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Contact Points

AMERICAN FRONTIERS *from* *the* MOHAWK VALLEY *to the* MISSISSIPPI, 1750–1830

Edited by Andrew R. L. Cayton *and* Fredrika J. Teute

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PREFACE

The last decades of the twentieth century have witnessed a proliferation of work on native American experiences in the colonial and early national periods. During the same time, a new wave of interest in the backcountry produced studies on the edges of European-American settlement. As the centennial approached of Frederick Jackson Turner's seminal address, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," delivered in 1893, Alan Taylor and I came up with an idea to hold a conference exploring new understandings of early American frontiers. James H. Merrell had pointed out in 1989 in a critique on colonial history and native American studies in the *William and Mary Quarterly* that, in spite of all the work accomplished, the various schools of scholarship had yet to integrate the results of each other's research. Alan and I proposed challenging scholars in relevant fields to transcend their own boundaries by applying other disciplines' perspectives to their work. The result was the conference "Crucibles of Cultures: North American Frontiers, 1750–1820," held in New Orleans in November 1994 and cosponsored by the Institute of Early American History and Culture, The Historic New Orleans Collection, and the Newberry Library. This volume of essays comes from the scholarly proceedings of that meeting.

In a preliminary exchange, James H. Merrell, Daniel K. Richter, Alan Taylor, and I considered an agenda and topics for a frontiers conference that would cross borders. That discussion was essential to laying out a format for the conference. Although the proposal languished for a while, fortune and many people smiled on the frontiers conference, encouraged it, and made it happen. Alan was steadfast in his support, and other scholars of early America responded with excitement and enthusiasm at the prospect of a conference that would look at frontiers as zones of cultural interactions. Conversations with Andrew R. L. Cayton, John Mack Faragher, Stephen Aron, Peter H. Wood, Theda Perdue, Colin Calloway, and David Edmunds, among others, kept the idea alive.

Essential to holding any conference is financial and institutional support. When Ronald Hoffman took over as director of the Institute of Early American History and Culture in mid-1992, he endorsed the proposal for the frontiers conference by promising to fund it. With his inimitable flair for shaping

JAMES H. MERRELL

Shamokin, "the very seat of the Prince of darkness": Unsettling the Early American Frontier

Darkness Discovered

"All was dark about Shamokin"

On September 16, 1745, the German colonists Martin and Anna Mack arrived at the Susquehanna River Indian town of Shamokin to set up a Moravian mission (see Figure 1). A difficult fall awaited them. Although some natives seemed friendly, sharing food and lending the newcomers a bed or an ear, these promising signs were all but buried beneath an avalanche of scorn, resentment, and rum. Even Indians who "rec[eiv]ed us very friendly" also "ask'd at the same Time when we intended to go away again?" Others, less polite, "were very Lightminded and Ridiculed us." And these opponents were sober; when Indians drank—and they were, Martin Mack observed, "for the most part drunk"—Shamokin went from unpleasant to frightening. Scarcely twenty-four hours after their arrival, the Macks heard "a great Noise in our Neighbourhood, the Indians . . . being all Drunk, Some of them came into our Hut, look'd very dismal and roar'd like the very Beasts."[1]

That was only a taste of things to come; during the next several weeks, the two often met "very Fierce and Bloody" natives who had mischief and may-

For comments and suggestions I am grateful to William Cronon, Clyde Griffen, Michael McConnell, and Richard White, to Stephen Aron and the participants in a colloquium in the Department of History at Princeton University, to the Colonial History Workshop at the University of Minnesota, and to Charles Cohen and the Early American History Colloquium at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

1. Shamokin Diary, Sept. 17, Oct. 8, 12, 24, 1745, *Records of the Moravian Mission among the Indians of North America* (New Haven, Conn., [1978]), from original materials at the Archives of the Moravian Church, Bethlehem, Pa., microfilm, 40 reels, reel 28, box 217, folder 12B, item 1 (hereafter cited as *Moravian Records*, reel/box/folder/item). Two of these journals are in English; translations of the others are my own. I am deeply grateful to Beverly Smaby for checking my work.

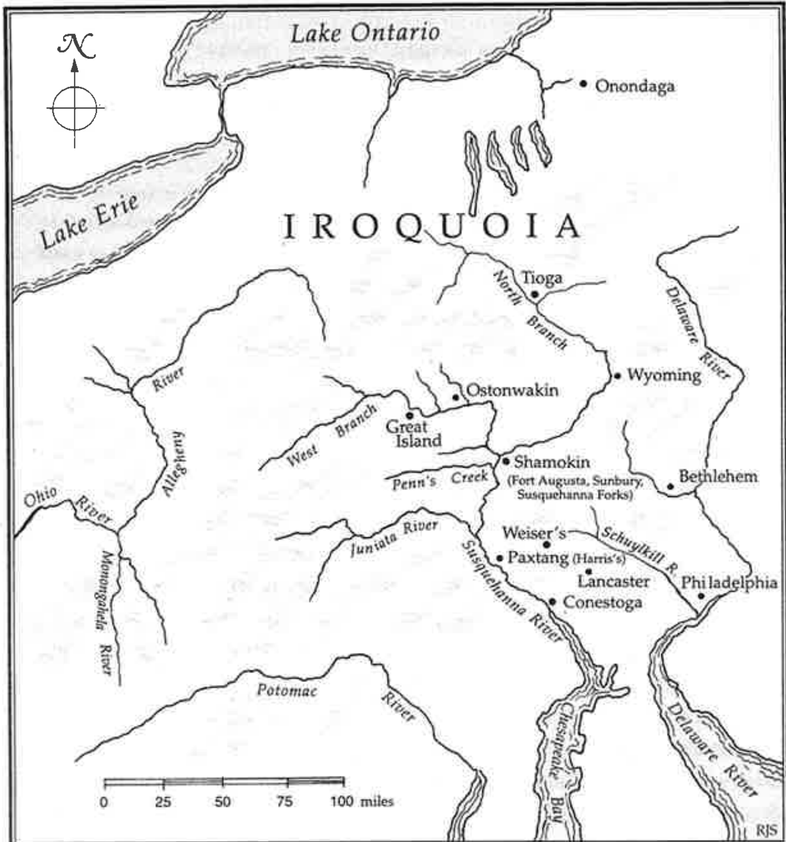


FIGURE 1

Shamokin and the Susquehanna Country. *Drawn by Richard Stinely*

hem, if not murder, in mind. The worst of these storms hit on a night in early November, near the end of the Macks' stay. A passing war party paused at Shamokin and, making a drum from an empty rum barrel, proceeded to dance—while emptying, apparently, another barrel of liquor. They were, Mack wrote, "so drunk, that they roar'd like Beasts, and had like to have pulled the Hutt over our Ears." Failing that, one warrior, "full of Fury," stormed in, "Snatch'd a great Fire Brand out of the Fire, and said he wo[ul]d burn the white People." The next morning, another yanked a backpack off the Macks' newly arrived Moravian replacement and heaved it into the woods, then snatched the newcomer's "Hat from his Head, . . . put it on . . . , and run away." On Novem-

ber 4, the Macks headed home to the Moravian town, Bethlehem, leaving to their shaken successor "this as yet wild People." Shamokin was, Martin Mack recalled with a shudder years later, "the very seat of the Prince of darkness."[2]

Mack was not alone in his assessment of the place. Soon after the Macks reached Shamokin, the Presbyterian missionary David Brainerd, who was staying in another part of town, dropped by to compare notes on the settlement—and, probably, to size up his competition. "He complain'd very much of [the Indians] that they were such wicked People, being always drunk," Mack wrote. "He did not know what he sho[ul]d do with them." "The Indians of this place," Brainerd later reported, "are accounted the most drunken, mischievous and ruffian-like fellows of any in these parts; and Satan seems to have his seat in this town in an eminent degree."[3]

Nowadays, it is hard to read such words without an indulgent smile or a contemptuous sneer for the misguided sensibilities of an earlier era. Which is worse: the missionaries' arrogance or their ignorance? These folk brought to Shamokin a Manichaean view of the world that pitted the forces of order (the people of Christ and of clearings) against the lords of misrule (the heathen denizens of the woods). Foot soldiers in that cosmic struggle, determined "to turn them [Indians] from darkness to light," they failed really to see the people who joined them for lunch and staggered toward them in the dark. In an age that paints the American frontier in shades of gray, it is tempting to dismiss

2. Ibid., Sept. 18, Oct. 16, 19, Nov. 2–3, 1745, 28/217/12B/1; John H. Carter, "The Moravians at Shamokin," Northumberland County Historical Society, *Proceedings and Addresses,* IX (Sunbury, Pa., 1937), 64. The firebrand episode might have been a ritual. The Indian, disarmed easily by the Macks' host, the métis Andrew Montour, then picked up (in succession) a gun and a stick, making the same threats and being disarmed each time. He finally sat quietly by the fire for a while before leaving the house. Fifteen years later, another Moravian encountered similar treatment at an Indian town farther up the Susquehanna River. See "Journal of Mr Christn. Fred Post, in Company with Teedyuscung, Mr John Hays, Isaac Still, and Moses Tattamy, to the Great Council of the Different Indian Nations, 1760," Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia (hereafter cited as HSP).

3. Shamokin Diary, Sept. 25, 1745, *Moravian Records,* 28/217/12B/1. For the competition, see ibid., Oct. 25, 1745, 28/217/12B/1; Jonathan Edwards, *The Life of David Brainerd,* ed. Norman Pettit, The Works of Jonathan Edwards, VII (New Haven, Conn., 1985), 324. For David Brainerd's assessment, see Carter, "Moravians at Shamokin," Northumberland Co. Hist. Soc., *Procs.,* IX (1937), 62. See also Edwards, *Life of Brainerd,* ed. Pettit, 324–326, 420–425. For other Moravians' similar assessments, see Shamokin Diary, Jan. 5, 1748, *Moravian Records,* 6/121/4/1; and Travel Diary, Apr. 19, 1747, ibid., 6/121/9/2; J. T. Hamilton, trans., "Autobiography of Bernhard Adam Grube," Moravian Historical Society, *Transactions,* XI (Bethlehem, Pa., 1936), 203–204.

those who saw things in black and white as fools and cranks, if not imperialists and racists.[4]

We should resist the temptation if we hope to make sense of Shamokin and the Susquehanna frontier. For one thing, the Macks and David Brainerd were familiar with native Americans and therefore unlikely to suffer culture shock upon arriving at just any Indian town. Martin Mack came to Shamokin from more than two years at other missions, his wife grew up close enough to Indians to pick up Mohawk (and later added Delaware), and Brainerd brought with him to the Susquehanna River lessons picked up during sojourns among several other Indian groups beside the Delaware and the Connecticut.[5]

For another, missionaries were not the only ones Shamokin threw off balance. The town at the Forks of the Susquehanna was an easy place to find; it was also an easy place to get lost. One colonial fur trader there became so disoriented that he forgot what day of the week it was. Another veteran of the Indian countries, the Pennsylvania Indian agent Conrad Weiser, once was struck dumb by what he saw in Shamokin. Sent there by provincial officials to greet an Iroquois delegation, Weiser anxiously scanned the visitors' faces as their canoes approached the shore. "There is but two among them I Remember I have sien befor," he fretted. "All the rest ar Strangers to me." The Iroquois expert was momentarily stupefied. "I was troubled in my mind," he recalled, "dit not know what to say or what to doe."[6]

Even as Shamokin's Indian inhabitants helped Weiser recover from his stupor, they knew the feeling. Although they would not have agreed that the Prince of Darkness was in their midst, they knew well enough how darkness felt. After all, not ten miles upstream lay Otzinachson, "Demon's Den," where, natives said, "the evil spirits . . . have their seats and hold their revels."[7] And sometimes

4. David Brainerd to Ebenezer Pemberton, Nov. 5, 1744, in Edwards, *Life of Brainerd,* ed. Pettit, 572, 579.

5. For the Macks' background, see "J. Martin Mack's Recollections of a Journey from Otstonwakin to Wyoming . . . in October of 1742," in William C. Reichel, ed., *Memorials of the Moravian Church,* I (Philadelphia, 1870), 100–101n. The name of Mack's wife is variously given as Anna, Annel, or Jeannette. For Brainerd, see Edwards, *Life of Brainerd,* ed. Pettit, 24–32, 58–62, 570–576, and pts. V–VIII.

6. Shamokin Diary, Dec. 27, 1747, *Moravian Records,* 6/121/3/3; Conrad Weiser to James Logan, Sept. 16, 1736, James Logan Papers, box 10, folder 62, HSP.

7. "Zinzendorf's Narrative of a Journey from Bethlehem to Shamokin, in September of 1742," in Reichel, ed., *Memorials,* I, 94. For the Iroquois sense of these places, see George R. Hamell, "Mythical Realities and European Contact in the Northeast during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," *Man in the Northeast,* no. 33 (Spring 1987), 68–70.

malignant spirits did approach the heart of the village. "All was dark about Shamokin," said Sassoonan, a Delaware headman from the town, during one crisis; "we could not see at the Least Distance from Us." In fact, the first appearance of "Shahomaking" in the colonial records came in 1728, a time when there was "som Misc[h]if hac[h]in by the Indians" in those parts, Sassoonan was trading "hard words" with another local leader, and the town itself was said to have been abandoned.[8]

This report of Shamokin's demise was premature, but in the years to come "great noise" and "great Confusion" were no strangers there. One spring, a Nanticoke hunter, passing through the town, "complained very much" that the native inhabitants "were the most disorderly and drunken Indians he knew, and he would not live here for all the world." But the worst noise and confusion erupted in the fall of 1755, when Indians from over the western mountains brought war to the Susquehanna country by striking colonists settled just below the Forks. Shamokin at once became a cauldron of rumor and intrigue, of maneuvers and veiled threats. Converging on the town were Indians from throughout the Susquehanna Valley, there to discuss the bloodshed, native diplomats from Ohio and "a great number of strange Indians, . . . all painted Black," looking to enlist the Susquehanna peoples in their cause, and a band of almost fifty Pennsylvanians from downriver, led by the prominent frontier trader, John Harris, come to investigate the recent attacks. By winter, the combined pressure of these contending forces did destroy Shamokin. Abandoned and burned, the site greeted new tenants the following summer when Pennsylvania troops built an outpost they called Fort Augusta atop the ashes of the native settlement.[9]

8. *Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, from the Organization to the Termination of the Proprietary Government,* 10 vols., Colonial Records of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia and Harrisburg, Pa., 1851–1853), IV, 651 (hereafter cited as *MPCP*). Similar sentiments are ibid., IV, 684, V, 475, VI, 685, VII, 8; *Pennsylvania Archives,* 138 vols. (Philadelphia and Harrisburg, Pa., 1852–1949), 1st Ser., I, 214, 227 (hereafter cited as *PA*); *MPCP,* III, 330.

9. For "great noise" and "great Confusion," see Weiser, Report of Indian Conference at Shamokin, May 2, 1744, Records of the Provincial Council in the Pennsylvania State Archives, Executive Correspondence (Harrisburg, Pa., 1966), reel B2, item 377 (hereafter cited as Recs. Prov. Ccl., Exec. Corr., reel/item). For the Nanticoke hunter, see Shamokin Diary, Mar. 20, 1749, *Moravian Records,* 6/121/5/1. For attacks in the fall of 1755, see *MPCP,* VI, 645–661. The best history of Fort Augusta is William A. Hunter, *Forts on the Pennsylvania Frontier, 1753–1758* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1960), chap. 10. See also Thomas Lynch Montgomery et al., eds., *Report of the Commission to Locate the Site of the Frontier Forts of Pennsylvania,* 2 vols. (Harrisburg, Pa., 1916), I, 354–363. The town's demise can be followed in *MPCP,* VI, 783, VII, 154.

