "young King" Mastegonoe and Tachapoake, "Chief man of the Sappones," signed the treaty of Middle Plantation (later Williamsburg), which made them, along with many other nations, tributaries of the colony. In return for a tribute of three arrows annually, they would be "well Secured & defended in their persons goods and properties," with redress to be available through the governor. For this promise of protection, tributary Natives were obliged to fight against the enemies of Virginia, with compensation for their services. However, the ink was hardly dry on this document before the Saponis had a change of heart. Whether subordinate status and alignment with Iroquoian-speaking

enemies who also became tributaries was too galling, raids from Iroquois too numerous, or inducements to move southward too attractive, the Saponis and Tutelos voted with their feet. Like the Occaneechees before them, they fled south, to the Yadkin River, which at least put more distance between them and their Iroquoian enemies (fig. 1).²⁶

In the last decades of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century, Virginia's Indian trade faced serious competition from the south. Bent on securing the lucrative piedmont trade for themselves, South Carolinians tried to exclude Virginians from their territory. During the last quarter of the seventeenth century and into the first years of the eighteenth, as many as fifty or sixty Virginia traders engaged in trading expeditions with foreign Indians each year, leading trains of packhorses loaded with English goods.²⁷ Gradually Carolinians proved successful competitors, and within decades, Virginia traders found themselves almost completely locked out of the long-distance Indian trade.²⁸ The Virginia trade was also effectively unregulated; the colony sold licenses to all applying traders. According to Spotswood, men with "no Stock of their own" entered the business. Forced to "purchase goods at a dear rate" by their lack of capital, they used "such Frauds in their dealings with the Indians" that they occasioned not only "frequent quarrels between y'm [Indians] and ye English but at last proved the entire loss of that Commerce."²⁹ Indeed, over the first fifteen years of the eighteenth century Virginia's exports fluctuated greatly and, in the four years after Spotswood's arrival, declined markedly—from an annual export of 22,927 deerskins to 4,952.³⁰

For Siouans, access to trade, particularly in colonial weaponry, was important for security. After the introduction of European weapons, they quickly became the preferred armaments of Native men. Although "Boys still use Bows and Arrows for Exercise," noted John Lawson in 1700, men "always use Fire-Arms, which with Ammunition they buy of us with their Dear-Skins, going rarely out unarmed." By the beginning of the eighteenth century, piedmont Natives had sufficient access to European weaponry that Englishmen were not surprised at meeting a Saponi man who traveled about with "a very large Cutlass stuck in his Girdle, and a Fusee in his Hand."³¹ Reliant on European guns among other commodities, piedmont Siouans became dependent on trade with colonists.³²

The presence of forts and the movement of Rangers impinged on the

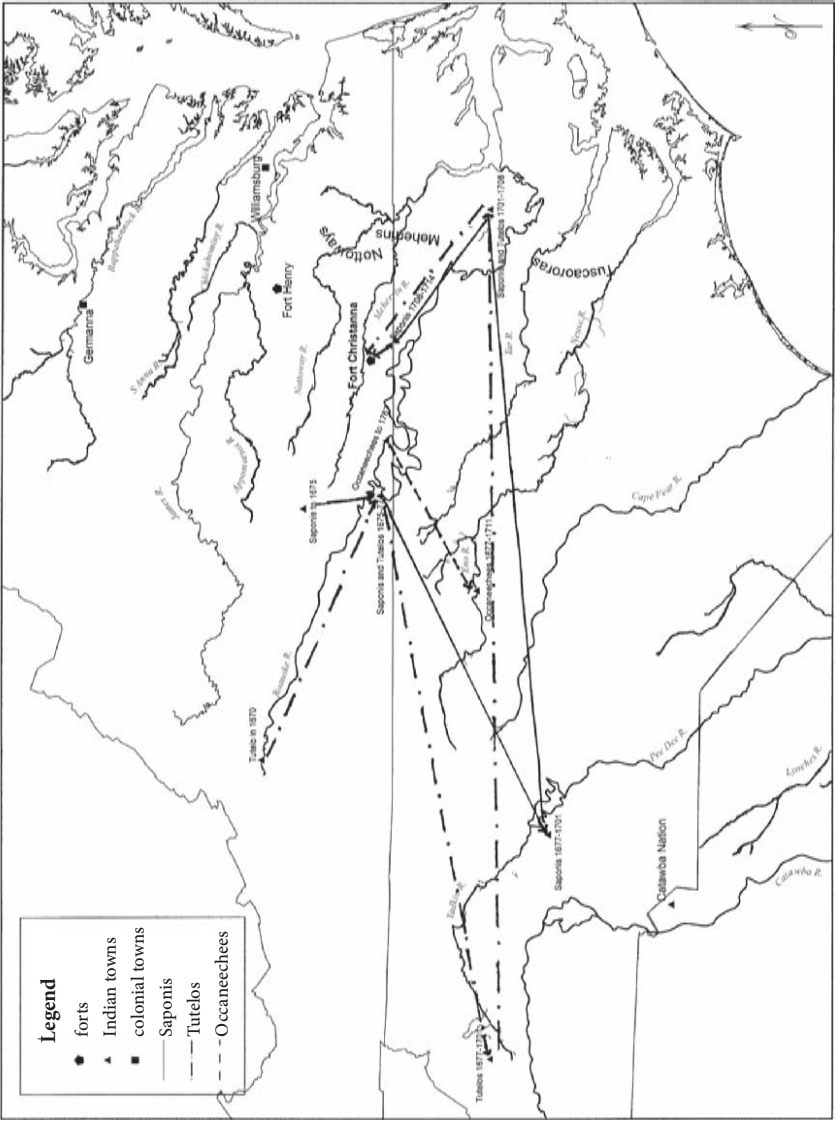


Fig. 1. Movements of the Saponi people, 1670-1715.

Siouans, but Iroquoian raids sweeping southward—as well as constant hostility from nearby Iroquoian-speaking groups such as the Tuscaroras, Nottoways, and Meherrins—represented Siouans most pressing problem. Their most feared and persistent enemies were the so-called Northern Indians, members of the Iroquois Five Nations, who, according to Hugh Jones, “[sent] out Bodies of young Fellows yearly, who dare not return without a certain Number of Scalps or Prisoners, in order to train them up, and qualify them for great and fighting Men.”³³ English colonists commented on Virginia Indians’ fears of Iroquoian raiders from the earliest days of settlement. Northern Iroquois, increasingly militarized through the Beaver Wars, and dramatic population loss from European-introduced epidemics throughout the 1670s spurred a “massive mourning-war.” The state of politics in Iroquoia turned much of this massive war effort south into Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas.³⁴

For a time, moving southward and westward gave the Saponis some respite, but after the settlement of 1701, in which the Iroquois made peace with the French Indians to the north and west, their situation worsened. The Iroquois directed even more of their raiding efforts toward their longstanding enemies to the south. Attacking Siouans in the Virginia and Carolina piedmont also helped the Iroquois to cement alliances with allied groups in Pennsylvania along the Susquehanna and Delaware rivers, and those southern nations with whom they were not at war, such as the Iroquoian Nottoways, Meherrins, and Tuscaroras of Virginia and North Carolina. Nations to the south were also increasing their raiding activities throughout this period to meet trade demands for Indian slaves in the Carolina and Virginia markets. These movements, spurred by disease, politics, and economics in the north and south contributed to Siouan population loss through both raids and the spread of disease.³⁵

The increasing external threats to Saponis’ and other piedmont peoples’ security affected Native relations within the piedmont. In 1701, Saponi hunters captured five “Sinnagers or Jennitos,” northern Iroquoian raiders, whom one Saponi man described as “a Sort of People that range several thousands of Miles, making all Prey they lay their Hands on.” The Saponis, returning to their town on the Yadkin River, intended to put their prisoners to death, but their allies, the Tutelos, learned of the prisoners and came to the Saponi town to intercede. Recently, several

Tutelos taken prisoner by the Senecas had been returned without injury, a surprising show of magnanimity the Tutelos wished to repay. Because the Tutelos, Saponis, and another small nation, the Keyauwees, had agreed to combine in order to strengthen themselves against their common enemies, the Saponis turned over their prisoners.³⁶ Whether Iroquoian raids from the north, slaving raids from the south and west, or declining population due to disease encouraged these communities to consider new options, the Saponi willingness to compromise and negotiate the treatment of captives seems to have struck a positive chord. The Tutelos and Keyauwees joined with the Saponis, and suitably emboldened, the three groups headed north. Choosing a location on the Roanoke River for their new town, this conglomerated community perhaps hoped they might find some security, distancing themselves from the source of recent raids. It is also possible the Saponis and Tutelos had become eager to return to a more familiar geography, closer to their traditional homeland.

Despite their cohabitation, the Saponis, Tutelos, and Keyauwees continued to experience attacks. In 1708, while still suffering raids from all directions, the “King of the Saponie,” acting on behalf of his people, traveled to Williamsburg to petition the Governor’s Council “that the said Indians might be received under the protection of this Government,” an option the Tutelos and Keyauwees were not prepared to pursue. The council agreed, reinstating the Saponis as tributaries, presumably under the same articles as agreed to at Middle Plantation over thirty years earlier. In return the Saponis asked to settle at “the Forks of three Creeks or the land between Unotee and Reeves’s quarter,” on the north side of the Meherrin River. Unotee had previously been a Meherrin town but was now abandoned. It likely appealed to the Saponis because it sat on an open field above the river, like other town locales they preferred, as well as the fact it once belonged to one of their enemies.³⁷ In addition, the site was already cleared, facilitating the establishment of a new town. Unfortunately for them, Englishmen had already patented the land, so the council offered a site farther north on the Nottoway River, promoted as putting greater distance between Virginia settlers and the Saponis and those Keyauwees and Tutelos who remained among them.³⁸

This was the situation of the colony’s Indian affairs when Alexander Spotswood arrived as governor in 1710. Spotswood was a man well

prepared to confront the defense problems of the colony. Born into a military family, he became an ensign in 1693 and went with the army to Flanders, Ireland, and back to Flanders during the War of Spanish Succession before being sent as the lieutenant governor to Virginia for the Earl of Orkney.³⁹ On assuming the governorship, Spotswood faced, among other things, a struggling Indian trade, warfare on the colony's poorly protected southern border, and—to his chagrin—feeble efforts towards Christianizing the colonies' Native population.⁴⁰ He also encountered a local assembly loath to impose taxes or spend money and several political enemies, both in the Virginia Assembly and on the council, throughout his tenure as governor.

