CADWALLADER COLDEN AND NEW YORK'S INDIAN AFFAIRS

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ABSTRACT

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Cadwallader Colden's interest in the Iroquois was not limited solely to the discussion of whether they were barbaric or civilized. Rather his numerous writings on land, the fur trade, and Indian affairs reflected a genuine concern for the Iroquois. Moreover, Colden's correspondence with some of the leading men both in the colonies and in Great Britain also reflected that same interest. But this affection was connected to his imperialistic attitude. If the plight of the Iroquois was linked to the goals of the Empire, then his actions were guided in those terms; but if that dilemma conflicted with the aims of the realm, then he was not so outspoken for the Iroquois. However, for most of his life in New York, the goals of the Iroquois were often interconnected with those of the Empire. Colden's lengthy career as surveyor-general was indicative of this interconnection. His contentions on the fur trade exhibited the same dilemma. Colden either initiated or supported proposals designed to improve the British position in the trade. Connected with these improvements was the

determination to put an end to certain abuses perpetrated on the Indians. Consequently, Colden's contentions on the fur trade and the land were linked to the overall scheme of Indian affairs. In this respect Colden was a leading advocate for an imperial plan, which would keep the Iroquois within the British sphere of influence. His treatises on the fur trade, the state of the lands, Indian affairs, and the Five Nations were also indicative of that interconnection. In each report, he not only argued against certain abuses inflicted on the Indians, but also showed why these abuses must be rectified, since the future of the province depended upon retaining the allegiance of the Iroquois. Consequently, Colden was a devout imperialist, but that imperialism was guided by the interconnection between the Iroquois and the Empire.

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INTRODUCTION

Historians for too long have either ignored or forgotten Cadwallader Colden of New York. The only biography of Colden is Cadwallader Colden: A Representative Eighteenth Century Official by Alice Mapelsden Keys, which is badly in need of revision, partially because Keys does not provide an analysis of Colden's life. In this same context, three articles also deal with the life of Colden. "A Colonial Governor's Family: The Coldens of Coldengham" by Brooke Hindle is an overview not only of Colden but also of his numerous sons and daughters. Another work is "Notes, Biographical and Genealogical, of the Colden Family, and Some of its Collateral Branches in America" by Edwin R. Purple, which also deals with the entire Colden family. Finally, A. J. Wall's "Cadwallader Colden and His Homestead at Spring Hill, Flushing, Long Island" (The New York Historical Society Quarterly, 1924) focuses on Colden's life after 1762 at his home of Spring Hill. Others deal with his political life. Among these are "The Political Career of Cadwallader Colden" by Allan R. Raymond (Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 1971); "Cadwallader Colden and the Role of the King's Prerogative" by Carole Shammas; and "Cadwallader Colden and the Stamp Act Riots" by F. L. Engelman (William and Mary Quarterly, 1953). Colden's scientific life also received attention with "A Figure of the American Enlightenment: Cadwallader Colden" by Alfred R. Hoermann. (Ph.D.

dissertation, University of Toronto, 1970) the best on Colden the scientist and intellectual. "A Savant in the Wilderness: Cadwallader Colden of New York" also by Alfred R. Hoermann is simply a restatement of the author's previous work. Brooke Hindle's "Cadwallader Colden's Extension of the Newtonian Principles" deals with the ideas Colden had on the laws of gravity, which diverged from those espoused by Sir Isaac Newton. Finally, two works which are more closely connected to this thesis, "Cadwallader Colden: Colonial Politician and Imperial Statesman 1718-1760" by Siegfried B. Rolland (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1952), and Wilbur R. Jacobs' "Cadwallader Colden's Noble Iroquois Savages." Rolland contends that Colden's career was dominated by what he perceived to be the French menace. Also, Colden developed ideas and subsequent proposals, which either marked him as an imperial statesman, or as a colonial schemer out to satisfy his own needs. Jacobs' article deals solely with Colden's treatise on the Iroquois, as a memorial on the fur trade and a history of Iroquois life. This thesis diverges somewhat from these last works, and ultimately is a study of Colden's role in New York's Indian affairs.