According to the frontier saga embedded in American memory, Fort Augusta was the dawn of a new day, the triumph of light over darkness. In fact, though, the place at the Forks defied conventional story lines; Augusta, too, had its share of darkness and noise. Colonel James Burd, arriving at the stronghold in December 1756, was appalled, when he "inquired into the State of the Garrison, . . . that no work has been done for some time" and the fort "was full of heaps of nusances." More than three years later, he returned to find, again, "every thing much out of order." Burd managed to escape the mess, but there was no escaping reports from subordinates informing him—yet again—that "all [is] in Confusion."[10]

Shamokin could, then, be a bewildering place, whether Indians or European colonists—or both—occupied it. In that very bewilderment and confusion lie Shamokin's mystery, and its significance. Perhaps it is time, some 250 years after the Macks got there, to return to the Susquehanna Forks and have a look around, to peer into the darkness and listen to the noise. Another visit to the place reveals how far this corner of the frontier departs from the epic Europeans told themselves (and us) about their adventures in North America. Although perhaps not as dramatic as the cosmic clash of good and evil, Shamokin's story is more complicated, and more interesting, suggesting as it does both the enduring pull of disorder and the enticing prospect of an altogether new order, a fragile rearrangement of disparate peoples.[11] At the same time, however, a visit to the town and to its replacement, Fort Augusta, helps explain why the older plot endures: within its denigration of natives and celebration of newcomers, its bombast and myopia, the grand narrative harbors a deeper truth about the early American frontier, a truth about the divide between Indian and colonist, a barrier these peoples had built and one they could not, would not, tear down.

Some archaeologists believe that the fort partially covered the Indian town; see Deborah L. Nichols, "Field Report on the 1979 Excavations at 36Nb 71, Fort Augusta, Sunbury, Pennsylvania," Northumberland Co. Hist. Soc., *Procs.,* XXVIII (1980), 105. Others believe that the fort was just south of the town; see Barry C. Kent, *Susquehanna's Indians* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1989), 101. One contemporary account (*PA,* 2d Ser., II, 678) put the fort just downriver. Both could be right: soldiers might have built at the site where Shickellamy and the Moravian missionaries had lived, which was a short way from town (see below).

10. *PA,* 2d Ser., II, 642, VII, 441; Lt. Caleb Graydon to Col. James Burd, July 12, 1762, Shippen Family Papers, V, HSP.

11. The best account of such an intercultural arrangement—one that, under different circumstances, endured—is Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815* (New York, 1991).

Darkness Explored: Shamokin

"We find it verry Diffical[t] to larn anything"

The roots of that widespread sense of being adrift on a turbulent, forbidding sea can be found in the geography and history of this corner of the world.[12] The Susquehanna River that ran past Shamokin's front door stretches like a great tree up from the Chesapeake Bay, its branches reaching deep into the interior to brush the headwaters of other streams that flowed toward the Great Lakes and the Ohio country.[13] The river had long been an avenue for Indian warriors, traders, diplomats, and emigrants. In 1700, however, a Susquehanna traveler would have found the valley remarkably empty of inhabitants, the Susquehannocks and other local peoples having recently migrated or merged with the Five Nations Iroquois, masters of the river's headwaters.[14] This emptiness and this highway, combined with the Five Nations' habit of encouraging other peoples to live on the borders of Iroquoia, made the Susquehanna country attractive to Indian settlers. For much of the eighteenth century, there was, as one Iroquois observed in 1754, an "abundance of Indians . . . moving up and down" the valley. Various bands from the Delaware River, Shawnees from remote lands to the south and west, Conoys and Nanticokes from Maryland, Tutelos and Tuscaroras from Carolina, Senecas, Cayugas, and Oneidas from Iroquoia—people from these and other groups founded an archipelago of

12. *Shamokin*'s meaning is unclear. It has been interpreted as "the place of eels," "the place where gun barrels are straightened" (for the smithy Moravians established there in 1747), "Crawfish Place," "where antlers are plenty," and "the place of chiefs, or rulers." See George P. Donehoo, *A History of the Indian Villages and Place Names in Pennsylvania, with Numerous Historical Notes and References* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1928), 141–143, 186–190; David M. Oestreicher, "Surviving Historic Traditions of the Unami Delaware" (I thank Dr. Oestreicher for sharing his work with me and allowing me to cite it). Confusion deepens because *Shamokin* was only one of the names for the town or region at the Susquehanna Forks and because *Shamokin* or *Otzinachson* sometimes referred to the Susquehanna's West Branch or colonial settlements below the Forks. Usually, *Shamokin* was the town, *Otzinachson* the region. I focus on the village, aware of the larger context, since references to "the Indians at Shamokin and thereabout" were common (*MPCP*, IV, 641).

13. I embellish here on the "treetop" metaphor of Francis Jennings; see *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire: The Covenant Chain Confederation of Indian Tribes with English Colonies from Its Beginnings to the Lancaster Treaty of 1744* (New York, 1984), 31–32.

14. Susquehannocks were the people inhabiting the Susquehanna Valley in the seventeenth century; after 1700, "Susquehanna Indians" meant the peoples of different tribes living along the Susquehanna River.

towns stretching from Conestoga and Paxtang in the south to Wyoming and Tioga, Ostonwakin and Great Island in the upper reaches of the river's two great branches.[15]

The fertile plain at the junction of these two streams (which European colonists called the North and West Branches) helped make the village at that site among the largest of the Indian islands. When Brainerd and the Macks arrived in 1745, the town's fifty houses, spread across both banks at the mouth of the North Branch and on an island between, held some three hundred Indians.[16]

In the site's very appeal lay an important source of Shamokin's darkness. Although the Iroquois claimed—and their man on the Susquehanna from 1728 to 1748, the Oneida leader Shickellamy, sometimes asserted—control of the region, in fact there was never a charter group of sufficient size or influence to set the terms on which newcomers would be accepted.[17] Shamokin was, throughout its life, clearly an Indian town—"The whites have nothing to say here," Shickellamy once said, "and no white is allowed to live here"—but which Indians? Though the settlement was probably founded by Delawares around 1720, a colonial map drawn a few years later denoted it an Iroquois town. By 1745, the identity of the place was more confusing still, with half of its inhabitants Delawares, the rest Tutelos and Iroquois: "Three different tribes of Indians; speaking three languages, wholly unintelligible to each other," sighed Brainerd, who knew none of them. Another missionary, Joseph Powell, suffered the same assault on his ears shortly after his arrival in January 1748. We

15. These migrations have been too little studied. But see Paul A. W. Wallace, *Indians in Pennsylvania*, 2d ed., rev. William A. Hunter (Harrisburg, Pa., 1986), chap. 14; Peter C. Mancall, *Valley of Opportunity: Economic Culture along the Upper Susquehanna, 1700–1800* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1991), chap. 2; Kent, *Susquehanna's Indians*, 70–108. In 1722, the Iroquois formally adopted these Tuscarora migrants, thereby becoming the Six Nations; see *MPCP*, VI, 116 (quotation).

16. John Bartram, *Observations on the Inhabitants, Climate, Soil, Rivers, Productions, Animals, and Other Matters Worthy of Notice; Made by John Bartram, in His Travels from Pensilvania to Onondago, Oswego and the Lake Ontario, in Canada . . .* (London, 1751), 14, 16; "Extracts from Mr. Lewis Evans' Journal, 1743," in T[homas] Pownall, *A Topographical Description of the Dominions of the United States of America*, ed. Lois Mulkearn (Pittsburgh, 1949), 169; Hunter, *Forts*, 522; David Brainerd, Diary, July 14–Nov. 20, 1745, 30, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia (hereafter cited as APS).

17. For the idea of a "charter" group, see T. H. Breen, "Creative Adaptations: Peoples and Cultures," in Jack P. Greene and J. R. Pole, eds., *Colonial British America: Essays in the New History of the Early Modern Era* (Baltimore, 1984), 204–205.

"have hear so many Languages that we find it verry Diffical[t] to larn anything," Powell wrote. Indeed, he went on in despair, "Its rare to hear two Indians talking in one Language."[18]

Poor Powell probably heard more than three languages that winter, for Shamokin was also a headquarters for Indians throughout the Susquehanna country. The council fire that the Iroquois kindled at the Forks made it a center for discussion and diplomacy. Six Nations ambassadors heading south sent word ahead to collect at that town "all the Indians about Shohomoakin," then paused there "to Settle their affairs" with these native neighbors. Around 1730, Pennsylvania got into the same habit, and over the next generation, when trouble broke out on the frontier, it was to Shamokin that provincial agents and Susquehanna Indian leaders repaired in order to patch things up. Here, observed one visitor to the village in the early 1740s, "the Indians have their Rendevous, and it is in some measure like the Hague in Holland."[19]

Home to some, headquarters for all, Shamokin was also a way station for travelers, further filling its houses with foreigners and its air with outlandish tongues. The passing scene was a carnival of peoples and cultures: Jeremias, a Moravian Indian from Bethlehem, whose getup drew stares and puzzled looks from the town's natives, and two warriors, whose fluent English, bearskin clothes, and fiercely painted faces elicited a similar reaction from missionaries; an Indian from up the West Branch, a snake tattooed on his face, hunting a stray cow, and two Pennsylvanians looking for horses; Indian fur traders from hundreds of miles away stopping by en route to Philadelphia and colonial traders passing through, going in the opposite direction. A Delaware war party, bound for battle in Catawba country on the borders of Carolina, halted one summer's night to dance in Shickellamy's house, taking turns planting hatchets into a post "on which a human head is carved," and one winter's day two warriors, sole survivors of another foray against Catawbas, paused to tell of their companions' being captured and skinned alive. One fall, Conrad Weiser showed up with the Moravian leader Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf,

18. Shamokin Diary, Aug. 2, 1747, *Moravian Records*, 6/121/3/1, Jan. 7–8, 1748, 6/121/4/1; Charles A. Hanna, *The Wilderness Trail; or, The Ventures and Adventures of the Pennsylvania Traders on the Allegheny Path . . .* , 2 vols. (New York, 1911), I, facing 192 (1727 map); Brainerd, Diary, 30. Brainerd knew Mahican but needed an interpreter to speak to Delawares (see Edwards, *Life of Brainerd*, ed. Pettit, 254 n. 2).

19. *MPCP*, VI, 116, VIII, 748–749; Weiser to Logan, Sept. 2, 16, 1736, Logan Papers, box 10, folders 59, 62; Weiser to ?, Jan. 24, 1745/6, Pierre Eugene DuSimitiere Papers, Indian Treaties, 966.F.24, Library Company of Philadelphia; "Zinzendorf's Account of His Experience among the Indians . . . ," in Reichel, ed., *Memorials*, I, 133.

who demanded that Indian "merry-making" cease so that he could pray; the following summer, Weiser was back, this time with the naturalist John Bartram, who ambled out of town in search of a nap or a swim and canoed upriver "to look for curiosities." These and untold numbers of other people, parading through, made the place babel's resort.[20]

To compound the confusion, even Shamokin's inhabitants were a peripatetic lot. It was not that in the fall they left town for months on end to hunt; most Susquehanna Indians did that. Rather, it was that few made Shamokin their home for long. Sassoonan, the Delaware headman who was living there in 1728 and was buried there nineteen years later, may hold the record for longevity; staying so long, he saw many of his people emigrate west across the mountains. In 1756, Tachnechdorus (John Shickellamy), the eldest son of Shickellamy, called Shamokin "our old place," neglecting to add that his family had only moved there around 1740. With such swirling, eddying human currents, it was hard to get one's bearings in Shamokin; the complexion of the spot could change from one visit to the next. Those Tutelos the Macks met in the fall of 1745, for example, were not even in Shamokin two years earlier or three years later.[21]

Ethnic antagonism furthered the sense of dislocation. Shamokin Iroquois were said to "despise" the Delawares living there, and during the 1740s Shickellamy belittled his Delaware neighbors, even announcing that Sassoonan was gravely ill, perpetually drunk, or hopelessly insane. In apparent retaliation for these and other slights, a Delaware conjurer bewitched and killed one of the Oneida's grandchildren, only to be done in later by an Iroquois who, the next day, strutted about the town proclaiming himself a hero. Moravians, picking up on the contention in no time, reminded each other that, in order to stay on good terms with everyone, "no partiality must be shown to Iroquois, Dela-

20. For Shamokin as way station, see "Br. Rösler's Relation," *Moravian Records*, 6/121/7/1; Shamokin Diary, Sept. 19, 1745, ibid., 28/217/12B/1, June 7, 1747, 6/121/3/1, Jan. 28, Apr. 4–5, 1748, 6/121/4/1, Jan. 25, 1749, 6/121/4/3, June 5–6, 1749, 6/121/5/2, May 15, 1755, 6/121/7/1; Travel Diary, Oct. 16, 1748, ibid., 30/225/2/1; "Zinzendorf's Narrative," in Reichel, ed., *Memorials*, I, 83–93, 101n; Bartram, *Observations*, 14–17 (quotation on 11).

21. Delaware migrations can be followed in C. A. Weslager, *The Delaware Indians: A History* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1972), chap. 10; Michael N. McConnell, *A Country Between: The Upper Ohio Valley and Its Peoples, 1724–1774* (Lincoln, Nebr., 1992), chaps. 1–2; Jennings, *Ambiguous Iroquois Empire*, pt. III. For Tachnechdorus, see *PA*, 1st Ser., II, 776. For the Tutelos, see "An Account of the Famine among the Indians of the North and West Branch of the Susquehanna, in the Summer of 1748," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, XVI (1892), 431; Travel Diary, Oct. 11, 1748, *Moravian Records*, 30/225/2/1.

wares or Tudelars." These German newcomers had good reason to be cautious, for some of the anger was directed at them. The suspicion and ridicule that Anna and Martin Mack found in some quarters of the town during the fall of 1745 would greet others from Bethlehem, too. To make matters worse, colonial fur traders fanned the flames of native resentment, cursing at missionaries and pointedly inviting them to leave.[22]

Add rum or whiskey to this volatile mix and the result could be explosive. Shamokin was by no means awash in liquor all the time, but drunkenness was a prominent feature of the social landscape. And, although drinkers sometimes were "merry," even "polite," more often they were menacing. "A drunken Indian is a desperate Creature," wrote one colonist, "and 10 others will run out of the way from a single [Indian] who is drunk and begins to behave wildly." In fact, in Shamokin the ratio usually was reversed: a handful of people, bent on abstaining, took to the woods, hid in the fields, even locked themselves in a storehouse in order to escape the blandishments of their intoxicated neighbors, who "plagued" them to join the crowd.[23]

When rum ruled, that crowd turned ugly. People plunged into fires and tried to tear a door off its hinges. With fists or firebrands, husbands beat wives, and mothers maimed children, leaving the little ones to "Cry Bitterly . . . in the Night"; other Indians "wrestled each other in the filth like pigs, and bellowed all night like mad beasts." Shamokin on the morning after one of these sprees was not a pretty sight. They "looked," wrote one who saw the survivors, "like they got up out of their graves."[24]

Swarms of peoples coming and going in pursuit of their own versions of happiness, unpleasantness between tribes and between those whites seeking souls and those after furs, rivers of rum—these combined to make the Indian settlement at the Forks a bewildering, sometimes scary place. But it was more

22. John W. Jordan, ed., "Bishop J.C.F. Cammerhoff's Narrative of a Journey to Shamokin, Penna., in the Winter of 1748," *PMHB,* XXIX (1905), 173–174, 176, 178 (quotation); *PA,* 1st Ser., I, 762; *MPCP,* V, 88; Shamokin Diary, June 8, July 2, 1747, *Moravian Records,* 6/121/3/1, Nov. 20–21, 1747, 6/121/3/3, Apr. 26, May 31, June 1, 1749, 6/121/5/2; Carter, "Moravians at Shamokin," Northumberland Co. Hist. Soc., *Procs.,* IX (1937), 67.