The Tuscarora War, which erupted just south of Virginia's border the year after Spotswood arrived, held widespread ramifications for the colony's relations with its Siouan-speaking peoples.⁴¹ Virginia's leaders suspected the tributary Meherrins and Nottoways of sympathies with, and possible defection to, the Tuscaroras. Representing a more trustworthy counterweight, the Saponis gained in authority, leading other Siouan-speaking groups to subordinate themselves to them.⁴² Most notably, the Occaneechee, Tutelo, and Stuckanox nations, living along the border of North Carolina and Virginia and in the firing line of Tuscarora raids, joined the Saponis, other Tutelos, and Keyauwees.⁴³ Spotswood called on men from the tributary nations, including "twenty of the Saponie, Occaneechee, and Stuckanox Indians," as well as a number of Tutelos, to repel the Tuscaroras. In return, he rewarded the leaders of each tributary nation with presents of powder and shot.⁴⁴ Although the war did not spread into Virginia settlements, it deepened colonial reliance on tributary Indians.

The war also highlighted for colonial officials the importance of maintaining control over the Indian trade. When the Tuscarora War broke out in 1711 the assembly responded by placing an embargo on trade with the Native enemy and resolving, "the Sum of One thousand pounds be Raised for the Assistance of North Carolina in its present Distress."⁴⁵ The main goal in cutting off trade to the Tuscaroras was to staunch the flow of weapons and munitions. However, it proved difficult to police the actions of independent traders. Spotswood sought a better way to regulate commerce with Indians in the future.

Spotswood's attention to Virginia's tributaries through the war worked toward another of his goals: Christianizing the tributary Indi-

ans. When Spotswood arrived, he tried to inculcate Christianity and civility by enticing tributary Indians to send their children to the College of William and Mary. Although Spotswood was genuinely interested in educating Native children, he also considered them useful as securities for the good behavior of the tributary nations—hostages as well as students. Diplomatically, Spotswood considered 1711 a success. By the start of 1712 “Hostages from all the Towns of our Tributary Indians” had arrived at the college, at least eleven from the Pamunkey, Chickahominy, Nansemond, Nottoway and Meherrin nations. That year marked—at a total of twenty-four—the highest enrollment of Native students at the college’s Indian school.⁴⁶

Each of these crisscrossing paths—defensive, commercial, and cultural—wound their way towards the establishment of Fort Christanna. Particularly in the wake of the Tuscarora War, safety on the southern frontier was Spotswood’s foremost concern. In his opening speech to the new assembly of the House of Burgesses in 1713, he expressed a desire to tighten frontier security without taxing the colony’s inhabitants.⁴⁷ He also hoped to make progress in Christianizing Virginia’s Natives and reviving the Indian trade. Fort Christanna was Spotswood’s solution to these three issues. It also became the home of the Saponi peoples of piedmont Virginia.

On February 27, 1714, Governor Spotswood, Chaw Co of the Occaneechees, Tanhee Soka of the Saponis, Mausee Untky of the Tutelos, and Nehau Rooss of the Stuckanox convened in Williamsburg to sign a treaty. Designed less to establish peace than to maintain it—since the Occaneechees, Saponis, Tutelos, and Stuckanox were already tributaries—the treaty aimed to enact a new plan for sustaining peace and trade in the piedmont. The plan devised by Spotswood revolved around Fort Christanna as a frontier site for defense, reviving colonial-Indian trade and establishing a school for Indian children. Spotswood expressed confidence that this plan would remedy several of the issues he confronted when he arrived in the colony, and which had only been highlighted by subsequent events.⁴⁸

Spotswood’s plan most immediately addressed the failure of colonial defenses on the frontier. In 1713, still wary of violence on Virginia’s southern border, eleven troops of Rangers had been called up to patrol the backcountry. Recruiting, sheltering, feeding, and compensating

the Rangers was a costly business, however. More than that, the Rangers were largely ineffectual—despite their deployment, Natives and colonists on the frontier continued to be killed or captured.⁴⁹ Spotswood proposed to the assembly a reduction of the Rangers from 132 men and officers to 28. The money saved from reducing their ranks—a cost that had already been approved by the assembly for the previous two years—could instead be used to pay the condensed Rangers force over several years. To bolster the reduced Rangers, Spotswood proposed erecting a new fort, Christanna, with a constant guard of twelve men under a single commanding officer.⁵⁰ As a further defensive bulwark, Nottoways, Tuscaroras, and Saponis would relocate to three frontier settlements, thereby providing “a securer and cheaper Barrier” against foreign Indians than the Rangers, which he deemed a “slender Guard, design’d only to observe straggling Indians in a time of Peace.”⁵¹ Spotswood recognized that not all Tuscaroras had been involved in the late war, and sought to convince as many as possible of the neutral groups of Tuscaroras to become tributaries as part of his plans to reconsolidate and renegotiate the status of tributaries in the colony. Although some Tuscaroras initially agreed, they quickly reneged and did not move.⁵² The Nottoways and Meherrins, who did not share the same history of movement as the Saponi peoples, refused to accede to Spotswood’s plan at all, which would require them to remove from their current residences. The only effective settlement was the conglomerated Saponi community at Christanna.

Spotswood’s plan for Christanna included control of the Indian trade through the formation of the Virginia Indian Company. During times of war, a monopoly would make it easier to stop all trade of powder and ammunition to hostile Indians, a difficult, if not impossible, undertaking if independent traders remained at the helm.⁵³ To convince the assembly, Spotswood argued that a joint-stock company—a monopoly—would eliminate what he identified as the main hindrances to Indian commerce: those private traders, “loose people,” who defrauded Natives.⁵⁴ Supporting what he saw as the interests of the colony, Spotswood claimed that the company would be open to more colonists as stockholders than could ever be involved as traders. Although the £50 minimum share kept many colonists from participating in the company, a cap of £100 aimed to keep any individual or group of individuals from taking control of the company.⁵⁵ The Virginia Indian Company would

have “sole privilege of the Indian Trade for twenty years,” and all trade would be limited to one location, Christanna. Regulating the Indian trade by preventing “all Fraudulent practices” would also serve to bring more revenue into the colony.⁵⁶

Other benefits would accrue from the monopoly as well, he argued. A company could raise more capital than individual traders, and a wider assortment of goods would stimulate more trade with distant Indians. Reviving trade would also benefit the new College of William and Mary, which received a portion of duties from fur and skin exports. Robert Quarry previously developed a similar proposal for Carolina, which found support with Spotswood’s predecessor, Francis Nicholson, although it was never enacted in either Carolina or Virginia. Spotswood helped push his version of an Indian monopoly through the assembly by emphasizing the Virginia Indian Company’s ability to cut costs.⁵⁷

In August 1714, Spotswood began supervising the building of “a Fortress, with five Bastions” on the south shore of the Meherrin River, sixty-five miles from the capital at Williamsburg. By spring, the fort was complete. One visitor described it as having five houses, built into the fort walls, each side one hundred yards long and boasting five cannon. The established guard of twelve men and an officer took up their station, and three hundred tributary Indians moved to Christanna.⁵⁸ These Indians were a combination of Saponis, Tutelos, Occaneechees, and Stuckanox afterwards referred to only as Saponis, having been incorporated into one “nation” by the 1714 treaty.⁵⁹

For Saponis, Christanna promised enhanced access to trade goods, as the site sat astride well-established Indian trading paths.⁶⁰ Located next to a major artery in the Tuscarora trade, the Saponis could entertain the prospect of becoming the dominant middlemen in southern piedmont commerce, since Virginia had suspended trade with the Tuscarora during the war.⁶¹ The Saponis not only had direct access to the Virginia Indian Company, but also to all colonial-Indian trade, now centered at the fort. Indeed, tributary Indians throughout Virginia and foreign Indians beyond the colony’s borders came to trade at Christanna. During John Fontaine’s 1716 visit to the fort he described ten Meherrin Indians who arrived “laden with beaver, deer and bear skins” for trading.⁶² Notto-ways, Tuscaroras, Enos, and Catawbias also traded at Christanna. Settlement at a key nexus of trade was important to the flourishing of any Native town, and the Saponis were now settled at perhaps the busiest

trading post in the colony.⁶³ Additionally, as a benefit of their cooperation with Spotswood, the company sold them “goods at a Cheaper rate than any other foreign Indians.”⁶⁴

Their new situation also served the Saponis’ security needs. Previously as tributaries, they had suffered harassment and losses—not just from Iroquois raids, but from an ongoing feud with fellow tributaries, especially the Nottoways and Meherrins who may have been seeking captives among their Siouan neighbors to sell to Carolina or even Virginia traders as slaves.⁶⁵ Relocation within cannon range of a fort promised greater protection from other Virginia tributaries as well as distant enemies. Moving their settlement to Fort Christanna also guaranteed the Saponis a thirty-six-square-mile grant of land and additional hunting grounds safeguarded from colonial encroachment.⁶⁶ During the first year the Saponis lived under the shadow of the fort, the colony claimed no loss of life to foreign Indians.⁶⁷

The Indian town at Christanna resembled previous Saponi settlements, but on a larger scale. When the Saponis first settled at Christanna, Spotswood estimated their population at three hundred and growing.⁶⁸ In 1716, Fontaine described the town at Christanna in much the same way as Carolina traveler John Lawson recorded the Saponi town, Sapon, he visited in 1701. The town at Christanna was built on a cleared plain beside the river, with houses formed in a circle and built into palisaded walls. The center of the town was a common space that had a “great stump of a tree” in the middle that was used as a platform “for one of their head men to stand on when he had anything of consequence to relate to them.” Like Lawson, Fontaine also described “several little huts built . . . in the form of an oven” (or hot-house), used by priests to remedy “all distempers.”⁶⁹ Despite living in the shadow of the colonial fort, the Saponis chose their town site and laid it out in their customary manner. They may have acceded to a new colonial relationship, but they also established some boundaries around their autonomy.