From his arrival in the province of New York in 1720 to his death fifty-six years later, Colden was one of the primary developers of an imperial Indian policy. Moreover, from his various positions in the province, Colden was in a position to institute reforms in land, the fur

trade, and in Indian affairs. Through his numerous correspondence, Colden clearly stated his opinion on how to correct abuses, and provided the keys on what the Empire's position should become. Consequently, Colden was not only an imperial statesman, but a colonial one also. In these terms, this thesis will attempt to show that by ignoring Cadwallader Colden's role in the Indian affairs of New York, historians have overlooked a person who not only shaped Indian policy, but also was in the forefront of many of the proposals that were instituted. By utilizing The Letters and Papers of Cadwallader Colden, Edmund B. O'Callaghan's Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York and The Documentary History of the State of New York, and The Papers of Benjamin Franklin, The Papers of Sir William Johnson, and Cadwallader Colden's The History of the Five Indian Nations, Depending on the Province of New-York in America, this thesis attempts to show that Colden was truly a man who played a major role in New York's Indian affairs.

CHAPTER I

CADWALLADER COLDEN, NEW YORK, AND IROQUOIS HISTORY

The son of a Scotch Presbyterian minister, Cadwallader Colden was born in Ireland on the seventh of February 1688. Reverend Alexander Colden provided his son's early education with the intention of entering him in the ministry. But upon entering the University of Edinburgh, Colden acquired a taste for science, even though it was at best rudimentary. This interest would lead him into a profession different from what his father had in mind for him. In 1705 Colden graduated from the university with a masters of arts degree. Within a short time, he left for London to continue his medical studies. Upon completion, Colden opened a medical practice, but as the financial rewards for a physician in London were small, and with his father's limited finances nearly exhausted, he decided to emigrate to America.[1] In 1710 Colden left for Philadelphia to stay with his mother's sister. After opening a medical practice,

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[1]Edwin R. Purple, "Notes, Biographical and Genealogical, of the Colden Family, and of Some of its Collateral Branches in America," The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record vol. 4, no. 4 (October 1873), p. 161; Alice Mapelsden Keys, Cadwallader Colden: A Representative Eighteenth Century Official (New York: Columbia University Press, 1906), pp. 1-2; Alfred R. Hoermann, "A Savant in the Wilderness: Cadwallader Colden of New York" New York Historical Society Quarterly vol. LVII (October 1978), p. 272.

he quickly learned that the medical profession in the City of Brotherly Love was as financially limiting as it had been in London. In order to supplement his meagre income, Colden dispensed drugs and sold merchandise. While in Philadelphia, he made proposals for the improvement of medical services for the city's poor, and a series of publicly funded lectures by the doctors of the city.[2] As his meagre income continued, Colden decided to leave the Pennsylvania city.

In 1718 while in New York on a holiday, Colden was summoned to the governor's office. Governor Robert Hunter, also from Scotland, welcomed Colden into his home where he was a frequent guest during his stay in New York. Several weeks after returning to Philadelphia, Colden received a letter from Governor Hunter, inviting him to move to New York. Hunter offered Colden the position of Master of Chancery in the province. In 1720, two years after his arrival in the province, Colden received another appointment from Governor Hunter. This time he received the more prestigious and powerful position of Surveyor-General, a post he would hold until 1762.[3] Colden's political career was only in the embryonic stages, but in time it was to

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[2]Purple, p. 161; Hoermann, pp. 272, 275.

[3]Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee, Dictionary of National Biography (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1908), p. 716; Carole Shammas, "Cadwallader Colden and the Role of the King's Prerogative" New York Historical Society Quarterly vol. LIII (April 1960); Keys, p. 3; Purple, pp. 161, 171.

blossom into one of the longest in North America.

In 1722 Colden was appointed to the King's Council by Hunter's successor, Governor William Burnet. Thus, within a short period, he had quickly become entrenched in the colony's political circles. In fact, after twenty-seven years of service in the Council, Colden was chosen as president of that body. He later became Governor George Clinton's chief advisor in 1745, but was soon replaced by James Alexander and William Smith, Sr., as Governor Clinton attempted to regain a political majority in the Provincial Assembly.[4] Colden's political career continued to expand, even though he had suffered this temporary setback by Clinton's maneuver.

Colden's next appointment was to come through a royal commission. On the fourteenth of April 1761, Colden was appointed to the position of Lieutenant-Governor of the colony by the King of England. As lieutenant-governor he was in charge of the government whenever the governor was absent from the province. From 1760 until 1776, Colden was acting governor five separate times, as the colony's governors were either absent or being replaced. Due to the political nature that was investing New York and the other colonies, Colden retired to his estate Spring Hill

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[4]John W. Raimo, Biographical Directory of American Colonial and Revolutionary Governors, 1607-1789 (Westport: Meckler Books, 1980), p. 267; Stephen and Lee, p. 717. Patricia Bonomi, A Factious People: Politics and Society in Colonial New York (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), p. 14.

on Long Island, where at the age of eighty-eight he died on the twenty-eighth of September 1776.[5] Colden's medical and political careers were only two facets of his extensive life, as his initial interest in science kept him equally occupied throughout his life.