23. Shamokin Diary, Apr. 20, May 10, 1748, *Moravian Records,* 6/121/4/2, Feb. 1, 23, Mar. 13, 1749, 6/121/5/1, Jan. 12, 1749, 6/121/4/3, May 9, 13–14, 27, 1749, 6/121/5/2; Travel Diary, Oct. 15, 1748, ibid., 30/225/2/1.

24. Shamokin Diary, Feb. 23, Mar. 20, 1748 (child crying; this quotation has been reversed for the sake of clarity), *Moravian Records,* 6/121/4/1, Feb. 24, Mar. 7, 12, 1749, 6/121/5/1, Mar. 5, 1750, 6/121/5/2; Travel Diary, Oct. 15, 1748, ibid., 30/225/2/1. See Peter C. Mancall, *Deadly Medicine: Indians and Alcohol in Early America* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1995).

than simply the numbers or the diversity, the tension or the occasional violence that knocked Shamokin akilter. It was the sheer unpredictability of encounters there. Missionaries, who most keenly felt cut loose from their cultural moorings, recorded it best. For no reason that Moravians could fathom, one visiting war party delighted in terrorizing them while another "behav'd with greatest Sevillity." One colonial trader entering their house was "as a fish outof [*sic*] water," another "was verry Exact in behaviour." One day Moravians pronounced a Delaware family "very beloved Indians" and "candidates for the realm of God"; the next, Tutelos crowding in on the German visitors "looked very satanic and barbaric."[25]

Perhaps Susquehanna Indians felt less disoriented. After all, they knew the place better than missionaries, knew it as home and rendezvous, way station and trading post. Nonetheless, they, too, found the Forks capricious. Tutelos versed in the ways of Virginia Christians were puzzled by the Moravian practice of holding services on Saturday; "They woonder'd," wrote one missionary, that "we kept two Sundays, never said they knew that the white people kep[t] more then one." Nor was that all of the confusion missionaries sowed. One moved into Shickellamy's house and immediately instructed Indian dancers there "to desist" with their "noise," then went out to round up some others for a sermon; the next adopted a low profile, convinced that "it [is] not . . . our Buisness to compell the People" and noting that in any case sermons were "a Suspicious Thing amongst them." Similarly, one colonial trader would store his goods with Indians; the next might steal their horses, guns, and pelts.[26]

Part of Shamokin's strange, unsettling aura was the way peoples there shed some of the assumptions structuring native and European societies. Consider the place of women. As a rule, in neither Indian nor colonial culture did women take a visible role in public affairs. In and around Shamokin, however, influential women were common. The French-Iroquois métis "Madam Montour," for one, was a commanding presence in the Susquehanna country for two decades after her arrival in the late 1720s. So was her niece, "French Margaret," occasionally a resident of Shamokin when not driving packhorses loaded with furs to colonial markets. Another local trader was John Harris's wife, Esther, who for at least one winter ran a trading post near the Forks. No less novel was a Mahican woman, a sometime interpreter at Shamokin. Work-

25. Shamokin Diary, Feb. 1, Mar. 16, Apr. 12–13, 1748, *Moravian Records,* 6/121/4/1; Travel Diary, Oct. 10–11, 1748, ibid., 30/225/2/1.

26. Shamokin Diary, Oct. 24, Nov. 3, 1745, *Moravian Records,* 28/217/12B/1, Jan. 9, 1748, 6/121/4/1; Brainerd, Diary, 29–30; *PA,* 1st Ser., I, 758; *MPCP,* V, 87–88.

ing with that anonymous Mahican as a translator was Anna Mack, who also visited sick Indians, establishing credentials as a healer, still another uncommon position for a woman in those parts.[27]

Natural calamity wreaked further havoc with efforts to bring Shamokin to some semblance of order. The town at the Forks was hardly alone in finding itself prey to occasional disasters of one sort or another. Diseases that struck in late summer (in 1747, a fever killed Sassoonan and the Moravian John Hagen as well as a dozen or so of Shickellamy's kin), droughts, late frosts, and high winds that blasted the corn crop, snows that stopped hunters, floods that stole canoes from the riverbank—these did not single out Shamokin.[28] Nor did hunger, a frequent visitor throughout the Susquehanna country in late spring and early summer. And yet these forces might have been particularly powerful at the Forks. For one thing, the site and its water supply were dangerous toward fall. For another, the town's popularity as a meeting ground and way station depleted local food supplies. In 1745, Martin and Anna Mack learned that other recent arrivals, the Montours, were "almost starved for Hunger," and Madam Montour's son Andrew exclaimed that "he had never liv[e]d so poorly in his Life." "It is uncomfortable for Indians there," observed a colonial visitor, "for if they plant they cannot enjoy it, so many strange Indians pass through the town whom they must feed."[29]

27. For assumptions among Susquehanna Indian women that public affairs were the preserve of men, see Brainerd to Pemberton, Nov. 5, 1744, in Edwards, *Life of Brainerd*, ed. Pettit, 579. For French Margaret, see John W. Jordan, ed., "Spangenberg's Notes of Travel to Onondaga in 1745," *PMHB*, II (1878), 429–430 (which identified her as Madam Montour's sister); [Bernhard A. Grube], "A Missionary's Tour to Shamokin and the West Branch of the Susquehanna, 1753," *PMHB*, XXXIX (1915), 442–444; Shamokin Diary, Sept. 19, 1745, *Moravian Records*, 28/217/12B/1; Esther Harris is mentioned in Jan. 6, Feb. 25, Mar. 1, 23, Apr. 2, 8, 11, 1748, 6/121/4/1. On Anna Mack, see Jordan, ed., "Cammerhoff's Narrative," *PMHB*, XXIX (1905), 172–174. For the Mahican woman working with Mack, see Travel Diary, Apr. 21, 1747, *Moravian Records*, 6/121/9/2. Anna Mack's work is noted in Carter, "Moravians at Shamokin," Northumberland Co. Hist. Soc., *Procs.*, IX (1937), 64; Shamokin Diary, Oct. 15, 17, 1745, *Moravian Records*, 28/217/12B/1.

28. Weiser to Logan, Sept. 16, 1736, Logan Papers, box 10, folder 62; *PA*, 1st Ser., I, 661–662; Edwards, *Life of Brainerd*, ed. Pettit, 425; *MPCP*, V, 136–138, VI, 443; "Account of the Famine," *PMHB*, XVI (1892), 430–431; Jordan, ed., "Cammerhoff's Narrative," *PMHB*, XXIX (1905), 169, 174; Grube, "Missionary's Tour," *PMHB*, XXXIX (1915), 441–442; Shamokin Diary, Nov. 18, Dec. 2, 4, 1747, *Moravian Records*, 6/121/3/3, May 31, Aug. 30, 1755, 6/121/7/1.

29. Edwards, *Life of Brainerd*, ed. Pettit, 425; Letter from Shamokin, Aug. 25, 1747, *Moravian Records*, 6/121/8/6; John W. Jordan, trans., Bishop Cammerhoff's Letters to Zinzendorf,

No wonder people from all walks of life and all corners of early America thought Shamokin anything but a nice place to visit, much less live. Madam Montour, though she had spent most of her long life in Indian country, was decidedly uneasy when she settled in Shamokin that fall of 1745. "The old Woman laments much, that the Indians here are still so cold and dead," Montour confided to a colonist one day, "and that they know of nothing but drinking and Dancing." That very night, as if on cue, some of those drunks rousted the old woman from her house and drove her into the dark.[30]

Darkness Explored: Fort Augusta

"I am plagued with these Devilish . . . Indians"

The same gravitational forces that made Shamokin the largest Indian town in the Susquehanna country—a deserted, fertile plain at the junction of two major waterways—in 1756 determined that Fort Augusta, built and manned by provincial soldiers, would be the keystone in the arch of frontier forts protecting Pennsylvania from Indian raids. According to frontier mythology, this abrupt shift from Indian country to white outpost signals the victory of order over chaos, civilization over savagery. Shamokin, archetypal of wilderness, also seems to follow the script here, with its metamorphosis into a provincial fort and then a white settlement, a script that has Indians—and those advance guards of the civilizers, fur traders and Christian missionaries—disappear before the superior numbers, superior virtue, "superior genius of the Europeans."[31]

The surviving evidence of the fort certainly makes it look that way. Indeed, the colonial impulse to impose its own version of order on the region's land and peoples was evident before the first Pennsylvania troops glimpsed Shamokin's ashes. Colonel William Clapham, commander of the regiment heading up the Susquehanna in the summer of 1756, designed a carefully calibrated,

1747–1749, Letter VIII, Sept. 27–30, 1747, 89–90, HSP; Edward Shippen to Joseph Shippen, Aug. 1, 1756, Weiser to Burd, Apr. 21, 1757, Shippen Family Papers, II; Shamokin Diary, Oct. 17, Nov. 3, 1745, *Moravian Records*, 28/217/12B/1, June 9, 1747, 6/121/3/1, Apr. 11, 20, 1749, 6/121/5/2; Grube, "Missionary's Tour," *PMHB*, XXXIX (1915), 444.

30. Shamokin Diary, Sept. 17, 1745, *Moravian Records*, 28/217/12B/1.

31. J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer; and, Sketches of Eighteenth-Century America*, ed. Albert Stone (New York, 1981), 122.

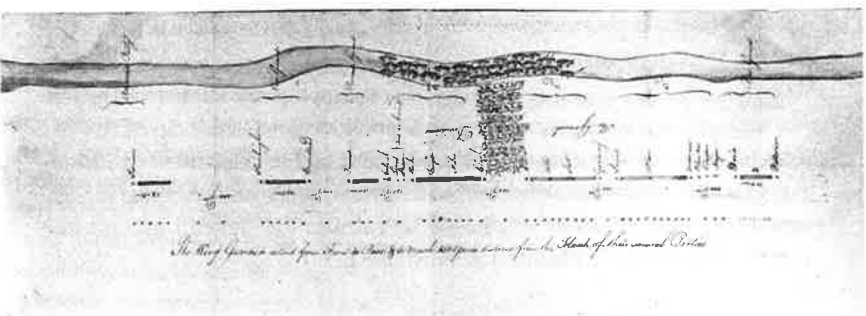


FIGURE 2

The Army's Line of March, 1756. *Captain Joseph Shippen described the army's orderly progress upriver: "We proceeded along with great regularity and caution, having a well concerted line of march, such as would prevent us from being surprized or surrounded. The whole body extended in length from front to rear a mile and a half and consisted of an advanced party, a van guard of 25 men, the provosts guard, the main body and a rear guard, each party from the other at the distance of 100, and 200 yds. and every man five yards from another marching always in one Indian file, each party having its own Wing Guards 150 yds. distance on the right or left flank as we marched on the East or West side of the River. The Fleet of Battoes always under the escort of the main body" ("Military Letters of Captain Joseph Shippen of the Provincial Service, 1756–1758,"* Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, *XXXVI [1912], 388). Courtesy, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia*

"well concerted line of march" that, "with great regularity and caution," arranged troops on shore and supply bateaux on the river (see Figure 2). On reaching the Forks, the soldiers proceeded to build a square structure that, in its very size and shape, heralded the dawn of a new day (see Figure 3). As an added precaution, Clapham had the trees within half a mile of the stronghold cut down, then drew up modes of reconnoitering the perimeter "round the Edge of the Woods" (see Figure 4). Like his sketch, the piles of paper slips—noting each day's watch, password, and the weapons available—testifies to the newcomers' obsession with order.[32]

That obsession aspired to reach beyond the trees and troops to include everyone in the vicinity. Colonial women, too, were to be subdued. No more were they interpreters or traders, no more healers. Those at the garrison,

32. "Military Letters of Captain Joseph Shippen of the Provincial Service, 1756–1758," *PMHB,* XXXVI (1912), 388; Journal by Capt. Joseph Shippen at Fort Augusta, Shamokin, 1757–1758, Jan. 23, 1758, Small Books, no. 6, Shippen Family Papers, HSP (hereafter cited as Shippen Journal [1757–1758]); Morning and Evening Reports of the Garrison at Fort Augusta, Miscellaneous Items, Burd-Shippen Papers, APS.

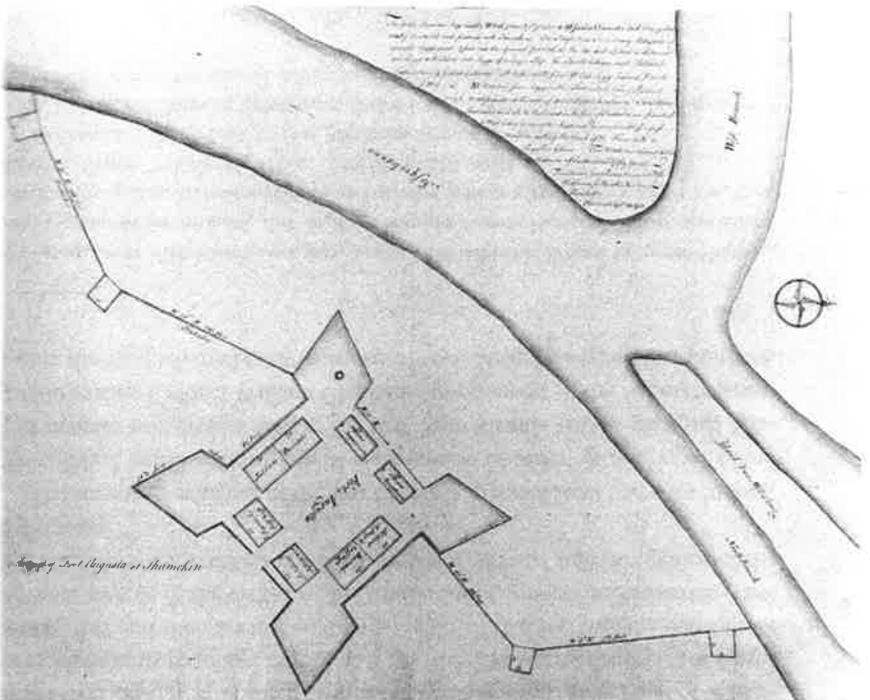
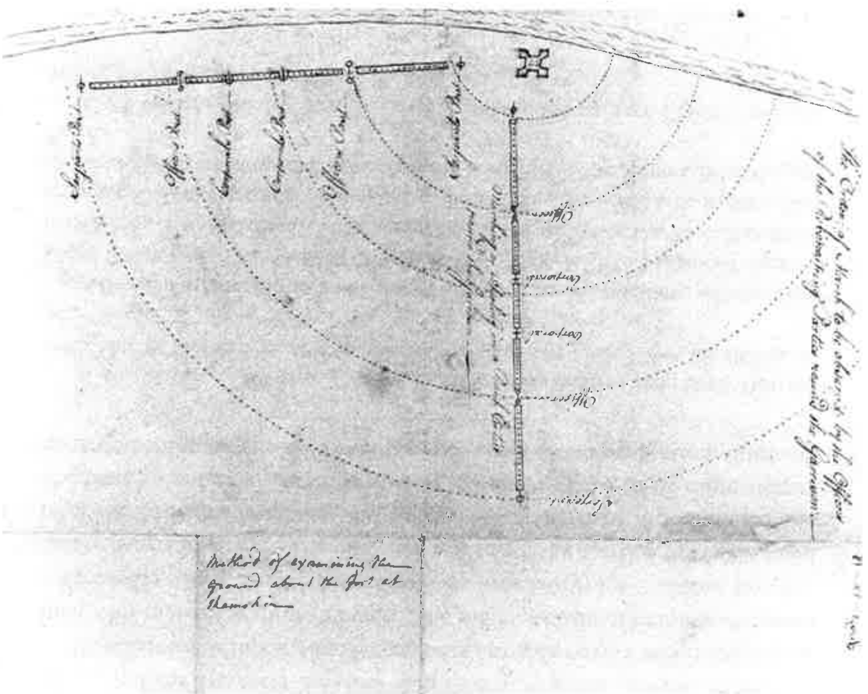


FIGURE 3

Plan of Fort Augusta. *The plan shows stockade lines running to blockhouses near the river and other features announcing a new order at the Forks. Courtesy, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia*

mostly soldiers' wives, were to perform the traditional camp tasks of washing, mending, and cooking for the army. Last but by no means least, the extant documents reveal how the new masters of the Forks sought to control Indians. Instead of the haphazard, unpredictable contacts of an earlier day, encounters now would follow prescribed—and circumscribed—forms, preserved for posterity by massive account books that, line by line, recorded every transaction with natives.