When news reached the colony in May 1715 that several nations of Indians had attacked the colonists of South Carolina, marking the beginning of the Yamasee War, colonists and Natives alike worried of repercussions in Virginia. On Virginia’s southwestern frontier, both colonists and Saponis feared that the Five Nations would support the aggressors and embroil the Virginia frontier in violence. The same month, the assembly ordered extra defenses (small cannon) placed at Christanna, as

well as additional men, who apparently kept the area “freed from all danger.”⁷⁰ The Yamasee War did not reach Virginia’s borders. Although Saponi hunters were still subject to raids when abroad, no attacks occurred at home.⁷¹

The prospect of security from attack presumably explains why in 1716 some Cheraws, then living along the Pee Dee River in South Carolina, petitioned Virginia to incorporate with the Saponis and to move to Christanna.⁷² As another Siouan group, the Cheraws knew the Saponis well. When the Saponis moved to the Yadkin River in the late seventeenth century, they would have regularly encountered the Cheraws, who then lived north of them on the Dan River. Furthermore, the Keyauwees, who had merged with the Saponis in 1701, soon left that arrangement to join the Cheraws. Perhaps with Keyauwee encouragement, the Cheraws were now willing to merge with the Saponis as part of the “population stream out of the Carolinas” as a result of increased warfare and violence.⁷³

Although successful in achieving its defensive and commercial goals, Spotswood’s frontier plan struggled to implement its cultural aims. Prior to his term Spotswood believed “little care” had been taken in Virginia for converting the Indians to Christianity or “endeavouring in any manner to Civilize them.” To lessen the burden on colonial finances, Spotswood delegated the cost of building and maintaining an Indian school at Christanna to the Indian Company.⁷⁴ He petitioned the Bishop of London and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) for a minister to be established at Christanna and support for a Christian school. When he was not immediately successful, he chose to pay the salary for a schoolmaster from his own pocket, perhaps hoping to be reimbursed by the SPG.⁷⁵ This plan provided a new location for educating and Christianizing the Indians without any additional cost to the colony.

As soon as the Saponis moved to Christanna, Spotswood selected seventy children, both boys and girls, of an age “most susceptible of Learning” to begin attending school under the supervision of schoolmaster Charles Griffin.⁷⁶ The schoolhouse, built by the Indian Company, was, according to the company’s stockholders, “perhaps the noblest in America.”⁷⁷ Although there are no accounts from the students, visitors to the school claimed that Griffin earned the respect of his tute-lages.⁷⁸ Within months he boasted to the Bishop of London that most of his charges were fast learners and already could say “the Lord’s prayer, &

ten Commandments perfectly well, they know that there is but one God & they are able to tell me how many persons there are in the Godhead & what each of those blessed persons have done for them.” They also knew the sacraments and daily prayers, during which, Griffin asserted, they conducted themselves “reverently.” Some Indians, the schoolmaster claimed, knew how to read and write English. Visitors to Christanna enthusiastically endorsed the progress of the Indian students.⁷⁹ Some were less impressed. Years later William Byrd II caustically remarked that the only effect of Griffin’s teaching on the Saponis was “to make them something cleanlier than other Indians are.”⁸⁰

The Saponis however, had no desire to abandon their Native ways. Couching his request deferentially, one Native “asked Leave to be excused from becoming as we [English people] are,” but then defiantly spoke for all Saponis by declaring “they thought it bad, that we should desire them to change their Manners and Customs, since they did not desire us [colonists] to turn Indians.”⁸¹ To entice the Indians to send their children to the school, Spotswood proposed that any Indians educated at the school (or at the College of William and Mary) would have the privilege to hold positions of “trust or profit” in the company, posts otherwise prohibited to Indians by colonial law. Only practical inducements geared toward Saponi desires, he recognized, would be likely to overcome Indian resistance.⁸²

Although some Saponis became increasingly proficient in English, their community leaders established bulwarks against forced acculturation. Fontaine noted that whenever the great men participated in any diplomacy “they will not treat but in their own language.” Unless the governor used an interpreter, the Saponis would not even acknowledge his questions.⁸³ They also educated their children outside of Griffin’s schoolhouse. Young boys continued to learn the skills for making and using bows and arrows. Beyond the walls of the school, the same boys who had been taught to recite the Lord’s Prayer also learned the music and, in Fontaine’s words, the “antic motions” of their war dances, their steps answering in time to the music and “by their actions . . . representing how they attacked their enemies . . . how many of the other Indians they had killed, and how they did it.”⁸⁴

The presence of the school shaped the way Virginians perceived the Saponis. Its success, in colonial eyes, reflected positively on the Indians who supported and attended it, and the Saponis gained a reputation in

the colony, according to Jones, for their “tolerable good Notions of natural Justice, Equity, Honour and Honesty.” Even Byrd, who disparaged the effects of Griffin’s teaching, nevertheless sought out Saponi hunters, when he later put together his surveying party, because they were “the honestest as well as the bravest Indians we have ever been acquainted with.”⁸⁵

Just before sunrise on April 10, 1717, a party of Five Nations Iroquois and Tuscaroras surveyed the camp of about one hundred Catawbas sleeping just outside the walls of Fort Christanna in Virginia. At daybreak they attacked, killing five Catawbas in their sleep, wounding two others, and absconding with five more as prisoners. Within minutes the attack was over. Shocked and unarmed, the Catawbas could not even pursue their attackers. The Catawba delegation had traveled hundreds of miles to Fort Christanna to deliver eleven children of their nation to be educated there as a sign of friendship with the colony. According to the rules of the fort, they had left their arms inside with the colonists, and after a successful meeting between their headman, Wickmannatauchee, and Virginia’s governor, Alexander Spotswood, they fell asleep under the cannon of the fort. Wickmannatauchee was taken prisoner and their “queen” murdered in the assault. Expecting protection from the Virginians during their parley, the anguished Catawbas suspected that “the English must have been privy to [the attack].” Only with “abundance of difficulty, and not without running some hazard in my person” did Governor Spotswood “at last overcame this their Suspicion, and persuaded them to leave their Children” under his care to be educated at the school at Christanna.⁸⁶

The Iroquois’ attack on the Catawbas outside Fort Christanna in 1717 seriously undermined both the safety and longevity of the settlement. Despite his defensive strategy, Spotswood admitted that “those Northern Indians have committed divers hostilities on our frontiers,” not only against the Indians but also settlers in the backcountry.⁸⁷ After the attack, Spotswood, determined to mend the rupture, contacted New York authorities to demand a release of the prisoners and requested compensation for the murdered Catawbas. He insisted that diplomats from the Five Nations come to Virginia, but the Iroquois did not comply. Spotswood then traveled to Philadelphia to meet with the colonial governors of New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland to find a way to “render the [Iroquois] Indians more Obsequious to the several interests” of

the colonies. In 1718 Spotswood related to the Lords of Trade that in his “Negotiations to the Northward” he was unable to accomplish what he intended; the approaching winter prevented him from meeting any of the Iroquois sachems. All he was able to do was send a messenger to intercept a party of Iroquois headed south—allegedly to attack the southern Indians—and obtain a promise that the party would “Abstain from any hostilities on the English Governments.”⁸⁸ Spotswood exerted much effort to negotiate peace with the Iroquois, but peace between the Saponis and Iroquois remained elusive for years to come.

The Catawba incident proved to be a breaking point for the community in other regards as well. Spotswood and members of the Council suspected that illegal traders, including the interpreters for the Saponis, William and Charles Kimball, were involved in the attack on the Catawbas. Spotswood claimed to have “certain Information that while the Senecas were at the Tuscoruro Town divers Inhabitants of this [colony] . . . were there trading with the Tuscoruros contrary to Law,” giving him “great Reason to Suspect” that the traders had told the Senecas about the practice of having visiting Indians deliver up their arms when attending Fort Christanna. Without this knowledge, Spotswood claimed, the “Party of Senecas durst not have attempted to fall upon them as they did.” These private traders, not members of the Virginia Indian Company, were probably among those who encouraged merchants in England to have the Act for the Better Regulation of the Indian Trade repealed. Anonymous traders’ complaints first made their way to the Council in Virginia just days before the attack at Christanna.⁸⁹ Spotswood’s political enemies believed that the monopoly company was a scheme designed primarily for the governor’s personal enrichment. In addition to opposing the Company through the Virginia Council, these opponents, including William Byrd II, took their complaints to England.