In fact, however, all of these maps and diagrams, straight lines and ruled pages are misleading. Life at the fort was messier than the tidy paper trail suggests. The stronghold, although more imposing than Shamokin's buildings, proved no more immune to regnant forces of nature. Late summer remained a perilous time, carrying off soldiers as it once had done John Hagen, Sassoonan, and Shickellamy's kin. Torrential rains and blinding snowstorms still



"The Order of March to be observ'd by the Officers of the Reconaitring Parties round the Garrison." *Describing the reconnaissance, Joseph Shippen wrote: "Every Morning before Sun-rise a Party of 50 Men goes out to reconnoitre the Ground for a mile and a half round the Fort, they take different Routs every time and march at the Distance of 6 or 7 Yards apart and all a Breast in one rank entire, so as to sweep a large space of Ground" ("Military Letters of Captain Joseph Shippen of the Provincial Service, 1756–1758,"* Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, *XXXVI [1912], 397). Courtesy, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia*

struck, slowing, stopping, even wrecking work on the edifice. "The Impetuosity" of a creek destroyed a bridge, and on the Susquehanna itself ice dams or floes in winter, like dry spells in summer, could ground bateaux bringing supplies—and the trappings of civilization—to what one homesick Pennsylvania officer called "this remote part of the World."[33]

The new tenants of the Forks also found that they could no more control

33. Hunter, *Forts*, 534; *PA*, 2d Ser., II, 648; "Military Letters of Shippen," *PMHB*, XXXVI (1912), 404–408 (see also 410).

the human traffic there than they could quiet the winter wind roaring down the West Branch. A sentry peering over Augusta's walls was likely to see all manner of Pennsylvania colonists go by, from a man searching for loved ones taken prisoner by Indians to parties hunting good "Land up the Susquehanna, . . . where some of them purposes to goe and settle." Shifting his gaze to the site just north of his post, that same sentry would spy thirty, or fifty, or more Indians from all over—Conestogas and Conoys, Delawares and "Delaware Negroes," Iroquois and Saponis—camping out there as they went about their usual round of activities. A war dance, a funeral "in the Indian Manner at the Indian Burying Ground," the "usual Chorus" of drunken song, traders crowding into the provincial trading post, ambassadors bearing wampum belts and tobacco pipes—all of these scenes and more still played on the local stage, as they had in Shamokin's day. As late as May 1765, a provincial officer remarked that Indians still were "continually coming and going."[34]

But it was less unforgiving nature or the sheer number of transients than the vagaries of humanity that defied order at the fort. Pennsylvania women, for example, undermined those bent on plotting and pursuing a strict regimen beside the Susquehanna. Like the dream of order, the nightmare of disorder appeared before the army made it to the Forks. En route upriver in July 1756, the regiment's chaplain, Charles Beatty, extracted a promise from Colonel Clapham "to leave the women behind ['especially those of bad character']." "Accordingly," Beatty wrote happily, "they were all ordered to be paraded" so that the unsavory could be weeded out. "But when this came to be done," the disappointed clergyman went on, "one of the officers pleaded for one, and another for another, saying that they could wash, etc., so that few were left of a bad character, and [even] these would not stay but followed that night, and kept with us."[35]

The independent streak continued at Augusta, where women did wash and mend clothes—then, much to the commander's dismay, hung them out to dry

34. Burd to T. Floyd, Military Letterbook of James Burd, 36, Shippen Family Papers; "An Account of the Captivity of Richard Bard . . . ," in Archibald Loudon, *A Selection of Some of the Most Interesting Narratives, of Outrages, Committed by the Indians, in Their Wars with the White People* . . . , 2 vols. (Carlisle, Pa., 1808–1811), II, 73; *PA*, 1st Ser., IV, 218. For Indians, see Shippen Journal (1757–1758), esp. Jan. 18, Feb. 18, Mar. 10, 1758; Hugh Mercer to Burd, Apr. 1, 1760, Graydon to Burd, July 20, 1761, July 12, 1762, Shippen Family Papers, V.

35. Charles Beatty, "Journal Kept in 1756," in William Henry Egle, *History of the Counties of Dauphin and Lebanon in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania: Biographical and Genealogical* (Philadelphia, 1883), 55.

on the pickets and stockades. Nor were camp followers shy about advancing their own interests. In February 1758, several complained to the commander that sharing their husbands' rations invited starvation and soon started to get their own provisions.[36]

Indian women around Augusta also proved to have minds—and tongues—of their own. If the fort's architects intended to limit contacts solely to Indian men, they were to be disappointed. Native women were frequent customers in the provincial store, trading on their own account and probing for ways around rules against selling liquor. Another woman protested those illicit sales when her son got drunk, quarreled with the provincial storekeeper, and was hauled into the fort. Right behind came his mother, "very much enraged, asking what Right the White People had to tie her Son, Since they were the very people who Sold them the Rum, he was then Drunk with."[37]

Such open confrontations were rare, but every commander at Augusta found Indians—men and women—stubbornly resistant to military discipline. They drank. They complained about (and at least once tried to kill) the storekeeper. They insisted on toasts and formal farewells. "I expect we shall have our own Troubles with them," glumly predicted an officer contemplating the imminent arrival of one native delegation. "I am plagued with these Devilish . . . Indians that every now and then Interrup[t]s me," another moaned.[38]

Troublesome as Indians and Pennsylvania women were, it was Pennsylvania men who caused the most difficulty. The military chain of command created only the illusion of control. In fact, soldiers were hardly less fractious than Indian villagers had been. The officers feuded with the storekeeper (who spied on them through a peephole) and derided ragtag bands of "fickleminded disobedient Volunteer[s]" heading upriver to hunt Indians. Those same officers quarreled among themselves over pay, precedence, and promotion, throwing

36. Fort Augusta, Quartermaster's Ledger, APS; James Burd, Orderly Book, Fort Augusta, Mar. 12, May 10, 1757, APS; Shippen Journal (1757–1758), Feb. 6, 1758. See also *PA*, 2d Ser., VII, 479.

37. Graydon to Burd, July 12, 1762, Shippen Family Papers, V. For trading, see Shamokin, Ledger B, June 2–Dec. 15, 1759, Gratz Collection, case 17, no. 6, HSP; Fort Augusta, Ledgers A, B, 1762–1763, Gratz Collection, case 17, no. 20; Indian Commissioners Day Book, Shamokin, 1759–1760, ibid., case 17, compartment 5, no. 31; Indian Commissioners Day Book, Shamokin, 1760–1761, ibid., compartment 6; James Irvine to Burd, July 13, 1762, Letters, Burd-Shippen Papers.

38. *PA*, 2d Ser., VII, 444; Burd to Edward Shippen, July 25, 1757, Graydon to Burd, Apr. 23, 1762, Shippen Family Papers, III, V.

one another in the guardhouse and bombarding Philadelphia with charges and countercharges.[39]

On one thing, however, all officers agreed: the troops they commanded were so different as to be almost another order of being. In 1758, Captain Peter Bard wrote that one recent batch of recruits beggared belief. "I think they exceed anything of men-kind I ever saw," the astonished and amused Bard remarked after reviewing the troops that July. "They look more like a detachment from the dead than the living. I would have given five pounds to have had Hogarth here when they were drawn up on parade," he scoffed to Colonel James Burd, "to have taken them off that I might have had the pleasure of giving you a view of them." Even those officers who were less contemptuous still considered common soldiers "working people" more inclined to "grumbel," curse, and rebel than build sturdy palisades or mount a proper patrol. At best, the troops were an endless source of trouble who drank rum they were assigned to guard and left their posts to bathe a toothache in the river or answer the call of nature in the bushes.[40]

39. Graydon to Burd, Oct. 12, 1763, Shippen Family Papers, VI. For battles with the storekeeper, see Nathaniel Holland to Gov. Denny, Feb. 24, 1759, Recs. Prov. Ccl., Exec. Corr., B9/2094; Graydon to James Hamilton, Nov. 13, 1761, and Burd(?) to Hamilton(?), Feb. 5, 1762, Shippen Family Papers, V; James Irvine to "Gentlemen," July 13, 1762, Affidavit of Dennis McCormick, July 17, 1762, Burd-Shippen Papers. For the peephole, see *PA*, 1st Ser., IV, 88. Officers' squabbles are in Hunter, *Forts*, 514–516; *PA*, 2d Ser., II, 700–701, 704–708; Thomas Balch, ed., *Letters and Papers Relating Chiefly to the Provincial History of Pennsylvania; with Some Notices of the Writers* (Philadelphia, 1855), 64–65; Lt. Gov. Robert Hunter Morris to ?, [August 1756], Gratz Coll., case 15, box 18; Lt. Daniel Clark to Richard Peters, Nov. 3, 1756, Recs. Prov. Ccl., Exec. Corr., B7/1316; Edward Shippen to Burd, Mar. 26, 1757, Shippen Family Papers, II; "Military Letters of Shippen," *PMHB*, XXXVI (1912), 375–376, 391–394, 399–402, 407, 422.

40. Balch, ed., *Letters and Papers*, 125; Bard to Governor, Aug. 8, 1756, Gratz Coll., case 15, box 18. For desertions and mutinies, see Hunter, *Forts*, 502, 531, 535; Johnston to Hamilton, Oct. 16, 1760, Graydon to Burd, June 5, 1764, Shippen Family Papers, V, VII; *PA*, 2d Ser., II, 659–661, 666, 676–677, 692, 694, 696–697, 699, VII, 442; "Military Letters of Shippen," *PMHB*, XXXVI (1912), 377, 430, 432, 433, 435–437. Even as he complained of German recruits as "a parcel of Mutinous Dutch Rascals" (ibid., 432), Shippen sometimes acknowledged that the troops had reason—a lack of clothing, late pay—to protest (386, 448–449). See also Beatty, "Journal," in Egle, *Dauphin*, 54–55; Christian Busse to Weiser, Oct. 23, Nov. 13, 1756, Correspondence, Conrad Weiser Papers, I, 89–90, HSP. The number and quality of troops fluctuated considerably over the years, from as low as 30 to as high as 400, and from unseasoned and unwilling to "exceeding good Men" ("Military Letters of Shippen," *PMHB*, XXXVI [1912], 413; Hunter, *Forts*, 535). For misbehavior, see Court Martials,

The natural tendency in wartime to let the imagination run wild further wrecked colonial plans for a coherent new community at the Forks. The army's march upriver in the summer of 1756 brought a taste of what was in store. We had "many alarms, reports, and detentions," noted one anxious colonist en route, because there were "many traces of the enemy as near at hand." Scouts sent ahead to reconnoiter scampered back, having "imagined they were discovered and surrounded by the Indians." On the march itself, a little target practice by the "advance guard" put "the whole regiment . . . under arms, . . . expecting to engage every minute" with some unseen foe. On the river, meanwhile, jittery bateaux men poling provisions upstream took a flock of cranes standing on shore for an enemy war party.[41]

Arrival at the Forks did little to calm frayed nerves. Soon after the army reached its objective and began digging in, the night watch made a falling tree out to be gunshots and returned fire with cannon in the direction of the offending timber. Almost a year later, now with the fort fully in place to protect them, sentries were still so jumpy that they took "a large Rock tumbled off the Mountain into the River" for an enemy barrage.[42]

If these new denizens of the Susquehanna Forks could not distinguish Indians from birds or a falling tree from gunfire, they were not likely to be able to tell which natives were friendly and which were not. It is hard to blame colonial soldiers, however; some Indians did indeed disguise their hatred of Pennsylvanians behind a mask of friendship, winning flattery and gifts from the province, then turning on its people. One victim of the ruse met his end just downstream from Fort Augusta: scalped, his skull split open, "his Gun shattered in pieces," the man had "one of the provincial Tomhawks [presents given Indians at treaty councils] stick[in]g in his private parts" as a sort of calling card. Another colonist picked off in a firefight near the fort was, survivors of the ambush insisted, killed by "friendly" Indians who had just camped within sight of the outpost on their way home from a peace treaty in the frontier town of Lancaster.[43]

Nov. 24, 1763, Shippen Family Papers, VI; Joseph Shippen to the Officer of the Guard, Dec. 9, 1756, Misc. Items, Burd-Shippen Papers (and James Burd Commitment Order for Sgt. John McCew, n.d., ibid.); *PA*, 2d Ser., II, 626–628.

41. Beatty, "Journal," in Egle, *Dauphin*, 54–55; Journal of Joseph Shippen, Building of Fort Augusta, 1756, July 2, 1756, Small Books, no. 4, Shippen Family Papers (hereafter cited as Shippen Journal [1756]).

42. Shippen Journal (1756), July 20, 1756; *PA*, 2d Ser., II, 665.

43. Shippen Journal (1756), Aug. 23, 1756; *PA*, 2d Ser., II, 681–683.

Confusion reigned in the Susquehanna country not only because it was hard to distinguish Indian friends from foes; it was hard even to tell Indian from white. In July 1756, "one Baskins" learned this while canoeing on the Susquehanna. "He saw 5 Ind[ia]ns," the colonist insisted; "they spoke Delaware to him and he answ[ere]d them." It turned out that these were, not enemy warriors, but provincial scouts "dressed in Indian habit"; poor Baskins was neither the first nor the last to be fooled. European colonists on the Susquehanna frontier did more than wear Indian clothes and speak to each other in Delaware; they also painted or blacked their faces and went scouting with "orders to proceed regularly in an Ind[ia]n File etc. as usual." Indians, too, were adept at disguise, as when "a Hallooing in the Forks of the River[,] seemingly the call of an English Man," turned out to be the shout of a Delaware. No wonder Fort Augusta seemed as full of darkness and noise as Shamokin had been.[44]

Darkness at Bay

"A bless'd singing Hour in English, Dutch and Indian"

It is easy, from our perch, to see why the social currents on this part of the frontier ran hard toward confusion and chaos. Who can forget Anna and Martin Mack cowering in that hut as a storm of Indians broke over them or Joseph Powell assaulted by that cacophony of voices? A panicked Conrad Weiser searching the faces of those Iroquois approaching shore or Baskins peering no less anxiously at the figures he saw on that shore? These are powerful images, to be sure. But as the conversation in Delaware that Baskins had with some other Pennsylvanians suggests, Shamokin resists simplicity. Looked at from another angle, one can see that the peoples meeting there were also developing a shared language, a mutually comprehensible set of symbols and ways that rendered life at the Forks something more than the tumult the Macks and others made it out to be.