In 1716 Micajah Perry, a wealthy London merchant and foremost trader to Virginia, presented a petition to the Commissioners of Trade and Plantations against the Virginia Indian Company.⁹⁰ The petition, signed by thirteen “Virginia Merchants,” voiced a series of complaints against the company. The period allotted for stockholders to subscribe to the company was so short that it effectively denied the right to interested English merchants. Since the company designated Robert Cary as its sole factor, it excluded many English merchants.⁹¹ The monopolistic nature of the company ran counter to the rights of British subjects to

have free access to trade anywhere in Britain's dominions, and had no precedent in British law. Furthermore, the petition complained that previous Virginia Indian traders, particularly large traders such as William Byrd II who had signed the petition, had been blocked from subscribing. Only friends of the governor needed apply.⁹²

Robert Cary disputed Perry's assertions. He claimed that the failure of subscriptions owed less to time constraints than to a fear that the company's many obligations would hamper its profitability. So reluctant were people to subscribe that the governor had even drummed up support after the period of subscriptions had closed. Cary emphasized the advantages of the Indian Company for the colony: providing for the colonial magazine, building the Indian school at Christanna, and assuming the expenses of defense on the frontier.⁹³ Despite Cary's claims, the Privy Council voided the act, although it did reimburse the company for costs incurred for the public benefit.⁹⁴

The dissolution of the company met with a varied response in Virginia, reflecting the new contours of colonial politics. Predictably, Spotswood was displeased.⁹⁵ But the new assembly, elected in 1718 largely over the issue of how to handle Christanna, saw matters differently. In a campaign document, an anonymous author implored voters not to elect "an assembly intirely in the Governor's and Indian Company's Interest" who sought only to make the inhabitants pay to maintain the "useless" Fort Christanna while the Company still benefited from the trade.⁹⁶ The opposition to Spotswood won the election and voted to abandon Christanna rather than assume the expenses that had previously been covered by the Virginia Indian Company. Spotswood feared that the extension of the Indian trade to the Catawbias, Cherokees, and other "Western Indians" under the company would be lost by "recurring to what loose way of managing that Commerce w^{ch} that Law was calculated to prevent," and that commerce with the Saponis and other local Indians would diminish.⁹⁷ Initially at least, Spotswood was right, as in the year after the repeal of the act, only one trader ventured forth to vend his goods to "any of the remote Indians."⁹⁸

Without the company to fund the fort and garrison, Spotswood's plans for Christanna fell apart.⁹⁹ The Virginia Assembly claimed "the Charge of keeping up fort Christanna purely for the Security of those few people [the Saponis] is no way necessary or reasonable." Given their increasingly precarious situation, the Saponis likely would have

disagreed with the assembly. Events in 1718, after the dissolution of the fort, confirmed their dramatically weakened state, beginning with the murder of several Saponis by Meherrins and Nottoways. That summer, Pennsylvania's governor informed Spotswood that the Senecas planned incursions against the tributary Indians at Christanna. Unable to defend them, Spotswood simply passed the news on to the Saponis. Making matters worse, the Saponis learned that Nathaniel Malone, a colonist of nearby Surry County, held one of their women as a slave; but before they could secure her release, she died. With the colonial abandonment of Fort Christanna, the feud between the Saponis and the Nottoways reached new heights. The Nottoways allowed the Tuscaroras and northern Iroquois to use their town as a launching place for raids on the Saponis. By the end of the year, the Saponis moved from their town beside Christanna into the abandoned fort for better protection against Iroquois attacks.¹⁰⁰ Even within the fort however, the Saponis were hardly safe. The following year, the Nottoways confessed to a joint attack against the Saponis involving eight Nottoways and twelve Meherrins in addition to Senecas and Tuscaroras.¹⁰¹ The Saponis sought the protection guaranteed by their treaty, but no help was forthcoming.

Abandoning Christanna left not only the Saponis, but also the whole southern frontier of Virginia, undefended. Uninhibited by any defensive measures, "the Northern Indians and Tuscaruros" intensified their raids on a range of parties.¹⁰² Frontier settlers, who suffered as much as the Saponis from the renewed violence, sought government help. For the first time since the establishment of Christanna, frontier inhabitants in 1718 petitioned the assembly, "praying that Guards may be established to defend them from the Indians."¹⁰³ They repeated their plea the following year. Even inhabitants not in the vicinity of Christanna expressed the "great and eminent Danger they apprehended themselves exposed to by the frequent marches of the Northern Indians through their Plantations, their Insolent behaviour towards the said Inhabitants and threatening to come in greater Numbers to Fall upon the English of this Colony" in their attempts to "cutt off and destroy the Sappone Indians." Leaving the frontier unprotected, it seems, challenged "foreign" Indians to "Try the Strength" of the Saponi fort.¹⁰⁴ And, without a functioning frontier fort, settlers saw Rangers as the best method for security.

From the perspective of the Saponis, the benefits of their relationship with the Virginia government terminated along with the fort. With-

out the Virginia Indian Company, Christanna was no longer the only, or central, location for colonial-Indian trade. The Saponis were also no longer privy to special rates on trade goods. Children lost the chance of an education leading to a position as trader or interpreter. Nevertheless occasional exchanges still took place at Christanna. In 1723, Cherokees and Chickasaws traveled to Virginia to complain about the withdrawal of the Virginia Indian Company traders from their towns. The council referred the delegates to Christanna to be granted "One Trading Gun, or Fuzil, and as much powder and Shott as they shall have occasion for in their Journey home." Christanna retained at least some of its commercial influence, though it was decidedly on the wane.¹⁰⁵

Discontinuing the school at Christanna affected more than the Saponis. Enrollment had risen from seventy Saponis at its inception to over one hundred before the school was terminated. Eleven of the new students were the Catawba hostages, delivered just months before the founding act was repealed. Others were children of western nations, also held as hostages for the good behavior of their kin. Unwilling to spend money on their maintenance, the colony voted to return them, despite the risk of upsetting their respective nations through undiplomatically terminating their arrangements.¹⁰⁶ In 1718 Virginia returned the Catawba children to their nation "in Such a manner as will best preserve a good Understanding of those Indians."¹⁰⁷

With Saponi and Virginian interests no longer aligned, both parties sought new ways to fulfill their security needs. Governor Spotswood revived efforts to establish a peace between the tributaries of Virginia and the northern Iroquois. He was concerned about protecting the Saponis out of fear that the "breach of faith" by the colony "may be attended with ill consequences and from the Strictest Friends may make those [Saponi] Indians our most dangerous Enemys."¹⁰⁸ But, like his predecessors, his priority was halting Iroquois raids along the southern and western frontiers. To that end he helped to negotiate the Albany Treaty of 1722, which established a boundary along "the great River of Potowmack and the High Ridge of Mountains which extend all along the Frontiers of Virginia" ostensibly keeping the Iroquois out of Virginia and Virginia's tributaries from going beyond those boundaries towards the Iroquois.¹⁰⁹ The following year, the Saponis tried to make peace with some of their enemies by signing a treaty with the Tuscaroras of North Carolina. At the Saponis' request, Nathaniel Harrison, a former member of the Vir-

ginia Indian Company and member of the governor's council, traveled to Christanna "to take care that nothing is concluded there Prejudicial to the peace and Interest of this Colony," and that the Saponis "may not be drawn into any Stipulations injurious to themselves."¹¹⁰

Neither effort arrested the violence on the frontier. In 1727, a party of Tuscaroras attacked a Saponi hunting party, killing or taking prisoner seven men.¹¹¹ The Tuscaroras of North Carolina, who had recently signed a peace treaty with the Saponis, claimed that the murders had been committed by their brethren "now living under the protection of the five nations." Trouble brewed between Saponis and colonists as well. That same year, at a horserace in Hanover County, colonist John Prowse set a sleeping Saponi man on fire. Prowse was never tried for his offense.¹¹² In 1728 the Saponis complained to Virginia's officials that the Nottoways had murdered the son of the "Tottero [Tutelo] King"; the Nottoways countered that the Saponis had murdered two of their men.¹¹³ The accusations led to the committing of three Saponi men, Tom and Harry Irwin, and Pyror, to the public jail in Williamsburg. Upset with the outcome, the "Tottero King," now subject to English law and not permitted to handle matters his own way, threatened the governor and several other colonists, which in turn led to his own imprisonment. Humiliation was heaped on humiliation.¹¹⁴

The last straw came in 1728, when a drunken Saponi headman murdered a white man. Virginians executed the culprit, violating Native law in two ways: Indians opposed both hanging and punishing a person under the influence of alcohol. Byrd pointed to this incident as the reason the Saponis "soon after quitted their settlement and removed in a body to the Catawbias."¹¹⁵ The Saponis undoubtedly held other grievances, not least the broken promises that had led them to settle at Christanna in the first place. Furthermore, continued raids and murders by Meherrins, Nottoways, Tuscaroras, and northern Iroquois proved Saponi vulnerability to attack. In the spring of 1729 the new governor, William Gooch, reported that the Saponis had not planted any corn, "whereby it is expected they intend to desert their present settlement."¹¹⁶

In 1729 the Saponis at last vacated Christanna, their home for fourteen years, relocating to the Catawba Nation in South Carolina (fig. 2). During the early decades of the eighteenth century the Catawbias had established themselves as the primary powerbrokers of the Carolina piedmont. They had absorbed a number of small Siouan groups,

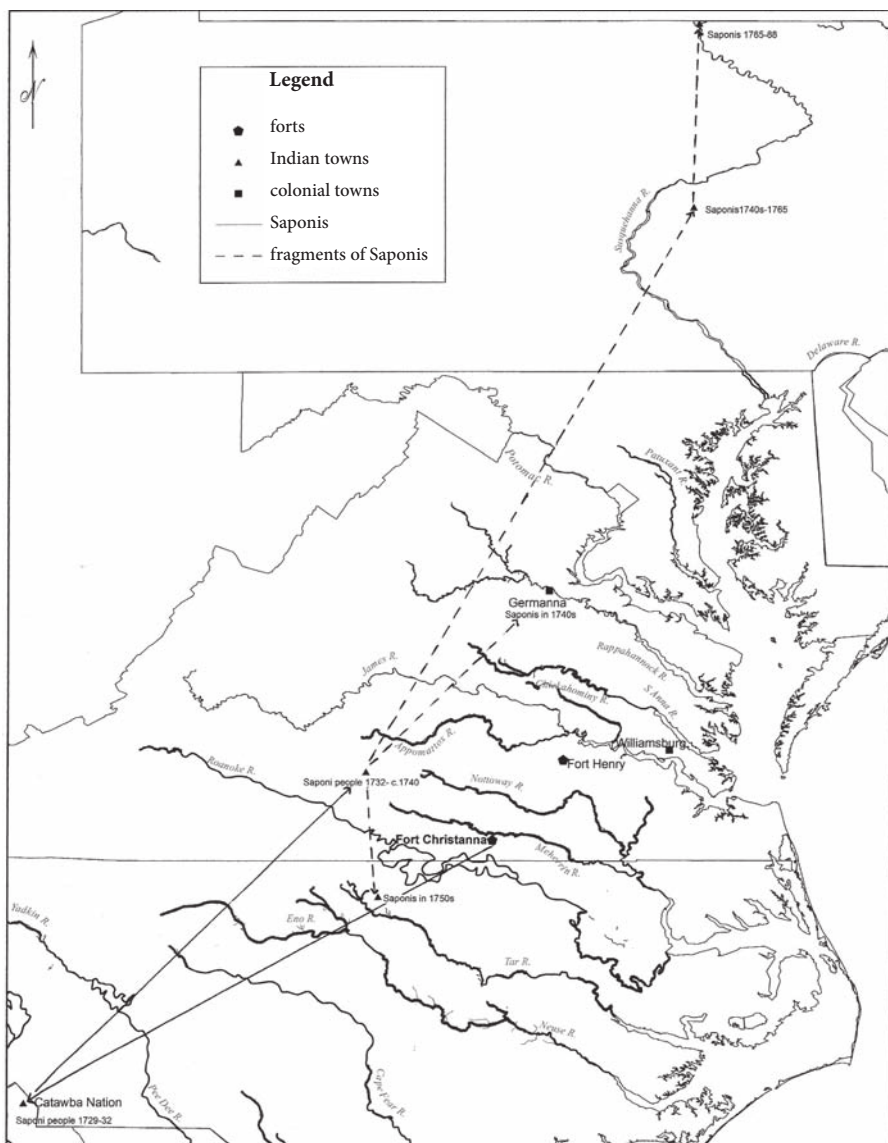


Fig. 2. Movements of the Saponi people, 1715–1780.

in much the same way as the Saponis had incorporated other Siouans into their polity.¹¹⁷ But not all attempts at incorporation proved successful, and the Saponis were soon on the move again. Within three years of leaving Virginia, the Saponis petitioned to return “under the protection” of the colony’s government.¹¹⁸ Virginia’s governor and council welcomed them back and promised them “any Lands they shall chuse . . . either on the River Roanoke or Appamattox,” where a tract of land would be set out for them “equal to that they formerly held at Christanna.”¹¹⁹

By 1732, however, Virginia’s Indian policies had changed radically. Virginia’s leaders were interested neither in cooperating with the Saponis to defend the frontiers, nor in using colonial monies to protect a tributary nation. The numbers of tributary Indians throughout the colony had decreased, and traders hoping to profit from the Indian trade focused their efforts on the Cherokees and other western nations, leaving local tributaries to fend for themselves. Diplomacy ignored the local tributaries, directed now towards distant, “foreign” groups.¹²⁰ The Saponis’ needs for trade and defense no longer matched those of the colony; a joint venture like Christanna was no longer feasible in Virginia.

In a sign of Saponi desperation, even as they continued to suffer at the hands of Iroquois and local Iroquois-speaking groups, a majority decided in 1740 to do the unthinkable and join their longstanding enemy.¹²¹ After all, the Iroquois, although fierce adversaries to outsiders, sought to eliminate internal warfare among themselves. Their elastic conception of nationhood allowed them to adopt individuals or peoples through consanguinity and affinity, thereby enveloping disparate bands, tribes, or nations into a larger Pax Iroquoia.¹²² Furthermore, the Saponis had seen their Tuscarora neighbors incorporate with the Iroquois, and then return south on raids with their new brethren. Join, not flee, seemed the obvious lesson.¹²³ Thus the Saponis began a long trek northward, living for a time in Pennsylvania, where the Iroquois formally adopted about one hundred Saponi people in 1753.¹²⁴ For the next two decades the Saponis remained in Pennsylvania, although by 1778 they had moved into New York.¹²⁵

For some Saponis, joining the Iroquois was a step too far. One group turned instead to their old patron, Alexander Spotswood, who had remained in Virginia after his term as governor. In the 1740s, a number of Saponis lived on his property at Germanna. Memories of their time at Christanna were apparently still alive, particularly evident in the name

of one Saponi man, named for his former teacher, Charles Griffin.¹²⁶ By the 1750s another band lived in present-day Granville County, North Carolina, by the headwaters of the Tar River.¹²⁷ Perhaps others joined the Tuscaroras still living in North Carolina. Groups of Tuscaroras from North Carolina, perhaps including remnants of the Saponis, continued to migrate northward toward the Iroquois throughout the end of the century.¹²⁸

Fort Christanna has generally received only passing notice, and is considered too fleeting to merit much attention. Yet to pass over it is to leave a whole side of Virginians' interactions, policies, and preoccupations unexamined. The fort represented a transitional moment when the interests of the colonial government and piedmont Natives converged. Defensive and commercial exigencies provided an opening for cultural exchange. This period of intercultural cooperation suggests that colonial-Native interrelationships were most advantageous when the interests of both parties were aligned. Although the community at Christanna thrived for only four years, it maintained a tenuous existence for another decade.

Focusing on the combination of peoples and interests that allowed a place like Christanna to flourish—if briefly—suggests why piedmont Natives, like the Saponis, Tutelos, Stuckanox, Keyauwees, Occaneechees, and others have played so little a role in the historiography of Virginia. Sources, of course, can be very difficult to track down for small groups, especially as the various mergers, divisions, and movements can make extant sources difficult to decipher. But movement has had other ramifications as well. Individual piedmont groups or towns were small, thus colonial dealings with each town were more limited than dealings with large nations or confederacies made up of many towns. Frequent migrations interrupted sustained relationships, particularly as groups, like the Saponis, crossed and recrossed colonial borders. Throughout the fifty years addressed in this article the Saponis, and related groups, lived in or passed through six different colonies. Colonial histories, which focus on individual colonies, have easily skipped over these small groups that flit on and off their colony's radar. Nevertheless, as the Saponis exemplify, longstanding relations did exist between individual colonies and piedmont groups. For periods of time, piedmont Natives and colonists were obliged to turn to each other to solve mutual problems. The height

of piedmont Natives' importance to colonies like Virginia was directly related to the westward spread of colonial settlers, and deserves a place between the heyday of Virginia-Powhatan interactions in the first half-century of settlement, and the dominance of foreign western nations in the latter part of the eighteenth century.

The history of Fort Christanna at its core reflects the diverse mergers and migrations undertaken by piedmont Siouans as they grappled with the various shocks attendant on European colonization; capitalist trade systems, disease, militarized Indian societies, and colonial encroachment. Fort Christanna represents a pivot point in the larger trajectory of Virginia's Siouan-speaking piedmont peoples—a group of Native Americans about which, lamentably, too little is known—as they sought safety, trade, and a place to practice their customs. For a time, the Saponis found a haven in an insecure world. Christanna was never a wholly ideal refuge, but in the decades surrounding the turn of the eighteenth century, Saponis and Virginians relied on each other to satisfy common needs. This same period saw a rise in chattel slavery, the growth of Virginia's colonial population, and the spread of tobacco agriculture, forcing Virginians to turn to the west. There, colonists confronted the disparate peoples of the Native piedmont, with whom, for a time, they cooperated to achieve related goals.

This article contributes to the literature on Southern Indians and the Mississippian Shatter Zone by identifying the various forces at work in the mergers and migrations of the Siouan nations who inhabited, primarily, the Virginia piedmont from 1670 to 1740. In particular, it focuses on the reorganizations that surrounded a unique moment of Native-colonial cooperation and cohabitation at the community of Fort Christanna. The development and demise of Fort Christanna enriches our understanding of the diverse reactions to the disruptions attendant to the Mississippian Shatter Zone by shifting the focus geographically beyond the Mississippian world, while also following the reorganizations, movements, and mergers of the Saponis, Tutelos, Stuckanox, and Occaneechees after the chronological heyday of the militaristic Indian slaving societies. Finally, the community of Fort Christanna highlights the distinct features of interrelationships between Siouans and Virginia colonists. Unlike the Carolinas or the northern mid-Atlantic colonies in which the colonists and colonial governments established key relationships with the militaristic Indian slaving societies revolving around

trade in slaves, furs, and skins, by the early eighteenth century, Virginians and Siouans both lacked functional trade or diplomatic relations with the slaving societies beyond, but penetrating, their borders.

The eventual fate of most Saponis mirrored the experiences of other Indian nations reeling from disease, military attacks, and deteriorating colonial relations. Throughout the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Native groups, driven to near despair, made the reluctant move toward Iroquoia. Defeated by Maryland in 1675, the Susquehannocks joined the Five Nations. Shawnees, former enemies of the Iroquois, who also migrated to Iroquoia, followed them.¹²⁹ After the Tuscarora War, many Tuscaroras, their options exhausted in North Carolina, moved northward, eventually becoming the sixth nation of the Iroquois. By the time the Saponis began their trek north in the 1740s they joined a larger trend, as small and fragmented nations followed the well-worn trails to Iroquoia.

NOTES

1. These groups are the focus throughout the article because they became the residents of Christanna. Although the Stuckanox also lived at Christanna, references in the historical record are too fleeting to reconstruct their movements before or after their time at Christanna.

2. For a discussion of tributary status see Kristalyn Shefveland, “Wholly Subjected?” Anglo-Indian Interaction in Colonial Virginia, 1646–1718” (PhD diss., University of Mississippi, 2010), 48–50.

3. Robbie Ethridge, “Creating the Shatter Zone: Indian Slave Traders and the Collapse of the Southeastern Chiefdoms,” in *Light on the Path: The Anthropology of the Southeastern Indians*, ed. Thomas J. Pluckhahn and Robbie Ethridge (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2006), 208.

4. Robbie Ethridge and Sheri M. Shuck-Hall, eds., *Mapping the Mississippian Shatter Zone: The Colonial Indian Slave Trade and Regional Instability in the American South* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 1. Virginia piedmont groups remained on the fringe even in Mississippian Shatter Zone literature, which, as it relates to Virginia either shifts south to Carolina by 1670, or focuses on the Powhatan; see Helen Rountree, “Trouble Coming Southward: Emanations through and from Virginia, 1607–1675,” in *The Transformation of the Southeastern Indians, 1540–1760*, ed. Robbie Ethridge and Charles Hudson (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2002), 65–78.

5. Because the language of the Siouans of Virginia was distinct from their Siouan-speaking neighbors to the south in the Carolinas it is presumed that the

groups migrated into the region at different times. For more on the prehistory of Indians of the piedmont see James Bennett Griffin, *Archeology of Eastern United States* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952); H. Trawick Ward and R. P. Davis Jr., "Tribes and Traders on the North Carolina Piedmont, A.D. 1000–1710," in *Societies in Eclipse: Archaeology of the Eastern Woodlands Indians, A.D. 1400–1700*, ed. David S. Brose, C. Wesley Cowan, and Robert C. Mainfort Jr. (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001); H. Trawick Ward and R. P. Davis Jr., *Time Before History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); and John Reed Swanton, *The Indians of the Southeastern United States* (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1946), 15, 30–31.