One way for us to fix that different angle of vision is to imagine a trip to Shamokin in, say, the summer or fall of 1748. Unless you came from Iroquoia and could float downriver, you would find just getting there to be something of an ordeal. Paddling upstream from John Harris's was no easy task: not only was the current against you, but, when the Susquehanna was low, the boulders in its bed lay exposed, making a canoe trip akin to wending through "a town

44. "Batteaux," n.d. [May–July 1756?], Shippen Family Papers, II; Shippen Journal (1756), July 4, 23, 1756; Shippen Journal (1757–1758), Mar. 24, 1758; Beatty, "Journal," in Egle, *Dauphin*, 55.

filled with houses." Going overland was no easier, for the hills were so steep that some riders formed a terrified human chain, each holding onto the coat of the one before, and some who started across on foot ended up crawling over on hands and knees.[45]

While picking your way through the river's rocks or up the mountain trails, you would begin to come upon Shamokin's people well before reaching the village itself. Here on the path are Indian women bound for some colonial settlement to buy liquor and Moravians heading the opposite way with beef from Bethlehem; there are other Moravians, and other Indians, en route from Weiser's farm or Harris's store with sacks of grain. Still other natives would be hauling, not grain, but the blacksmith's tools upriver to Shamokin. Farther along you might see a party of Tutelos and Cayugas heading out to trade or hunt and another band—Delawares and Iroquois, perhaps, or an Oneida war captain at the head of Shawnees and Tutelos—out to snatch scalps or prisoners from some remote Indian tribe.[46]

As you approached Shamokin itself from the south, you would first see the fences enclosing fields planted by Moravians and Shickellamy's family. One reason for the enclosures would also be obvious: horses were by now common in Shamokin. Indeed, two of Shickellamy's had helped haul rocks from the river and logs from the woods to build the Moravian house. That house, too, would now be in sight: eighteen feet by thirty feet, one and one-half stories high, the shingled structure stood a mere twelve paces from Shickellamy's, another log dwelling seventeen feet by forty-nine feet, built for him by colonists several years ago.[47]

45. Shamokin Diary, July 31, 1747, *Moravian Records,* 6/121/3/1, Nov. 4, 1745, 28/217/12B/1; "Zinzendorf's Narrative," in Reichel, ed., *Memorials,* I, 84–85.

46. Carter, "Moravians at Shamokin," Northumberland Co. Hist. Soc., *Procs.,* IX (1937), 67; Jordan, ed., "Spangenberg's Notes of Travel," *PMHB,* II (1878), 427–428; Jordan, ed., "Cammerhoff's Narrative," *PMHB,* XXIX (1905), 164, 168; "Account of the Famine," *PMHB,* XVI (1892), 430, 432; Shamokin Diary, Oct. 20, 27, 1747, *Moravian Records,* 6/121/3/3, Apr. 3, 1748, 6/121/4/1, Feb. 3, 1749, 6/121/5/1, May 7, Aug. 5, 1755, 6/121/7/1; *PA,* 1st Ser., I, 662, 758, II, 23; Jordan, trans., Cammerhoff's Letters, VI, Aug. 12, 1747, 60; Grube, "Missionary's Tour," *PMHB,* XXXIX (1915), 442.

47. Jordan, trans., Cammerhoff's Letters, V, June 29, 1747, 52, VI, Aug. 12, 1747, 60–61; Shamokin Diary, June 3, July 1, 1747, *Moravian Records,* 6/121/3/1, Mar. 9, 25, 1748, 6/121/4/1; Travel Diary, Oct. 13, 1748, ibid., 30/225/2/1; Jordan, ed., "Cammerhoff's Narrative," *PMHB,* XXIX (1905), 177; Carter, "Moravians at Shamokin," Northumberland Co. Hist. Soc., *Procs.,* IX (1937), 66–67. For Moravian house building, see Shamokin Diary, May–July 1747, *Moravian Records,* 6/121/3/1, Mar. 21–22, 1748, 6/121/4/1. The missionaries replaced this dwelling with one in another location during the spring of 1753 (6/121/6/1). For Shickellamy's house, see *PA,* 1st Ser., I, 661. The Oneida also had a summerhouse and a storehouse, which might have been the same building.

While you took in these sights, perhaps your ears would pick up the sound of Moravians at "a bless'd singing Hour in English, Dutch [German] and Indian" or Delawares at a feast who "Sing *Hee* 3 Times, w'ch they drill'd out very long."[48] Audible, too, would be the clang and clatter of the blacksmith at work along with the murmurs of Indian hunters and colonial traders waiting to have a horse shod, a hatchet made, or a gun fixed.

Which of these people stopped what they were doing to welcome you depended on who you were. Weiser or Count Zinzendorf or an Iroquois headman got elaborate greetings and handshakes; most visitors probably did not. Whether your arrival was formal or casual, there was the matter of where to stay. The town had designated "visitors' houses," but—again, depending upon who you were—Shickellamy, the Moravians, or a colonial trader and his Indian wife might offer you a bed.[49]

Once settled into your lodging, you can head out to see the sights. You eavesdrop as a Moravian answering to Anouhseráckeri or Ganachragéjat talks to an Indian named John Petty or John Watson in Delaware, Iroquois, English, or German. You drop by the Moravians' to watch the missionary men bleed an ailing Delaware or cut Shickellamy's hair while the women make shirts for the Indians. Out front, meanwhile, another German woman pounds corn at the stump mortar before the Oneida's house and, just beyond, an African American sent from Bethlehem splits rails to fence the headman's field.[50]

Like the Moravians, you then slip into the stream of visitors, stopping at houses where the woman is Mahican and her husband Shawnee, or Shawnee and Cayuga, or Tutelo and Oneida. Like Moravians, too, and like an Indian

48. Shamokin Diary, Sept. 29, Oct. 24, 1745, *Moravian Records,* 28/217/12B/1, Apr. 13, 1748, 6/121/4/1.

49. Jordan, ed., "Cammerhoff's Narrative," *PMHB,* XXIX (1905), 177; Bartram, *Observations,* 15.

50. List of Indian Names, *Moravian Records,* 6/121/10/1; *PA,* 1st Ser., IV, 91; Shamokin Diary, July 11, 25, Aug. 1, 1747, *Moravian Records,* 6/121/3/1, Nov. 9, 1747, 6/121/3/3, Jan. 18, Mar. 27, 1748, 6/121/4/1, May 1, 1748, 6/121/4/2; Jordan, ed., "Spangenberg's Notes of Travel," *PMHB,* II (1878), 429–430; *MPCP,* V, 136–137; Jordan, trans., Cammerhoff's Letters, XIII, May 14–26, 1748, 92–93.

couple headed off with a bag of corn loaves, you cross to the island to drop in on people there. Back on the south bank there is a council to attend, where Delawares, Iroquois, and perhaps some Tutelos and Shawnees gather, settle themselves on bearskins, light a pipe, and "put every thing in order." Leaving that gathering, you visit the grave of John Hagen, near Sassoonan's along the shore. Late in the day there is another burial, this time for one of Shickellamy's grandchildren. Painted, dressed in a shirt Moravian women sewed and placed in a coffin Moravian men built, the little girl goes to the next world well stocked with necessities: a blanket to keep her warm, moccasins (along with leather, needle, and thread to make new ones), flint, steel, and tinder to build a fire, with a kettle to hang above it, and, to fill the pot, some bear meat and Indian corn.[51]

Our visit to Shamokin is, admittedly, idealized: the weather is good, the food is plentiful, the liquor is not. But it is no fabrication. Rather, it suggests some of the ways disparate peoples stitched together the fabric of a shared life. The marriages, hunts, councils, and war parties that crossed tribal lines, the linguistic and musical confluences, the Moravian women at Shickellamy's mortar, the Iroquois child in a shirt and a box made by German hands—all of these, amid the din made by so many different peoples, whisper possibilities of peace and harmony.

Returning to the same spot a decade later, you would find that a brutal frontier war had not altogether torn apart the fabric of understanding and common experience. On the river, you see Indians approaching Fort Augusta with a British flag in the bow of their canoe, firing two rounds in greeting and being answered by three huzzas from the garrison. Meanwhile, other natives, departing, are decked out in English clothes and, at their request, get not only those three cheers but also a farewell cannon salute. On shore, Pennsylvania soldiers patch the craft of other Indian visitors, just as the smithy repaired their tools and weapons.[52] Closer to the fort stands the provincial Indian store; business is brisk, with traders of many tribes drawn there to swap peltry or sell venison to the troops.[53]

51. *MPCP*, IV, 684; Shamokin Diary, Oct. 19, 1745, *Moravian Records*, 28/217/12B/1, Nov. 23, 1747, 6/121/3/3; Weiser to ?, Jan. 24, 1745/6, DuSimitiere Papers, 966.F.24. For Hagen's grave, see Travel Diary, Oct. 13, 1748, *Moravian Records*, 30/225/2/1; Jordan, ed., "Cammerhoff's Narrative," *PMHB*, XXIX (1905), 172–174; Jordan, trans., Cammerhoff's Letters, VIII, Sept. 27–30, 1747, 89, IX, Nov. 17, 1747, 105.

52. *PA*, 2d Ser., II, 661–662, 665, 678; Milita[r]y Letterbook of James Burd, 1756–1758, 41, Shippen Family Papers; "An Account of Sundrys . . . Delivered to (Andrew) a Dalaware Indian," Dec. 17, 1757, Recs. Prov. Ccl., Exec. Corr., B8/1703; Shippen Journal (1757–1758), Feb. 27–28, Mar. 16, 1758.

These scenes suggest the kinds of everyday contacts that were part of Augusta life, especially when soldiers and their families (along with other families drawn there to serve the garrison) built houses outside the walls and when the gate itself apparently stayed open much of the time. Walking through that gate, you might come upon a council between Indians and colonists, talks where the smoke of a calumet pipe and the rattle of wampum belts—now, sometimes, with the Pennsylvania commander's initials woven into them—mixed with the rustle of paper passports or the scratch of a pen recording the speeches. Or you might see Toshetaquah (Will Sock) working with some curious colonist on a Conestoga-English vocabulary. Turn around and a Delaware is lending an officer his portmanteau while another arranges to stable his horse at the fort.[54]

Perhaps most striking of all the consonances there would be the garrison's penchant for going native. Following the lead of army scouts, those "Woodsmen" routinely clad and painted in Indian fashion already, colonists aimed more generally to "train up Officers and Men to fight the Indians in their own Way." This scheme, "to make Indians of part of our provincial soldiers," was popular among European colonial strategists on the Pennsylvania front. The troops "are very willing," wrote one officer. He might have added that, after a generation of contact in the Susquehanna country—contact that continued at Fort Augusta—those troops were also very able.[55]

53. *PA*, 8th Ser., VI, 4630; Fort Augusta, Ledgers A–B, Gratz Coll., case 17, no. 20; "Invoice of Four Bundles of Peltry and Furs," Apr. 7, 1763, ibid., case 14, box 10; Nathaniel Holland to Israel Pemberton, Dec. 18, 1758, Feb. 25, 1759, Jan. 1, Oct. 16, 1760, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Indian Committee Records, Friendly Association for Regaining and Preserving Peace with the Indians by Pacific Measures, I, 323, 469, III, 407, IV, 43, Quaker Collection, Haverford College Library (hereafter cited as Indian Committee Recs.); Hamilton to Graydon, Oct. 10, 1761, Graydon to Hamilton, Nov. 13, 1761, Burd(?) to Hamilton(?), Feb. 5, 1762, Shippen Family Papers, V.

54. *PA*, 1st Ser., IV, 627–628, 2d Ser., II, 662–663, 679–680, VII, 459; Hunter to Burd, June 7, 1763, Shippen Family Papers, VI; Shippen Journal (1756), July 28, 1756; Shippen Journal (1757–1758), Feb. 15, 1758; Holland to Pemberton, May 6, Aug. 7, 1760, Indian Committee Recs., III, 111, 503; "Fort Augusta, 25th January 1757, a Vocabulary in the Mingo Tongue Taken from the Mouth of William Sock a Canistogo Indian," APS; *MPCP*, VIII, 489–490.

55. Peters to Proprietaries, Apr. 30, 1756, Richard Peters, Letters to the Proprietaries, 1755–1757, 35, Gratz Coll. For the use of "Woodsmen" at the fort, see "Military Letters of Joseph Shippen," *PMHB*, XXXVI (1912), 421. See also S. K. Stevens et al., eds., *The Papers of Henry Bouquet* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1951–), II, 124 (see also 51, 61, 133; *PA*, 1st Ser., III, 213, 224).

Darkness Revealed: The Antebellum Era

"The Shadow may be often taken for the reality"

The British commander in Pennsylvania, General John Forbes, endorsed one plan to replace some troops' "coats and breeches" with "moccasins and blankets," then to "cut off their hair and daub them with paint and intermingle them with the real Indians." "As you justly observe," he wrote in a letter to a subordinate, this might trick the enemy into thinking that Britain's Indian auxiliaries were many, for "the Shadow may be often taken for the reality."[56]

Forbes might have been talking about Shamokin and the Susquehanna country, where shadows abounded. One shadow was the dissonance that the Macks and others found, which had its roots in the motley array of peoples collected there. Another was the harmony evident in our imaginary trips to the place, harmony grounded in cultural convergence and mutual interest. There is substance—"reality"—in both of these, of course: Shamokin and Fort Augusta *were* bewildering, there *was* common ground there. But it would be wrong to take either as the whole story. Behind the painted faces were colonists, not "real Indians," and neither colonist nor Indian ever forgot it. So it was at the Forks: beneath the general hubbub of folk from all over, beneath the surface of the social landscape of Indian town and then of provincial fort, lay a fault line with native Americans on one side, European colonists on the other.[57]

To be sure, the boundary between Indian immigrants and their European counterparts was blurred, and, in an effort to get along, leaders on both sides tried further to erase it. Time and again, Pennsylvania officials told Shamokin headmen that "we and you are as one People," and those Indians agreed that they and the colonists had "one heart, not divided into halves, but intirely the same without any Distinction." Powerful metaphors did not one people make, however, no matter how often invoked. Another visit to the Susquehanna Forks reveals the obdurate divisions that structured life in that place, the darkness lurking there, making all the talk of being one people just that: only talk.[58]

56. Stevens et al., eds., *Papers of Bouquet,* II, 124, 136.

57. For the limits to colonial borrowing of Indian ways, see James Axtell, "The Indian Impact on English Colonial Culture," in Axtell, *The European and the Indian: Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America* (New York, 1981), 274–275, 284–303. This is not to suggest that the fault line between Indians and colonists was identical to a geological fault line. Rather, it was as much a product of human action and thought as was the confusion and commonality.

58. *MPCP,* III, 336, IV, 308.