6. Merrell's book on the Catawba Nation, although it focuses on the Carolinas, is one of the best works on Siouans in the piedmont region. Merrell, *Indians' New World: Catawbas and their Neighbors from European Contact through the Era of Removal* (Chapel Hill NC: Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1989), 9. Merrell, *Indians' New World*, 9–10.

7. Merrell, *Indians' New World*, 14–17; Ward and Davis, "Tribes and Traders," 130–35; Griffin, *Archeology of the Eastern United States*, 308–10.

8. In 1669 and again in 1709 the Meherrins were said to have 50 bowmen, suggesting a total population of 180. In 1728 William Byrd II estimated the Nottoway population to be 300. Swanton, *The Indians of the Southeastern United States*, 149, 164; Lewis R. Binford, "An Ethnohistory of the Nottoway, Meherrin and Weanock Indians of Southeastern Virginia," *Ethnohistory* 14, nos. 3/4 (Summer–Autumn, 1967): 112–13, 150–56.

9. For more on the Tuscarora see Stephen D. Feeley, "Tuscarora Trails: Indian Migrations, War, and Constructions of Colonial Frontiers," (PhD diss., College of William and Mary, 2007).

10. Douglas Boyce, "As the Wind Scatters the Smoke': Tuscaroras in the Eighteenth Century," in *Beyond the Covenant Chain: The Iroquois and their Neighbors in Indian North America, 1600–1800*, ed. Daniel K. Richter and James H. Merrell (Syracuse NY: Syracuse University Press, 1987), 152.

11. There are no warrior counts or population figures for this period for the Saponi, Tutelo, or Occaneechee individually. Together, Lawson counted the number of Tutelos, Saponis, Occaneechees, as well as the Keyauwees and Shakori as 750 men women and children. John Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, ed. Hugh Talmage Lefler (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 242.

12. The Nahyssans settled with the Saponis and seem to have merged with them, because after their stay on the Roanoke the two groups were referred to collectively only as Saponis. Frank G. Speck, *Tutelo Spirit Adoption Ceremony* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical Commission, 1942), ix; Swanton, *The Indians of the Southeastern United States*, 175, 178, 200.

13. In 1614, the Chickahominies became the first tributaries of Virginia. Stern, "Chickahominy: The Changing Culture of a Virginia Indian Community," *American Philosophical Society* 96, no. 2 (1952): 165.

14. Stitt Robinson, "Tributary Indians in Colonial Virginia," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 67, no. 1 (January 1959): 54; William Hening, *The Statutes at Large; Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia, from the First Session of the Legislature in the Year 1619* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1969), 1:323–34.

15. Alan Vance Briceland, *Westward from Virginia: The Exploration of the Virginia-Carolina Frontier, 1650–1710* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1987), 8–9; Hening, *Statutes*, 1: 293–94, 326.

16. During most of the seventeenth century Indians and settlers were physically separated from each other by laws that restricted the settlement of each. But, as Virginia's colonial population grew, settlers were increasingly less restricted in their settlement and moved closer to Indian-designated areas. Although settlement restrictions still segregated Natives and colonists, Rangers were not common, and frontier patrolling was limited to times of war. After Bacon's Rebellion, however, land was opened up to colonists and Rangers institutionalized. Henning, *Statutes*, 2:499–501.

17. Henning, *Statutes*, 3:18–19, 83, 99–100, 115, 119, 126.

18. William Byrd, *The Prose Works of William Byrd of Westover: Narratives of a Colonial Virginian*, ed. Louis B. Wright (Cambridge MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1966), 3; Paul C. Phillips, *The Fur Trade* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961) 2:166–67; Shefveld, "Wholly Subjected?" 75–81.

19. Helen Rountree, "The Powhatans and Other Woodland Indians as Travelers," in *Powhatan Foreign Relations 1500–1722*, ed. Helen Rountree (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993).

20. Charles M. Hudson, *The Catawba Nation* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1970), 34–35; Robbie Ethridge, *From Chicaza to Chickasaw: The European Invasion and the Transformation of the Mississippian World, 1540–1715* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 86, 97.

21. April Lee Hatfield, *Atlantic Virginia: Intercolonial Relations in the Seventeenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 28–34.

22. Clifford Boyd, "Evolutionary Archeology and the Contact Period: A Case Study from Virginia and North Carolina," in *Indian and European Contact in Context: the Mid-Atlantic Region*, ed. Dennis Blanton and Julia King (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2004), 152; Ward and Davis, "Tribes and Trad-ers," 132, 135.

23. In July 1675, a party of Maryland and Virginia colonists attacked the Susquehannocks, who occupied the interior of southern Pennsylvania and the

piedmont of Maryland. The Susquehannocks responded by killing several colonists along the frontiers of both colonies. Francis Jennings, "Glory, Death, and Transfiguration: The Susquehannock Indians in the Seventeenth Century," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 112, no. 1 (February 1968): 34–38.

24. Ethridge, *From Chicaza to Chickasaw*, 97, 103; Wilcomb Washburn, *Governor and the Rebel: A History of Bacon's Rebellion in Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1957), 26–33.

25. Boyd, "Evolutionary Archeology," 152; Ward and Davis, *Time Before History*, 235–46.

26. The tributaries who signed the treaty included the Pamunkeys, Nottoways, Appomattox, Weyanokes, Nansemonds, Nanzaticos, Portobaccos, Monacans, Saponis, and Meherrins. It is unclear exactly when the Saponis, Occaneechees, or Tutelos moved from Virginia. "Treaty between Virginia and the Indians, 1677," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 14, no. 3 (January 1907): 289–96; Swanton, *Indians of the Southeastern United States*, 146, 200–201. It is uncertain where the Tutelos moved during the last quarter of the seventeenth century; Lawson described them as living west of the Saponis, probably very close to or in the mountains there. They were in contact with the Saponis and Keyauwees and later joined them. Briceland, *Westward from Virginia*, 37–44, 99, 124–25; Lawson, *New Voyage*, 42, 52; Swanton, *The Indians of the Southeastern United States*, 148–49, 157, 164, 200; Speck, *Tutelo Spirit Adoption Ceremony*, i–xi.

27. Contemporary sources cite as few as five traders or as many as one hundred. The more conservative number may suggest that a few large traders actually controlled the trade and the larger number may be more suggestive of the number of men actually sent out on trading expeditions by the larger traders (such as William Byrd I and II, Robert Hix, and Cadwaller Jones.) The larger estimates are also offered prior to 1708 when South Carolina's legislation against Virginia was first being enacted (the legislation passed in 1707, by 1708 its effects were beginning to be felt by Virginia traders). Merrell, *Indians' New World*, 28–29; Shefvland, "Wholly Subjected?" 75–81.

28. Merrell, *Indians' New World*, 49–56. For more on the conflict between Carolina and Virginia see "Carolina," in Leonidas Dodson, *Alexander Spotswood* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1932), 14–38; Briceland, *Westward from Virginia*, 187; Alexander Spotswood, *The Official Letters of Alexander Spotswood, Lieutenant Governor of the Colony of Virginia, 1710–1722, Now First Printed from the Manuscript in the Collections of the Virginia Historical Society* (Richmond: Virginia Historical Society, 1883), 1:230–31.

29. Spotswood, *Letters*, 2:94.

30. Phillips, *Fur Trade*, 1: 404–405; Verner W. Crane, *The Southern Frontier, 1670–1732* (Chapel Hill NC: Duke University Press, 1928), 328. See also "Indian

Trade,” in Shefveld, “Wholly Subjected,” and Maureen Meyers, “From Refugees to Slave Traders: The Transformation of the Westo Indians,” in Ethridge and Shuck-Hall, *Mapping*.

31. Lawson, *New Voyage*, 42.

32. Merrell, *Indians' New World*, 37–42.

33. Hugh Jones, *The Present State of Virginia* (New York: Reprinted for Joseph Sabin, 1865), 7–20; Lawson, *New Voyage*, 42.

34. Daniel K Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 145; Edward Wright Haile, *Jamestown Narratives: Eyewitness Accounts of the Virginia Colony, the First Decade, 1607–1617* (Champlain VA: RoundHouse, 1998), 272, 665–66; James Merrell, “‘Their Very Bones Shall Fight’: The Catawba-Iroquois Wars,” in Richter and Merrell, *Beyond the Covenant Chain*, 116; Daniel K. Richter, “War and Culture: The Iroquois Experience,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 40, no. 4 (October 1983): 528–59.

35. Richard Aquila, “Down the Warrior’s Path: The Causes of the Southern Wars of the Iroquois,” *American Indian Quarterly* 4, no. 3 (1987): 212–19; Merrell, “‘Their Very Bones Shall Fight’” in Richter and Merrell, *Beyond the Covenant Chain*, 116–21; Paul Kelton, “Shattered and Infected: Epidemics and the Origins of the Yamasee War, 1696–1715,” in Ethridge and Shuck-Hall, *Mapping*, 326–29.

36. These captured “Sinnagers” were probably Senecas, but Seneca was sometimes used to refer to Iroquois of any of the five Iroquoian nations. Lawson, *New Voyage*, 53–55, 242.

37. *Executive Journals of the Council of Colonial Virginia*, ed. H. R. McIlwaine, Wilmer Hall, and Benjamin Hillman (Richmond: Davis Bottom, 1925–1966), 3:188–89, (hereafter cited as *EJCCV*); Binford, “An Ethnohistory of the Nottoway, Meherrin and Weanock,” 154; Ethridge, *From Chicaza to Chickasaw*, 103, 152, 155; Robin A. Beck Jr., “Catawba Coalescence and the Shattering of the Carolina Piedmont, 1540–1675,” in Ethridge and Shuck-Hall, *Mapping*, 134–37.