The cultural divide became most apparent once war came in 1755, but it was always present. Sometimes a frontier crisis sent tremors through the Susquehanna country that exposed it. In 1728, a rash of rumors about Indian attacks on the province prompted some Pennsylvania "borderers" to assume that "they might lawfully Kill any Indian whom they could find," as if all natives were the same. Some fifteen years later, a Susquehanna Shawnee, harboring a similar set of assumptions, again placed all Indians on one side of a line, Europeans on the other. When word reached a town on the West Branch in January 1743 that some Virginians had ambushed an Iroquois war party, a Pennsylvania trader there, fearing for his goods (and his life), tried to argue that "the Disorders that have happen'd are no ways owing to the People of Pennsylvania." "We . . . are not answerable for what the People of another Province may imprudently do." The colonist was unconvincing. In reply, "one of the Shawna's observed that the white People are all of one colour and as one Body, and in Case of Warr would Assist one another."[59]

Such assumptions about difference contained a deeper, more frightening belief about the savagery of those on the far side. When Shamokin Delawares killed a Pennsylvania trader named John Armstrong early in 1744, the trader's kinfolk and friends—experienced Indian hands, all—were convinced that they could find only the shoulder bone of the corpse because the murderers had devoured the rest. Soon thereafter, Delawares at Shamokin were persuaded to hand over the culprits when word came that the only other choice was to "separate [the suspects'] Heads from their Bodies . . . and carry them to Alexander [Armstrong, the victim's brother,] to roast and eat them, . . . as he wants to eat Indians." Delawares dining on John Armstrong's remains was about as unlikely a repast as the grieving brother cooking some native heads. But each, in a time of crisis, was ready to believe the worst about the other.[60]

Though killings laid bare the chasm between Indian and European, traces of that gulf can be found throughout the antebellum history of the Susquehanna Forks. They lie, for example, in widespread native suspicion of colonists. The missionary David Brainerd, who one day met up with a band of Susquehanna Indians while he was en route to the Forks, discovered that some "suspected that I had some ill design upon them, and [they] urged that the white people had abused them and taken their lands from them, and therefore they had no reason to think that they were now concerned for their happiness." Although Brainerd insisted that most Indians in this group were friendlier, his

59. *MPCP,* III, 304, IV, 631–633; *PA,* 1st Ser., I, 217.

60. *PA,* 1st Ser., I, 643; *MPCP,* IV, 685.

welcome at Shamokin suggests otherwise. "We are Indians, and don't wish to be transformed into white men," Shickellamy answered when pressed to let the missionary live there. "The English are our Brethren, but we never promised to become what they are. As little as we desire the preacher to become Indian, so little ought he to desire the Indians to become preachers. He should *not* build a house here; they don't want one." Nothing else in Brainerd's scouting trip made him any more optimistic about the prospect of sowing seeds of the true religion in Susquehanna soil. "These poor heathens," he reported on his return, "are extremely attached to the customs, traditions, and fabulous notions of their fathers." "Twas not, [they say,] the same God made them who made the white people, but another who commanded them to live by hunting, etc., and not conform to the customs of the white people."[61]

That very fall, to the Moravians' delight, Shickellamy changed his mind about missionaries. Impressed by the Macks' willingness to help with the harvest, taken with their quiet, indirect campaign for Christ—no demands, no sermons—tempted by their talk of putting a smithy at his doorstep, the Oneida let the Moravians stay. Yet these pious folk, whose hopes for a meeting of minds and hearts were so high and whose gentle ways held such promise of closing the cultural distance, ended up falling farthest and striking hardest the stony ground of irreconcilable differences. For a decade, from the Macks' arrival to the missionaries' abandonment of the site one step ahead of enemy warriors in October 1755, a cadre of devoted men and women lived in Shamokin, learning languages, visiting and being visited in turn, stressing that their God was also the Indians' God. Yet, after ten years, the last missionary to leave echoed Martin Mack's first assessment of the place: it was still "wild."[62]

This is not to say that Moravians failed altogether. Shickellamy himself, shortly before his death in December 1748, traveled to Bethlehem for further instruction in the faith. As proof of his acceptance of Moravian ways, before heading home he discarded an amulet that he wore around his neck—the last vestige, Moravians rejoiced, of his pagan ways. Moreover, earlier that same year a woman had wept because, she said, she "could not understand and Speake with Sister Smith more." And toward the end of the Moravians' stay, a Conoy

61. Brainerd to Pemberton, Nov. 5, 1744, in Edwards, *Life of Brainerd,* ed. Pettit, 578, 580 (see also 576); Jordan, ed., "Spangenberg's Notes of Travel," *PMHB,* II (1878), 428.

62. Shamokin Diary, Sept. 29–30, Oct. 1, 6, 9–10, 14, 1745, *Moravian Records,* 28/217/12B/1; "Br. Rösler's Relation," Oct. 30, 1755, ibid., 6/121/7/1. For Moravian methods, see Shamokin Diary, Oct. 22, 1745, ibid., 28/217/12B/1; "Zinzendorf's Narrative," in Reichel, ed., *Memorials,* I, 65.

named Schafmann cast his lot with them, even going so far as to build a house next door to his new friends.[63]

Such hopeful signs only set in bolder relief the missionaries' failure, however. In his journey to Bethlehem and to the Moravian faith, Shickellamy had no Shamokin companions. Moreover, his death within days of returning from the Moravian capital (and less than a month after discarding the charm that, he believed, warded off sickness) was hardly an endorsement of the path toward Christ.[64] Similarly, the woman who wept was indeed trying to understand, but her tears of frustration suggest the imposing linguistic and cultural obstacles that faced even a willing listener. And, although Schafmann's enthusiasm certainly excited his Moravian sponsors, he was the exception that proved the rule: building his house by the missionaries', the Conoy also eschewed contact with other Indians.[65]

As Schafmann's isolation suggests, the seeds of the Moravian failure, and the larger significance of that failure, lay in their ultimate inability to shed their habits of thought and behavior in order to meet the Indian world on its own terms or at least to meet it halfway. For all the talk of plans "simply to sojourn in their towns, as friends," Moravians were out to redeem the Indians' world and illuminate its pagan darkness. Behind the strategy to just "Pray and Weep" while waiting for Indians to "open the Doors of their Hearts" to Christ was an aggressive campaign to remake the spiritual and natural world.[66]

That urge was clear even before the first Moravians reached Shamokin, for en route there in 1742 Count Zinzendorf and his companions indulged in

63. James H. Merrell, "Shickellamy, 'A Person of Consequence,'" in Robert S. Grumet, ed., *Northeastern Indian Lives, 1632–1816* (Amherst, Mass., 1996), 250–251; Shamokin Diary, Jan. 16, 1748, *Moravian Records,* 6/121/4/1, Jan. 30, 1749, 6/121/4/3, Apr. 22, 1749, 6/121/5/2, Aug. 3, Oct. 30, 1755, 6/121/7/1.

64. Other inhabitants of Shamokin went to Bethlehem at one time or another, but I have found no evidence of other conversions. One might also ask how sincere Shickellamy's own conversion was (Merrell, "Shickellamy," in Grumet, ed., *Northeastern Indian Lives,* 250–251). That word spread of Shickellamy's visit just before his death, see Shamokin Diary, Feb. 19, 1749, *Moravian Records,* 6/121/5/1.

65. The Moravians' ability to get their message across might never have been very great. As late as June 1755, a Shamokin Indian complained that only one missionary could communicate effectively with the natives, and that one was rarely there (Shamokin Diary, June 8, 1755, *Moravian Records,* 6/121/7/1).

66. "Zinzendorf's Narrative," in Reichel, ed., *Memorials,* I, 65; Shamokin Diary, Sept. 15, Nov. 3, 1745, *Moravian Records,* 28/217/12B/1.

an orgy of renaming the landscape. Traveling through terrain still bearing an unmistakable Indian signature—not only names and paths but "a memorial stone" here, there drawings on trees, over there a warrior's grave—Moravians christened everything from campsites and springs to valleys and hills. Sleeping at *Pilger Ruh*, drinking from *Erdmuth's Spring*, fording *Benigna Creek*, scaling *Jacob's Heights*, those who followed found comfort in the familiar landmarks and took up where Zinzendorf's party had left off, carving initials into trees and adding to the stock of Susquehanna features with new names.[67]

Once Moravians settled in at Shamokin, the same impulses found various outlets. The house built in the summer of 1747, although it resembled Shickellamy's next door, nonetheless astonished local Indians—who often stood and watched it go up—with its cellar, chimney, wooden floor, coal house, and loft.[68] And that was just the beginning. Ignoring advice from their superiors to farm "in the Indian manner" so as to fit in, Moravians fenced and plowed fields, planted fruit trees, and built bridges.[69]

Furthering the missionaries' departure from the main currents of Shamokin life was their aloofness from that life. For all of the determination to make a home in Shamokin, Bethlehem was never far from Moravian minds. Not dwelling *in* Bethlehem, missionaries dwelt *upon* it, continually revisiting family and friends there in their prayers, their thoughts, even their dreams.[70] So intense was the longing to see friends from home that rumors of a visitor's

67. "Zinzendorf's Narrative," in Reichel, ed., *Memorials*, I, 82; Jordan, ed., "Spangenberg's Notes of Travel," *PMHB*, II (1878), 426–427, III (1879), 58; Travel Diary, October 1748, *Moravian Records*, 30/225/2/1; W[illia]m M. Beauchamp, ed., *Moravian Journals Relating to Central New York, 1745–1766* (Syracuse, N.Y., 1916); Grube, "Missionary's Tour," *PMHB*, XXXIX (1915), 442.

68. Shamokin Diary, June 10, 13, 22, 27, July 1, 2, 4, 8–11, 13, 16, 1747, *Moravian Records*, 6/121/3/1, Oct. 16, 23, 30, Nov. 10, 19, 1747, 6/121/3/3, Mar. 21–22, 1748, 6/121/4/1.

69. Jordan, ed., "Cammerhoff's Narrative," *PMHB*, XXIX (1905), 178 (quotation); Shamokin Diary, June 17, 25, July 13, 1747, *Moravian Records*, 6/121/3/1, January–April 1748, May 13, 18, 19, 1748, 6/121/4/2, Mar. 14–15, 1749, 6/121/5/1, May 9, 1749, 6/121/5/2, May 19, 1754, 6/121/6/2, Sept. 9, 1755, 6/121/7/1. A meadow is mentioned on June 20, 1755, 6/121/7/1. In addition, during the spring of 1754 Moravians spent a week cutting down the trees around their new house (May 12, 1754, 6/121/6/2). Whether the Indians' absence that week was coincidental is unclear.

70. This occurred especially, though by no means exclusively, on the Sabbath. See, for example, Shamokin Diary, Feb. 4, 11, Mar. 4, 11, 25, 1749, *Moravian Records*, 6/121/5/1. For Moravians' revisiting Bethlehem in their dreams, see June 19, 1747, 6/121/3/1. For doing so in their hearts, see Oct. 24, Nov. 22, Dec. 25, 1747, 6/121/3/3, May 14, 21, 22, June 1, 4, 18, 1748, 6/121/4/2.

approach were enough to keep eyes on the path to town or even to send someone down that path in hopes of meeting the longed-for traveler. When a visitor did reach Shamokin, anxiety gave way to ecstasy as the famished spirits devoured the fresh letters, greetings, and news, often keeping the newcomer up talking late into the night. Sweet these reunions were; but their end was marked by tears. Those left behind among the Indians were disheartened, wrote one traveler recounting his own departure from Shamokin, "especially brother Boehmer, who is not yet accustomed to the lonely way of life."[71]

At least one Moravian was lonesome when Indians left on the hunt and the town stood empty. More often, however, missionaries watched natives leave with relief, not regret, for, regardless of the Moravians' frequent professions of affection for Indians, the German colonists loved Delawares, Iroquois, and other native neighbors at arm's length. Building a house of their own made an unambiguous statement of this desire for distance; placing it with Shickellamy's several hundred yards from town spoke still louder.[72] Loud, too, was their steadily deepening isolation of their local shrine, John Hagen's grave. In September 1747, Moravians laid the beloved Hagen to rest near Sassoonan. But in the years to come, they set him farther and farther apart from Indians, first putting a wooden fence around the plot, then covering it with a hut, and finally surrounding it with a stone wall.[73]

71. Ibid., Dec. 28–29, 1747, 6/121/3/3, Dec. 19, 1748, Jan. 1, 1749, 6/121/4/3. For newcomers' arrivals, see June 25, July 23, 1747, 6/121/3/1, Sept. 29, Oct. 12, 18, Nov. 2, 8, 1747, 6/121/3/3, Apr. 18, May 1, 13, June 15, 1748, 6/121/4/2, Jan. 2–3, 1749, 6/121/4/3, Feb. 14–15, 1749 6/121/5/1, May 1, 1749, 6/121/5/2, Jan. 21, Apr. 17, June 11, 1754, 6/121/6/2. See also Jan. 4, 1748, 6/121/4/1, May 5, 1748, 6/121/4/2, June 28, 1754, 6/121/6/2.

72. Ibid., Sept. 24, 1755, 6/121/7/1. That Shickellamy did not live in town is suggested by Shamokin Diary, Oct. 28, 1745, *Moravian Records*, 28/217/12B/1. The site of the Moravians' house was said to be half a mile from the town (Timothy Horsfield to the Governor, Nov. 10, 1755. Timothy Horsfield Papers, 45, APS). Moravians visiting Indians after June 1747 commonly said they went "into the town" (Shamokin Diary, Aug. 31, Sept. 7, 28, 1755, *Moravian Records*, 6/121/7/1). The Indians' dislike of visitors' living apart from the village was apparent at other Susquehanna towns. See "Mack's Recollections," in Reichel, ed., *Memorials*, I, 102–106; Jordan, ed., "Spangenberg's Notes of Travel," *PMHB*, III (1879), 58. The missionaries' location might have reflected not only their wishes but those of Indians. However eager natives were to have visitors staying in houses in town, they might have felt differently about foreigners determined to settle in for a prolonged stay. See Daniel K. Richter, "'Some of Them . . . Would Always Have a Minister with Them': Mohawk Protestantism, 1683–1719," *American Indian Quarterly*, XVI (1992), 477–478.

73. Travel Diary, Oct. 13, 1748, *Moravian Records*, 30/225/2/1; Shamokin Diary, Mar. 26, 1749, ibid., 6/121/5/1, June 17, 1754, 6/121/6/2.