38. It is uncertain where the Saponis settled after being accepted as tributaries, whether they settled on the Nottoway or chose to settle somewhere farther south, further from their Nottoway and Meherrin enemies.

39. Dodson, *Spotswood*, 4–5.

40. In the beginning, Virginians made good faith, if desultory, efforts to educate and Christianize their tributary Indians. Some Anglican families brought Indians, mostly young children, into their homes to be Christianized in the first decade of settlement. George Thorpe, a recently arrived councilor in 1621, promoted the idea of “Henrico College,” to be located near the falls of the James River for the education of Indians. After the uprisings of 1622 and 1644, however, as one historian puts it, “most Virginians would have preferred to extirpate

rather than educate the natives" (Axtell, "Poison Ivy," *Colonial Williamsburg* [Winter 2008]: 60–61). Still, the idea of Indian education did not die, and in 1693, when the Rev. James Blair crafted his plans to secure a charter for the College of William and Mary, he secured a bequest from the estate of the English philosopher Robert Boyle to fund the education of Indians. Well supported, the Indian school at the college lacked one essential ingredient: Native students. Most colonists, according to Spotswood, considered children of the tributary nations "unworthy the trouble" of education. Tributary Indians could point to examples of children they had relinquished for education who had been sold out of the colony as slaves. With few, if any, volunteers, the college resorted to purchasing Indian children from afar as candidates for conversion and acculturation. Dodson, *Spotswood*, 6; Spotswood, *Letters* 1:53–54, 60; J. Leitch Wright Jr., *The Only Land They Knew: The Tragic Story of the American Indians in the Old South* (New York: Free Press, 1981), 186–87; Spotswood, *Letters*, 1:126; Robinson, "Indian Education in Virginia," *Journal of Southern History* 18, no. 2 (May 1952): 162–64; Owen Stanwood, "Captives and Slaves: Indian Labor, Cultural Conversion, and the Plantation Revolution in Virginia," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 114, no. 4 (2003): 457; Dobson, *Spotswood*, 6; Spotswood, *Letters*, 2:53–54; Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 190–93.

41. Swanton, *Indians of the Southeastern United States*, 164; Frank G. Speck, *Siouan Tribes of the Carolinas as Known from Catawba, Tutelo, and Documentary Sources* (Menasha WI: American Anthropological Association, 1935), xi.

42. Feeley, "Tuscarora Trails," 204.

43. The leaders of the Saponi, Occaneechee and Stuckanox petitioned the council to live together in December 1711, and the Tutelo applied to join the Saponis as tributaries to Virginia in April 1712. *EJCCV*, 3:296, 310.

44. The Saponi leader was given 6 pounds of powder and 24 pounds of shot, the Tutelo leader was given 8 pounds of powder and 32 pounds of shot. *EJCCV*, 3:332, 342, 358.

45. *Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, 1712–1714, 1715, 1718, 1720–1722, 1723–1726, 189–90*, ed. H. R. McIlwaine (Richmond: [The Colonial Press, E. Waddey co.], 1912), 27–28 (hereafter cited as *JHB*).

46. Spotswood, *Letters*, 1:126, 129.

47. Several of Spotswood's opponents were large Indian traders, particularly William Byrd II. Dobson, *Spotswood*, 6; *JHB*, 63–64.

48. "Treaty with the Saponie Indians 1713 [1714]," Library of Congress GB: PRO: CO5/3516, Washington DC.

49. Spotswood, *Letters*, 2:193–96; *JHB*, 47.

50. The North Carolina fund had been raised to contribute to the defense of the said colony during the Tuscarora War. Because the money had already

been raised for a purpose of defense it would be aptly used to promote Virginia's defense without having to ask the assembly for additional money. At the time there was £580 in the account. Spotswood, *Letters*, 2:203–204.

51. Spotswood, *Letters*, 2:190–218; *JHB* 63–64.

52. The Tuscarora settlement was planned to be on the Rappahannock at the site that became Germanna when Spotswood replaced the Tuscaroras of his plan with a settlement of German Protestants who had fled from North Carolina. The Nottoways and Meherrins were to be on the Roanoke River. *EJCCV*, 3:363–64. For a fuller discussion of the Tuscarora see Feeley, "Tuscarora Trails," 182, 189.

53. Mary Theobald, *The Indian Trade in Colonial Virginia* (MA thesis, College of William and Mary, 1980), 93–100; *JHB*, 70.

54. Early in the colony's existence trading with the Indians had been a privilege granted to colonial traders by license from the governor. In 1683, King Charles decreed that trade in the colonies be free and open to all, which became the general policy in Virginia, although at times with certain restrictions. Theobald, "Indian Trade," 21–22. Spotswood, *Letters*, 2:93–95.

55. Seventeen men signed the "Memorial of the Virginia Indian Company" as stockholders, and Spotswood was also a stockholder in the company. The memorial claimed there were over twenty stockholders. Assuming twenty stockholders, the capital for the company would have been between £1,000 and £2,000. "Memorial of the Virginia Indian Company," Fulham Papers, Lambeth Palace Library, London, vol. 14, reel 7, 255; Theobald, "Indian Trade," 80–82.

56. Margaret Connell Szasz, *Indian Education in the American Colonies, 1607–1783* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988), 71.

57. The Virginia Indian Company, after two years, would take over the entire cost of maintaining the fort, as well as the cost of providing for its garrison. Additionally, it would contribute to the building of a magazine for the colony and maintain the colony's supply of powder. Crane, *Southern Frontier*, 142–43.

58. Spotswood, *Letters*, 2:113–14; Martha W. McCartney and David K. Hazard, *Fort Christanna Archaeological Reconnaissance Survey* (Williamsburg: Virginia Research Center for Archaeology, 1979).

59. It is unknown why the Saponis became the "nation" when these peoples combined. Perhaps they were the most numerous of the groups, or perhaps the colonists used the Saponis because they had been tributaries longest. There is evidence that the individual groups did retain a sense of unique identity despite being considered one nation by the colonists. Byrd II wrote in *History of the Dividing Line*, "the daughter of the Totero king went away with the Saponis [when they moved to the Catawbass], but, being the last of their nation and fearing she should not be treated according to her rank, poisoned herself, like and old roman, with the root of the trumpet plant." While her reaction may have

been stronger than others, and she was probably not the last of the Tutelos, this relation by Byrd II demonstrates that the collapsing of identities into the Saponi nation was not as straightforward for Natives as it was to colonists. Byrd, *Prose Works*, 315–16; “Treaty with the Saponie Indians 1713 [1714].”

60. For a map of Native trading paths in the region see Hatfield, *Atlantic Virginia*, 14.

61. Feeley, “Tuscarora Trails,” 194–95; Boyd, “Evolutionary Archeology,” 166, 170.

62. John Fontaine, *Journal of John Fontaine; an Irish Huguenot Son in Spain and Virginia, 1710–1719*, ed. Edward Alexander (Williamsburg: University Press of Virginia, 1972), 98.

63. For examples of the importance of trade to Native towns see the Occaneechee, who rose to prominence at their Occaneechee Island site due to their role as middlemen in trade, as well as the decline of the Catawba after the 1730s when traders no longer had to pass through the Catawba towns to trade. See also Trawick and Ward, *Time Before History*; Merrell, *The Indians’ New World*, 137; and Hatfield, *Atlantic Virginia*, 28, 32–33.

64. Spotswood, *Letters*, 2:141.

65. It is difficult to tell if the feud between the Saponis and the Meherrins and Nottoways actually intensified during this time, or if Saponis were simply becoming more willing to report violence to the council for mediation and the increased mentions of violence in the record are misrepresentative of an actual increase. *EJCCV*, 3: 202, 220, 222, 223–24; Ethridge, *From Chicaza to Chickasaw*, 103.

66. Saponi hunting grounds were to be all unpatented lands between James and Roanoke rivers. Spotswood, *Letters*, 2:88–93.

67. *JHB*, 87.

68. A year after Spotswood’s estimate, John Fontaine numbered the population at only two hundred. Fontaine, *Journal*, 91–93.

69. Fontaine, *Journal*, 91–93, 96–97; Merrell, *Indians’ New World*, 23.

70. Spotswood does not mention how many additional men were posted at Christanna at this time. Spotswood, *Letters*, 2:144–46.

71. In 1716 the headmen of the Saponis complained to Governor Spotswood that 15 of their men had been murdered or taken by a party of Iroquois while hunting. Spotswood provided powder and shot for a revenge party. Fontaine, *Journal*, 93

72. *EJCCV*, 3:397–98.

73. By 1710 the Cheraws had moved to South Carolina, where some remained until the 1720s. How many Cheraws moved to Christanna after 1716 is unknown, but their negotiations demonstrate their sense of the opportunity it presented. Merrell, *Indians’ New World*, 29, 54, 67, 80; Feeley, “Tuscarora Trails,” 216.

74. Spotswood, *Letters*, 2:88–93.

75. The SPG never did send a minister or funds for Spotswood's project, but he hired and continued to pay the salary of a schoolmaster, Charles Griffin, until the school was abandoned. Dobson, *Spotswood*, 72–73.

76. In selecting Indian children to attend the College of William and Mary, Spotswood said age eight was most susceptible to learning, which is probably the same age children he desired for the school at Christanna. Spotswood, *Letters*, 2:113–14.

77. "Memorial of the Virginia Indian Company," Fulham Papers, 255.

78. Charles Griffin emigrated to North Carolina from the Caribbean in or before 1705 when he was about twenty-five years old. Although his prior history is unknown he was well educated and reputed to be from a good family. Shortly after arriving in North Carolina he established a school that became immediately successful, so much so that even though Griffin was a devout Anglican, Quaker families in his precinct sent their children to be educated at his school. In 1709 Griffin was disgraced when he was accused of fornication and siding with the Quaker faction in deeply factionalized political debates raging in the colony. Perhaps for these reasons, or the outbreak of the Tuscarora War two years later, Griffin left North Carolina and arrived in Virginia, where he became schoolmaster at Christanna. For more on Griffin see Herbert R. Paschal, "Charles Griffin: Schoolmaster of the Southern Frontier" in *Essays in Southern Biography*, ed. East Carolina College Dept. of History (Greenville, 1965), 166; Jones, *The Present State of Virginia*, 7–20; William Stevens Perry, *Papers Relating to the History of the Church in Virginia, A.D. 1650–1776* (Geneva NY: Privately printed, 1870), 196–97.