The missionaries' daily round further betrayed them. True, Moravians visited and welcomed Indians, fed them and sewed shirts for them, fixed their guns and shoed their horses. Yet, Moravians also refused a native's invitation to take a swig from a bottle, watched but did not join Indian dances, never considered marrying a local Indian, tended to shoo guests away as the day wore on—saying that "our house was not for the Indians to lodge in"—and sometimes surrendered to the urge to lecture Indians on their faults.[74]

However much they admired some Indians, however much they despised many colonists (especially fur traders), Moravian missionaries nonetheless divided the world into Indian and colonist. Their daily account of visits always distinguished *Weisse Leute* (white people) from *Indianer* (Indians). Few if any of those *Indianer* could peer over a German's shoulder as he wrote in his journal and read the dichotomous picture of Shamokin being set down there. But many could read a Moravian well enough nonetheless, and did not like what they learned. For every native happily pronouncing these Bethlehem missionaries different from other colonists, another was full of doubt.[75] The newcomers' plow, like their house, apparently generated uneasiness. So did the coveted blacksmith, who occasionally annoyed Indian traders by haggling over debts and insisting that he would accept only deerskins—not raccoon, not fox, not wildcat—in exchange for his work. Even Shamokin Indians borrowing a Moravian custom remarked (and thereby marked) the limits of their interest. Natives burying their dead in a coffin built by missionaries, for example, scolded the carpenters, saying that it was cruel to bury people, as Christians did, without the tools needed to survive in the next world.[76]

74. Shamokin Diary, Oct. 15, 24, 1745, ibid., 28/217/12B/1, June 7, 1747, 6/121/3/1, Mar. 28, 1749, 6/121/5/1; Travel Diary, Apr. 19, 1747, ibid., 6/121/9/2, Oct. 13–15, 1748, 30/225/2/1. On lodging, see Jordan, ed., "Cammerhoff's Narrative," *PMHB*, XXIX (1905), 177. For reluctance, see Shamokin Diary, Jan. 15, 22, 23, 30, Feb. 1, 5, May 20, 27, 28, 1749, *Moravian Records*, 6/121/5/2. Indians sometimes did stay (July 25, 1749, Feb. 8, 1750, 6/121/5/2, April–August 1755, 6/121/7/1). The occasional lectures are mentioned in Shamokin Diary, Sept. 20, 1745, ibid., 28/217/12B/1, Mar. 24, 1748, 6/121/4/1, May 16, 1748, 6/121/4/2.

75. For those saying Moravians were different, see Jordan, ed., "Cammerhoff's Narrative," *PMHB*, XXIX (1905), 172; Shamokin Diary, Nov. 3, 1745, *Moravian Records*, 28/217/12B/1, Dec. 8, 25, 1747, 6/121/3/3; Travel Diary, Oct. 14, 1748, ibid., 30/225/2/1.

76. Jordan, ed., "Cammerhoff's Narrative," *PMHB*, XXIX (1905), 172, 174–176. It may also be significant that no Indians helped the missionaries build their house, though Shickellamy did lend them two horses. For Indians watching the missionaries at work in the fields and exclaiming over the quality of the corn in those fields, see Shamokin Diary, May 12, June 8, 1748, *Moravian Records*, 6/121/4/2. The following spring, two Indian men asked

Other Indians thought missionaries not merely misguided but malevolent. One Susquehanna native "Spoke many Evill things of the Brethren." "Said the indians tould him in Knaden Hitt [Gnadenhütten, another Moravian mission in Pennsylvania] that the Brethren wanted to make them to Slaves, and that [when] thay . . . puld of[f] Sum Indian Corn Colbs of thare owne planting and a [Moravian] Brother met them and took it from them and Beate them." At the heart of these concerns about Moravians was the Indians' fear of losing their land to European intruders. In October 1745, the Macks confronted these Indian suspicions when a Shawnee named Neshanackcow turned on them to say: "You . . . are like the Pidgeons, when you come to a Place, 1 or 2 don't come alone, but imediat[e]ly a whole Company fly thither."[77]

Neshanackcow, like his fellow tribesman at that town on the Susquehanna's West Branch in January 1743, insisted that, whatever Moravians said about being different from other European colonists, white people were "all of one Colour and as one Body." Although missionaries protested these accusations, in fact some of them did have an eye out for likely places to start towns "if sometime the Proprietor should get the land" from Indians.[78] It would be surprising were Neshanackcow the only Susquehanna Indian to get wind of these musings, for natives were acutely sensitive to signs of invasion by colonial settlers. As early as 1733, Shamokin leaders warned off John Harris, who, calling it a trading post, had built a house and—betraying, the Indians argued, his real design—begun "clearing fields" at the mouth of the Juniata River, just forty miles downstream. For the next two decades, Indians, "very uneasy," watched as European colonists pressed up the Susquehanna toward Shamokin itself. In the spring of 1755, Tachnechdorus was outraged to find a family of German farmers putting up a house and planting crops on the very outskirts of town.[79]

Moravians to plow their field but refused a missionary's offer to teach them (May 20, 23, 1749, 6/121/5/2). Shickellamy, for one, pronounced himself pleased with the plowing in the summer of 1747, when he was eager to accommodate the newcomers in order to secure the services of their blacksmith (July 25, 1747, 6/121/3/1). See also Feb. 24, 26, 1750, 6/121/5/2.

77. Shamokin Diary, Oct. 31, 1745, *Moravian Records*, 28/217/12B/1, Mar. 6, Apr. 2, 1748, [illegible]4/1.

78. Travel Diary, Oct. 17, 1748, ibid., 30/225/2/1. See also Oct. 5, 1748; Reichel, ed., *Memorials*, I, [illegible]n; Jordan, trans., Cammerhoff's Letters, IV, May 22–24, 1747, 30; "Extracts from [illegible] Journal," in Pownall, *Topographical Description*, ed. Mulkearn, 168.

79. *MPCP*, III, 503, IV, 570, 572, 648; Jordan, ed., "Cammerhoff's Narrative," *PMHB*, XXIX (1905), 167, 169; *PA*, 1st Ser., II, 24; Shamokin Diary, May 2, 12, July 26, 1755, *Moravian Records*, 6/121/7/1 (see also July 2, Aug. 14).

Darkness Revealed: The War Years

"I thought to refuse any kind of Connection with them"

Even more than land encroachment, the outbreak of war in the autumn of 1755 laid bare the alienation that was always beneath Shamokin's surface. Like the occasional bloodshed earlier, the killing that began during that terrible fall unleashed hatreds, hatreds that, this time, would rule the Susquehanna for a generation, until the day Iroquois, Delawares, and the rest abandoned the valley forever. Indians, Pennsylvania borderers now asserted, had shown their true colors; all were enemies. It is time to get rid of those Iroquois families, our so-called friends, hanging around my house, John Harris urged Pennsylvania officials in late October, as "I don't like their Company." With old acquaintances like Harris in this humor, Shamokin Indians who followed the old paths "to the [colonial] Inhabitants" took their lives into their hands. Tachnechdorus, making his way down the Susquehanna to Pennsylvania in the spring of 1756, was "often insulted by the fearful ignorant people who have Sometimes told Sheckallimy to his face, that they had a good mind to Scalp him." "Your People are foolish," an enraged Pennsylvania loyalist, an Oneida leader named Scarouyady, told the provincial Council that same season. "At present your People cannot distinguish Foes from Friends; they think every Indian is against them; they blame us all without Distinction . . . ; the common People to a Man entertain this notion, and insult us wherever we go."[80]

Scarouyady predicted that a fort at the Forks would quiet the dreadful noise in the Susquehanna country. The stronghold, he said in Philadelphia that spring, would give Indians a "Place to go where they can promise themselves Protection." Fear, suspicion, murder: "All this," Scarouyady promised Pennsylvania, "will be set right when you have built the Fort."[81] It did not turn out that way, not least because the colonists who built and manned that fort agreed with John Harris, and their rage found brutal expression. On the army's march upriver in June 1756, "two Dutchmen, deserters . . . , sacreligiously mutilated an Indian in his grave." In January 1757, another party escorting two Indian messengers upriver to the fort had to seize one Manes, a sergeant who, claiming that he knew the two were actually Indian foes, grabbed his gun and swore

80. *MPCP,* VI, 655, VII, 6, 47, 51, 80, 244; *PA,* 1st Ser., II, 634, 777–778.

81. *MPCP,* VII, 80. Although Scarouyady and other Indians did request that Pennsylvania build a fort there, it should be noted that he and most of the others issuing the invitation were Ohio Indians; the Six Nations Iroquois never formally approved a fort at that site. See Hunter, *Forts,* 485–486, 519.

that "if he Should meet them in the woods he would as Soon kill them as the Greatest enemy he had."[82]

Manes and the two deserters were hauled in for their misdeeds, suggesting that at least some provincial officers still were somewhat immune to the epidemic of Indian hating sweeping the frontier. But commanders of the garrison at the Forks were hardly more enthusiastic about "our Dear Fr[ien]dly Indians at Augusta" than the troops were, and they were as eager to be rid of them as John Harris. Colonel Clapham's orders as he assembled his forces in June 1756 were clear: once you erect the fort, no Indian, "however friendly, should . . . be admitted but in a formal manner, and the guard turned out." Later instructions were even more strict: because they might get drunk or—worse—begin "making Observations on the Works and Strength of the Garrison, . . . the Indians should not be suffered to come unto the Fort." Officers were glad, in this case, to follow orders. "I thought to refuse any kind of Connection with them," wrote Lieutenant Caleb Graydon of some Delaware visitors.[83]

Complete segregation was impossible, as we have seen. Nonetheless, even as they followed the scripts of treaty councils and formal calls, officers did what they could to keep Indians at a distance and to maintain the barrier separating natives from colonists. Indian allies, traders, and scouts were almost always recorded, not as Job Chilloway, William Taylor, Telenemut, Kukywunham, or Lykins, but as "Job Chillaway, an Indian," "Telenemut, an Indian," "Indian William Taylor," "Kukywunham and Lykins 2 Indians." So deep ran the distrust that, when two Delaware men, three women, and five children—hardly a menacing bunch—showed up one day, the fort's commander canceled his review of the troops because "my Garrison [is] so small that I don't Choice to give them an opportunity of knowing my Numbers."[84]

The same urge for separation can be read in the plans for the fort itself. Just as the governor ordered Clapham to put up houses for visiting natives "at a convenient distance, under the command of the Guns," so the Indian store, too, went outside, in the shadow of the fort's walls (and its cannon) rather than within its confines.[85]

82. Beatty, "Journal," in Egle, *Dauphin,* 54; Court of Inquiry, Fort Augusta, Jan. 31, 1757, Shippen Family Papers, II.

83. Harris to Burd, Dec. 6, 1757, Shippen Family Papers, III; On Clapham's orders, see *PA,* 1st Ser., II, 667. See also Lt. Gov. Robert Hunter Morris to ?, September 1756, Gratz Coll., case 15, box 18; *PA,* 1st Ser., IV, 214, 2d Ser., VII, 462; Denny to Burd, Oct. 29, 1757, Shippen Family Papers, III.

84. *PA,* 2d Ser., II, 681, 685, VII, 459, 461, 464.

85. Ibid., 1st Ser., II, 667.

Placement of huts and store sent a clear signal of the colonists' vision of proper relations between Indians (however friendly) and whites. But the message sent by the construction of Fort Augusta—this is now English land—was clear in a host of other ways. Shamokin Indians had been worried about a solitary cornfield beside the Juniata in 1733; what must they have thought about the fort people's wholesale reformation of the landscape at the Forks? The straight lines, the right angles, the formidable walls of oak and pine, the seventy-foot flagpole—these were only the beginning. Year after year, work gangs ranging in size from several men to seventy and in skills from mere laborers to carpenters and colliers or masons and brickmakers set about taming what they considered wild terrain. They dug trenches and sawpits, a well and a magazine. They constructed a bakehouse and a "Necessary house." They ventured to the river to sow bluegrass on the banks, to haul stones and hunt lime, to build a wharf and a fish dam.[86]

At the same time, other construction crews set to work fashioning livestock pens. The forty-one cows brought with the army in the summer of 1756 were the first of a steady stream of domestic animals that included sheep and even chickens as well as cattle and hogs. One officer betrayed his priorities when he noted the arrival of a party from downriver consisting of forty-eight bullocks—and twenty-seven soldiers.[87]

A "Herdsman" was, then, a valuable member of the garrison. So was a plowman, for many of the colonists driving that first herd of livestock soon turned a hand to agriculture in order to make the garrison less dependent on food shipped up the Susquehanna. Only two weeks after arriving at the Forks, soldiers cleared "a large Garden" of several acres. The following spring, work details fenced this plot before fencing and plowing a ten-acre turnip patch nearby. Each year the agricultural regime expanded: turnips and watermelons in 1757, cabbage, potatoes, marigolds (for soup), and fruit trees in 1758, by 1760 oats and hay from a meadow. "We live in the hight of Luxury," boasted Lieutenant Graydon in June 1760, "especeliss abounding in strawberrys, Cream, Mutton, Lamb, Green Peas, salad[?], Butter of our own making etc. etc. etc. etc. etc. etc.

86. Military Letterbook of Burd, 8; *PA*, 1st Ser., III, 48, 66, 2d Ser., II, 654, 656, 659, 677, 687, 697–700, 703, VII, 479, 484; Shippen Journal (1757–1758), Dec. 22, 1757; Montgomery et al., eds., *Frontier Forts*, I, 360–361.

87. Beatty said that 20 cattle were with the regiment (Beatty, "Journal," in Egle, *Dauphin*, 55). For references to domestic animals, see *PA*, 1st Ser., III, 4, 14, 347, 515, 550, 568, IV, 122, 2d Ser., II, 672–704, VII, 462, 470, 471, 478–479. For chickens, see Hunter, *Forts*, 528; Balch, ed., *Letters and Papers*, 75.

etc." The following spring, Graydon again could scarcely contain his enthusiasm: "Every thing grows finely here and we have all more Occasion of Cooks than Phisycians."[88]

Men like Graydon spent more time detailing their achievements at the Forks than sounding the Susquehanna country to gauge the Indians' reaction to the course of events since the fall of 1755. But it is clear that Susquehanna natives followed a path of hatred, fear, suspicion, and estrangement akin to colonists'. When those fifty Pennsylvanians headed by John Harris arrived in Shamokin at the outbreak of war in October 1755, one Delaware who saw them asked another, "What are the English come here for?" "To kill us I suppose," was his companion's prompt reply.[89]

However much Scarouyady and some other Iroquois lobbied for it, Pennsylvania's plans to erect a stronghold at the Forks the following spring did little to reassure most Susquehanna Indians. "If built," they worried, "from thence the English would march up the Susquehanna, burn[?] all before them," and, meeting up with other colonial forces, "so drive off all the Indians." In the end, Scarouyady was wrong, the native doubters right: the fort heightened rather than relieved tension. So imposing was Augusta that native delegations bound for the garrison might send scouts to see if the troops there shot Indians on sight. A party bold enough to camp under the guns still might be reluctant to venture through the gate. "They would not come into the Fort to my House," wrote one officer in 1760, "least I should cut them all off."[90]

Just how alienated Indians remained, how keen they were to maintain their distance from colonists, became clear in May 1757. Earlier that spring, in an attempt to keep an eye on natives, Pennsylvania officials at the Lancaster treaty thought they had extracted from Indian ambassadors a promise to settle twelve native families near the fort. When, stopping at that stronghold on their way home, the Indians were told of this supposed deal, their speaker, a Susquehanna Oneida named Saguhsuniunt (Thomas King), was blunt. "We never made any such promise as you mention . . . ; we never intended to stay here. . . . We have all our friends and Relations at our Towns, and it would not be good

88. *PA*, 1st Ser., III, 15, 2d Ser., II, 669–670, 673, 684–685, 698; Bard to Governor, Aug. 8, 1756, Gratz Coll., case 15, box 18; Hunter, *Forts*, 528; Balch, ed., *Letters and Papers*, 125–126; [?]son to Burd, June 21, Aug. 1, 1760, Graydon to Burd, June 5, 1760, May 20, 1761, Mar. 5, Apr. 10, 1762, Shippen Family Papers, V.

89. *MPCP*, VI, 648.

90. Memorandum of Conversations with Indians, May 31, June 1, 1756, Recs. Prov. Ccl., Exec. Corr., B6/1171. See also *PA*, 1st Ser., II, 666, 2d Ser., II, 662, VII, 443.

for us to stay here and leave them there; . . . We are all going off to-day," Sagughsuniunt concluded, "and . . . none will stay here unless those that dye" from the smallpox then raging through the delegation.[91]

Neither Sagughsuniunt nor his companions thought that by refusing Pennsylvania's offer this time they were abandoning the Forks to colonial control. The spot was too precious, too sacred, to be relinquished. In 1754, an Iroquois leader had told provincial officials: "We will never part with the Land at Shamokin and Wyomink; our Bones are scattered there, and on this Land there has always been a great Council Fire." Once fire of another sort consumed the town shortly after frontier war broke out the following year, Shamokin Indians scattered by the flames were in despair. His family made a mistake in "running away from Shamockin last fall into a Wildnessness," Tachnechdorus admitted in the spring of 1756; "we have lost ourselves."[92]

In order to find themselves again, Tachnechdorus and the others knew that they had to get Shamokin back. It would not be easy. The sheer size of the fort and the scope of colonial operations there proclaimed permanence. Indians passing by saw the fruit trees and marigolds, the lime kilns and wharf, and got the message. They watched as the fort's gravitational pull—its need for supplies and skills as well as the protective power of its guns—drew other colonists to the Forks. They noticed the "straight road round Shomocken Hill" that soldiers built and saw a survey party scouting the best route for a second highway to run southeast, all the way to the Schuylkill River. They stumbled upon other surveyors out to divide up the land and saw prospectors chipping ore samples or chasing down rumors of a lead mine.[93]

91. *PA*, 2d Ser., II, 679.

92. *MPCP*, VI, 116 (and see Benjamin Lightfoot, Notes of a Survey, Pottstown to Shamokin, 1759, 10, HSP); *PA*, 1st Ser., II, 776.

93. *PA*, 2d Ser., II, 648. For surveying, see Holland to Pemberton, May 6, Aug. 7, Oct. 16, 1760, Indian Committee Recs., III, 111, 503, IV, 43; John Armstrong to Hamilton, Nov. 19, 1760, Letters, Burd-Shippen Papers. For roads, see *PA*, 1st Ser., III, 560, 721, 728–730, IV, 362–363; Lightfoot, Notes of a Survey, 3, 10; Peters to Mercer, Dec. 30, 1760, Shippen Family Papers, V. For the mine and crystal, see William Allen to Burd, July 10, 1762, Shippen Family Papers, V. It is unclear who owned Shamokin. Conrad Weiser in 1754 apparently made a private purchase from the Shickellamys for the proprietors of the land on which the fort eventually would be built, but that was never done in formal treaty. See Hunter, *Forts*, 486–487, 508–509, 519–520; Letterbook of Richard Peters, 1737–1750, 381, 392, Richard Peters Papers, HSP; Penn-Physick Manuscripts, XI, 58, 113, HSP; Penn Manuscripts, Indian Affairs, IV, 6, HSP; Weiser to Peters, Mar. 11, 1755, Peters Papers, IV, 7; Peters to the Proprietors, Jan. 10, 1757, Penn MSS, Additional Miscellaneous Letters, I, 100, HSP.

Reading the fort and its ominous companions, Indians were "much alarm'd . . . and jealous," one Pennsylvania official noted as early as 1756, "that we intend by it to secure the possession of their unpurchased lands." Two years later, the Conestoga William Taylor, "furious," told Colonel James Burd at Augusta "that we [English colonists] had taken all the Indians' Lands from them, and that land on which Fort Augusta stands was theirs." That Schuylkill road crew only deepened suspicion; Indians camped at the Forks "are fearful," reported the surveyor, that "if the People get a Waggon Road there they [Pennsylvanians] will then come and settle their Land." By 1760, Indian skeptics had only to gaze westward across the mountains to the confluence of the Allegheny and Monongahela, where the shape of Shamokin's future lay. "You told me, when you was going to Pittsburgh, you would build a Fort against the French, and you told me you wanted none of our Lands," a Seneca reminded provincial officials during a treaty at Lancaster in 1762; "and that you promised to go away as soon as you drove the French away, and yet you stay there and build Houses, and make it stronger and stronger every day."[94]

At that same Lancaster council in August 1762, Indians tried to take Shamokin back before it, too, slipped forever into other hands. The council fire that the Iroquois had kindled there "is not yet out," insisted Sagughsuniunt, their speaker; "if any body stirs it, it will soon blaze." On behalf of "all the different Tribes of us present"—some six hundred people in all, including Tachnechdorus and others from old Shamokin—the Oneida made clear the Indians' refusal to share a common destiny with their European colonial neighbors. "You know I am not as you are," he said. "I am of a quite different Nature from you." To reflect that difference, Sagughsuniunt wanted the stronghold at the Forks evacuated and the land returned. He began by reminding Pennsylvania of its promise to "go away" from the fort when the war was over, or "at any time when I should tell you to go away." Now, he said; now is the time. Keep a "Trading House" there, by all means. Trade "is the way for us to live peaceably together." But "for you to keep Soldiers there, is not the way to live peaceable." Therefore, "call your Soldiers away from Shamokin." Sagughsuniunt was adamant: "I must tell you again these Soldiers must go away," he repeated; "We must press you to take away your Soldiers."[95]

94. *PA*, 1st Ser., II, 666, 2d Ser., II, 681 (see also Holland to Pemberton, Apr. 16, 1761, Indian Committee Recs., IV, 95); Lightfoot, Notes of a Survey, 10. See also *PA*, 8th Ser., VI, [illegible], 4990–4991, 5093; *MPCP*, VIII, 767.

95. *MPCP*, VIII, 742, 748–749, 752–753. The garrison's strength is in Hunter, *Forts*, [illegible].

Issuing these orders ten times more would not have helped. Pennsylvania stalled—the French conflict continues, we need the king's permission to withdraw—and the soldiers stayed. Indeed, a year after the Lancaster council, when another Indian war threatened, colonists made their priorities clear by doing precisely the opposite of what Sagughsuniunt had demanded: instead of razing the fort and leaving the store, they leveled the trading post and dragged its remains inside to strengthen the garrison. Inside, too, went the Pennsylvanians who lived near the Forks. But when friendly Indians in the vicinity tried to seek shelter among colonists, they were refused entrance "to the settlements." By the time the soldiers did at last leave, in June 1765, it was too late: European colonists were too many, and too entrenched, to remove.[96]

Darkness Defeated

"My Heart feels for the wandering Natives"

On June 27, 1775, precisely a decade after the last troops headed home, a young Presbyterian minister named Philip Fithian arrived at the Forks of the Susquehanna River. Fithian, a Princeton graduate recently employed as a tutor to Robert Carter's children at Nomini Hall in Virginia, was now searching the Shenandoah and Susquehanna Valleys for a pulpit to call his own. The Susquehanna Forks seemed a likely place. The town of Sunbury, laid out three years earlier, now boasted one hundred houses arranged on the Philadelphia model; its neighbor across the river's North Branch, the "infant Village" of Northumberland, "seems *busy* and *noisy* as a Philadelphia *Ferry-House.*" Between the two stood Fort Augusta, still more or less intact.[97]

For an educated young gentleman from New Jersey and Princeton by way

96. *PA*, 2d Ser., VII, 464. For the closing down of trade, see also James Irvine to the Indian Commissioners, May–August 1763, Gratz Coll., case 14, box 10; Invoice of Goods Brought Down from Fort Augusta, Aug. 22, 1763, ibid.; *PA*, 2d Ser., VII, 459, 464. See also Bouquet to Hamilton, July 4, 1763, Hamilton to Bouquet, July 12, 1763, Robert Callender to Bouquet, [Aug. 2, 1763], in Stevens et al., eds., *Papers of Bouquet*, VI, 295, 306, 329. Discussions of the fort's future are in *PA*, 8th Ser., VII, 5740, 5743, 5772, 5853; Turbutt Francis to Samuel Hunter, June 28, 1765, Society Collections, Francis, HSP; Herbert C. Bell, *History of Northumberland County, Pennsylvania* (Chicago, 1891), 76.

97. Robert Greenhalgh Albion and Leonidas Dodson, eds., *Philip Vickers Fithian: Journal, 1775–1776; Written on the Virginia-Pennsylvania Frontier and in the Army around New York* (Princeton, N.J., 1934), 38 nn. 39 and 52–54, 63. See also "Journal of General James Whitelaw, Surveyor-General of Vermont," Vermont Historical Society, *Proceedings* (St. Albans, Vt., 1905–1906), 134; and Crèvecoeur, *Letters and Sketches*, ed. Stone, chap. VIII.

of Nomini Hall, the place had considerable appeal. There were enough men like himself to promise many happy hours drinking toddy or coffee "in the Company of Gentlemen where there is no Reserve" and where the talk could turn to "Books, and Litterary Improvements." Indeed, many of gentility's trappings could be found there, from Philadelphia newspapers and personal libraries to a garden and summerhouse, from paintings on the wall to ladies at the piano. To be sure, there were a few rough characters around: after all, the land on which the towns stood had been bought from the Indians only seven years ago, and some people had "'New Purchace' Manners." Still, Fithian, impressed by the "beautiful Prospect of *Sunbury*," was convinced that "in a few Years, [all] will be grand and busy."[98]

Fithian gave no hint of knowing that the site already had been, in its way, grand and busy. If the spot still bore traces of its Indian past, he did not mention them. What he did mention—indeed, what he dwelt upon—was the powerful effect of the Susquehanna landscape. Where once that landscape had evoked in colonists only terror, it now, for Fithian, was a delight. He marveled at its richness; he strolled or sat "on the cool dark Bank of the River," noting that "these shady Banks were made for Contemplation"; he ventured out in a canoe, sometimes entertaining those on shore with his *"Fife"*; he went for walks in the "Woods and Wilds," indeed could spend a whole day doing nothing "but ramble and stare about on the Wilds, and Luxeries of Nature's Bosom." There he admired the "musical" birds, the bells of cows, horses, and sheep "grazing through the Woods" that made "a transporting Vesper" and "a continued, and a charming Echo!" "The Woods are musical," the young man exclaimed, "they are harmonious."[99]

Climbing and walking, canoeing and riding around the Forks, Fithian found time, and occasion, to mourn the natives' loss. "My Wonder ceases that the Indians fought for these happy Valley's," he remarked after one stroll along the riverbank. Canoeing past Sunbury a few days later, Fithian "could not help thinking over with myself, how often the Savage Tribes, while they were in Possession of these inchanting Wilds, have floated over this very Spot. My Heart feels for the wandering Natives. I make no Doubt but Multitudes of them, when they were forced away, left these long-possess'd, and delightsome Banks, with swimming Eyes."[100]

98. Albion and Dodson, eds., *Fithian Journal, 1755–1776*, 40, 42, 45, 46, 47–49, 59, 63, 65.

99. Ibid., 40, 44, 50, 51, 52, 53, 55, 58. He also ventured out to gather huckleberries (61, 79) and wildflowers (71–72).

100. Ibid., 58, 63.

With Fithian we have come a long way from what the Macks had found a generation before, or even what his father-in-law, Charles Beatty, had glimpsed as the colonial army marched upriver in 1756. Where they saw darkness, he saw light; where they saw howling wilderness, he saw enchanting wilds; where they saw Indians, he saw none—and, seeing none, was free to indulge in a mourning ritual that soon would grow in popularity.[101]

But just as news of a copperhead striking a local farm woman took much of the pleasure out of Fithian's "rambling," so the powerful Indian presence near the Forks ultimately unsettled him. At Northumberland on July 17, he heard that some Indians were just then leaving town to head "up the Country" with "Eight Horse Loads of Powder." No doubt, the preacher fretted, this is part of "some infernal Stratagem!" "Poor I," he moaned, "unarmed and impotent, am going up" that way soon, too. Following a wagon road up the West Branch on July 22, he soon crossed onto "the 'Indian's Land'" and was now in the "Enemies Country."[102]

Signs of Indians were everywhere: two clearings along the river that once had been "Indian-Towns," "many 'Indian Camps'" and fireplaces, only recently vacated, trees "cut, by the Indians, in strange Figures." Bad as such signs were, actual Indians were infinitely worse. "Two Indians!" Fithian exclaimed on catching his first glimpse of some. "Young Fellows about eighteen," their "neat, clean Riffles" and deerskins were not enough to ease this wanderer's fear and contempt. "I cannot bring myself to a Pleasant Feeling," he shuddered, "when I look upon or even think of, these heathenish Savages."[103]

Unpleasant feelings all but overwhelmed Fithian one evening several days later. The minister was lodging with one Gillespie when "two Indian Boys bolted in" after dinner, toting fish. "Down they sat in the Ashes before the Fire"

101. See ibid., viii. Fithian married Beatty's daughter that fall. Almost a century after Fithian wrote, J. F. Meginness, a local historian, also had "no doubt" that Indians left Shamokin "with regret, and the dusky warrior as he turned into the forest, could not refrain from looking back at the spot he loved so well, that was to be abandoned forever." "The flames of the burning wigwams lighted up the gloom of the surrounding wilderness—the little pappooses clung closer to their mothers, and looked wistfully around"; see Meginness, *Otzinachson; or, A History of the West Branch Valley of the Susquehanna . . .* (Philadelphia, 1857), 74.

102. Albion and Dodson, eds., *Fithian Journal, 1775–1776*, 54, 61, 70.

103. Ibid., 70–71, 81, 82. That the tree marks consisted of "Diamond's—Deaths Heads—Crowned Heads—Initial Letters—Whole Names—Dates of Years—Blazes" suggests either that Fithian misread them as Indian marks or that the Indians again were demonstrating their considerable acquaintance with colonial forms.

to cook their catch, but scarce had the cooking begun when "they bit it off in great Mouthfuls, and devoured it with the greatest Rapacity." The two left, Gillespie turned in, and Fithian sat on a stool, writing of the "Shambles" and stench of his lodgings, when "Stop! O Stop—Sleep to night is gone—! Four Indians come driving in, each with a large Knife and Tom-Hawk—Bless me two other Strapping Fellows! . . . Six large Indians!" The young clergyman had seen enough: "For all this Settlement I would not live here," he cried; "for two such Settlements—not for five hundred a Year—nothing would persuade me—!"[104]

In his excitement and anxiety, Fithian scarcely noticed that Gillespie, finding his guests unremarkable, simply gave them food and chatted with them. But Gillespie and his Indian visitors belonged to the Susquehanna's past, not its future. In Fithian lay the future, in his elegiac rhapsody on the natives' absence and his open revulsion at their presence. Spiced with the accounts of atrocity then enjoying popularity—"all the People in these back Settlements . . . are very taleful of the Indian War," Fithian later noted—the Presbyterian traveler's pleasant musings and unpleasant feelings would be repeated again and again on other frontiers. As with the Macks and David Brainerd, Fithian's exclamations and excesses invite our indulgence or our contempt.[105]

But as with the missionaries, so with the minister: we should resist the temptation. True, in his assumption that Indians fought for the valley and were driven away Fithian missed the complexity of life at the Forks before his time. But in his belief that Indians belonged to a different world, a world not only alien but antithetical and hostile to his own, he shared the view that the Macks had brought to Shamokin in 1745, and the view that natives there had of them that fall. This conviction—shared by Neshanackcow and Shickellamy, Moravian missionary and provincial officer alike—was best expressed at the Lancaster treaty council in 1762 by Sagughsuniunt, the Susquehanna Oneida who once had refused to share Shamokin with colonists and now came to tell those colonists to get out: *I am not as you are, I am of a quite different nature from you.*

104. Ibid., 82–83.

105. Ibid., 154 (see also 164).