79. Charles Griffin to the Bishop of London, 12 January 1716, in Perry, *Papers*, 196–97; Spotswood, *Letters*, 2:137–38; Fontaine, *Journal*, 91, 98; Jones, *The Present State of Virginia*, 7–20.

80. Byrd, *Prose Works*, 231.

81. Jones, *The Present State of Virginia*, 7–20.

82. Governor Spotswood also instituted a policy to "remit the whole tribute they [tributary nations] are obliged to pay yearly to the Governor, so long as they permit their Children to be kept at the College." In the 1714 treaty this policy was extended to include children educated at Christanna, reducing the Saponis' annual tribute to a symbolic gift of three arrows; however, evidence suggests that the Saponis' tribute was never more than the symbolic arrows, so this policy may have only applied to nations who became tributary prior to 1677 and paid a higher tribute. "Treaty with the Saponie Indians 1713 [1714]."

83. Charles and William Kimball served the Saponis as interpreters from 1712 until 1728, and perhaps longer. Fontaine, *Journal*, 93; *EJCCV*, 3:321, 4:76–77, 174; *JHB*, 177, 222, 254, 327, 412.

84. Fontaine, *Journal*, 98.
85. Jones, *The Present State of Virginia*, 7–20; Byrd, *Prose Works*, 314–16.
86. Wickmannatachee escaped from his captors and made his way home. A female hostage taken during the attack was taken to Mohawk country before she escaped, living for five months in the woods as she made her way back to the head of James River where she was taken up by a plantation owner before being returned, by suggestion of the Virginia Council, to the Catawbas. Spotswood, *Letters*, 2:230–38, 257–59; Jones, *The Present State of Virginia*, 7–20; Virginia, *EJCCV*, 3:442–44; Virginia, *JHB*, 189–90.
87. Spotswood, *Letters*, 2:230–38, 251–52.
88. Spotswood, *Letters*, 2:257–59, 261–62.
89. *EJCCV*, 3:442–43, 455–56.
90. Perry was predominantly a tobacco merchant, but also imported skins and furs from large Indian traders like William Byrd I, and later William Byrd II, an activity only 12 percent of tobacco firms engaged in at the turn of the eighteenth century. “Micajah Perry,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 17, no. 4 (April 1909): 265; and Jacob M. Price, *Perry of London: a Family and a Firm on the Seaborne Frontier, 1615–1753* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1992).
91. Robert Cary was a London merchant with family connections throughout Virginia. He was well established in London and Bristol trade networks through the efforts of his father, James Cary, a Virginia merchant. Robert Cary and Company, a merchant firm in London, was run by the son of Robert Cary (also Robert Cary). Jacob M. Price, “Who Was John Norton? A Note on the Historical Character of Some Eighteenth-Century London Virginia Firms,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 19, no. 3 (July 1962): 401.
92. The signatories of the Perry petition were Micajah Perry, Richards Perry, William Byrd, William Hunt Danson, William Dawskins, Thomas Sandford, Benjamin Bradey, Humphrey Bell, John Maynard, Henry Dee, John Hyde, James Bradly, and Samuel Howell. Members of the Virginia Indian Company were Alexander Spotswood, Nathaniel Harrison, Thomas Nelson, W Dandridge, Richard Bland, Robert Innes, John, Holloway, Henry Irwin, John Baylor, Cole Digges, William Cocke, Mann Page, Edmund Kearny, William Cole, Walker, Thomas Jones, Charles Chiswell, and William Robertson. Colonial Office Papers (CO) 5/1318, Public Record Office, London, “Petition to Commissioners for Trade and Plantations,” folio 444, 3–9; Lambeth Palace Library, *The Fulham Papers at Lambeth Palace Library* (London: World Microfilms, 1970), XIV: 254–57.
93. Lambeth Palace Library, *The Fulham Papers*, XIV, 254–57.
94. Great Britain Public Record Office, *Journal of the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations* (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1920), 138, 141–42, 230, 241–43.

95. *EJCCV*, 3:455–56.
96. Jack P. Greene, “The Opposition to Lieutenant Governor Alexander Spotswood 1718,” *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 70 (1962): 39–41.
97. *EJCCV*, 3:439–440.
98. The lone trader was a “Mr. Perry,” perhaps Peter Perry, the brother of Micajah Perry, who was a merchant/trader from York County. “Micajah Perry,” 264; Spotswood, *Letters*, 2:263.
99. *EJCCV*, 3:608.
100. Spotswood’s letters suggest that the Saponis had moved into the fort by the fall of 1718. Spotswood, *Letters*, 2:301–303.
101. The Saponis offered Malone 120 buckskins for the freedom of the Saponi slave. *EJCCV*, 3:450–52, 465–66, 520; *JHB*, 202, 215, 281–83.
102. Spotswood, *Letters*, 2:301–303.
103. *JHB*, 224.
104. *EJCCV*, 3:507–09.
105. *EJCCV*, 4:1–2.
106. Spotswood, *Letters*, 2:281–83, 301–303; *EJCCV*, 3:455–56, 479.
107. *JHB*, 199.
108. *JHB*, 189–90.
109. Stitt Robinson, *Early American Indian Documents: Treaties and Laws, 1607–1789* (Frederick MD: University Publications of America), 346–47.
110. Between 1719 and 1723 the Saponis did not register any security complaints with the council. Although many Tuscaroras had moved north to join the Iroquois after the Tuscarora War, some remained in North Carolina. Groups of them continued to move northwards until at least 1766. *EJCCV*, 4:33.
111. Evidence for Christanna is slim between 1723 and 1727. In 1724 and 1726 interpreter William Kimball requested payment for his services among the Saponis, and a Saponi who had been taken captive into Canada returned, causing some discussion in the assembly due to his remarks about the French. *EJCCV*, 4:76–77, 80; *JHB*, 412.
112. *EJCCV*, 4:126, 132–33.
113. The reference is only to the “Tottero King.” Whether he was Mausee Untky, who signed the 1714 treaty, is unknown. Although incorporated with the Saponis, the Tutelos obviously retained their own identity. *EJCCV*, 4:186.
114. The council journals do not elaborate on the nature of the threats, and court records have not yet yielded any further evidence regarding these men. *EJCCV*, 4:186, 189.
115. Byrd, *Prose Works*, 101, 231, 314–16. See also Merrell, *Indians’ New World*, 102.
116. *EJCCV*, 4:198, 209.
117. Their growing numbers made the Catawbias an ideal location for colo-

nial trade and in 1717 South Carolina established a trade factory among them, though Virginia traders were also involved in the Catawba trade. It also helped that various Catawba towns were located along the trade route to the Cherokees, providing an ideal stop to traders continuing on to Cherokee country. The Catawba Nation formed largely due to external pressures that helped to unite the diverse peoples that had moved to the Catawba River; one of the main external pressures was Iroquois raids. Merrell, *Indians' New World*, 104, 113, 117. Richter and Merrell, *Beyond the Covenant Chain*, 120–21; Beck, “Catawba Coalescence,” 134.

118. The consolidation of so many nations on the Catawba River had pooled more men for defense, but it had also provided the Iroquois with a single location to direct the full force of their southern raids. Though the Catawba gained a name for their fierceness and bravery, the increasing intensity of the Catawba-Iroquois conflict still took its toll. Virginia traders also soon found a way to Cherokee country that bypassed the Catawba, undermining trade on the Catawba River and shifting it elsewhere. *EJCCV*, 4:269.

119. *EJCCV*, 4:119–22, 135, 137. Along with the Saponis came a splinter band of Cheraws.

120. Spotswood continued his attempts to bring students to the Indian school at the college, but numbers remained low (1712 had been the peak year), as “foreign” Indians, like the Iroquois, refused to send their children to the college. Axtell, “Poison Ivy,” 60.

121. The Saponis visited the governor and council with a complaint “against the Nottoways for divers Murders committed on their people since their return into this Government & more particularly for joining with divers foreign Indians in an attack made on the Saponi Indians at their Fort in the month of August,” just months after their return. In 1733 the Saponis again tried to negotiate peace through a treaty with the Nottoways and Tuscaroras which was attended by Robert Hix, former captain of the Rangers at Christanna. After 1733 the Saponis stop showing up in the journals of the council or assembly. *EJCCV*, 4:290–91, 303.

122. Matthew Dennis, *Cultivating a Landscape of Peace: Iroquois-European Encounters in Seventeenth-Century America* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 8.

123. The Saponis probably viewed migration as a “last-ditch effort to end Iroquois predation,” much the way the Tuscaroras had. Feeley, “Tuscarora Trails,” 332, 328–39, 386.

124. In 1765 the Saponis living among the Cayuga had 30 warriors, which based on Swanton’s calculations would mean a total Saponi population of 108. Swanton, *The Indians of the Southeastern United States*, 178.

125. The Saponis and Tutelos were adopted as separate nations. The Tutelos

retained a distinctive identity among the Iroquois until the twentieth century. The Saponis may have been subsumed under the name Tutelo. Swanton, *The Indians of the Southeastern United States*, 178, 200–201.

126. Germanna was proposed as the sister-fort to Christanna for the Tuscarora. When the Tuscarora refused Spotswood's plan for them there he settled the location with German Protestants. Grinnan, "The Last Indians in Orange County, Virginia," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 3 (1895–1896): 189–90; McCartney and Hazzard, *Fort Christanna Archaeological Reconnaissance Survey*.

127. The Saponi peoples had never lived on the Tar River before, but may have had some familiarity with the area from their former residences in the North Carolina piedmont. Swanton, *The Indians of the Southeastern United States*, 178.

128. *EJCCV*, 4:303.

129. Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire: The Covenant Chain Confederation of Indian Tribes with English Colonies* (New York: Norton, 1984), 196.