Bounded by his own limitations, Colden's intellectual pursuits were extremely varied. He wrote treatises on intestinal disorders, smallpox, yellow fever, and the curative powers of tar water. But his works were not limited to just medical problems, because he had an intense interest in physics. Colden achieved some notoriety in this area, as he attempted to change the scientific world's view on Sir Isaac Newton's theory on the law of gravity to his own. In 1745 and 1751 he wrote two essays which held this view, but they were not widely accepted. Of his numerous scientific interests, Colden probably received more recognition for his work in botany. Colden introduced the Linnaeus system of plant classification to North America and corresponded frequently with two of the leading botanists of his time, Johann Frederick Gronovius and Carolus Linnaeus. Colden's description of plants near his estate earned him the distinction of having part of it published in the Transactions of the Royal Society of Science at Upsal in 1749. He achieved an even greater honor

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[5]Bonomi, p. 294; Raimo, p. 267.

when Linnaeus named a plant Coldenia.[6] Colden's avid pursuit of scientific, intellectual, and political matters was transmitted by him to his children.

On a trip to England in 1715 Colden married Alice Christie, the daughter of a Scottish minister. Before her death in 1762, she gave him ten children. A year after they were married their first son was born, who would follow his father as surveyor-general of the province. His second and third sons, Cadwallader, Jr. and John, respectively, entered the political scene but neither remained in it for long. Cadwallader, Jr. took over the management of the family's country estate, while John died in 1750 at the age of twenty-one. The last Colden son, David, followed his father into the scientific world with his experiments in the fledgling field of electricity. The Colden family, also, included four girls, but only the second eldest, Jane, was able to gain a measure of renown. Jane Colden became interested in botany at the urging of her father who taught her the Linnaeus system. She described and imprinted some four hundred plants grown near the family's country estate, which gained her some distinction among the world's leading botanists. Colden had two other children, but both

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[6]Brooke Hindle, "Cadwallader Colden's Extension of the Newtonian Principles" William and Mary Quarterly vol. 13 (January-October 1956), pp. 459-461, 467; Purple, pp. 163-164; Hoermann, p. 274; Charles Kammen, Colonial New York: A History (New York: Charles Scribner & Sons, 1975), pp. 273, 275.

died in infancy.[7] Colden's family remained, throughout his life, an important part of his world, as he used his influence to gain political positions and scientific distinction for his children. But what of his world in which not only he had made his mark, but also some of his children did as well.

The exploration of New York might have commenced earlier than the seventeenth century if the explorers and nations were not solely interested in finding a shorter route to the Orient. John Cabot, as early as 1498, sailed the North American coastline from Labrador to the Chesapeake Bay in search of Japan. Cabot probably sighted New York's coastline, but since it did not resemble the description of Asia left by medieval travelers he sailed back to England. Other European explorers undoubtedly sailed past New York, but like Cabot they too were interested only in finding the Orient. Ferdinand Magellan's voyage of 1522 proved the American coastline was not Asia, but rather a land mass located between Europe and Asia. Still in search of a shorter route, the explorers decided to examine the interior of North America in quest of the "northwest passage."[8]

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[7]Brooke Hindle, "A Colonial Governor's Family: The Coldens of Coldengham" New York Historical Society Quarterly vol. XLV (July 1961), pp. 243-249; Purple, pp. 165-178; Cadwallader Colden, The Letters and Papers of Cadwallader Colden (New York: New York Historical Society Collections, 1917-1935) 9 vols. 3:378, 4:61, 9:70-71.

[8]Robert A. Goldstein, French-Iroquois Diplomatic and Military Relations, 1609-1701 (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1969), pp. 13-14.

In 1524 Giovanni da Verrazano sailed his ship the "Dauphine" into lower New York Bay, but a squall forced him to abandon further exploration. One year later a Portuguese mariner sailed into the Hudson River, but like Verrazano, he did not lay claim to the area. As early as 1540 French traders had descended the Hudson River to trade with the Mahicans and Wappingers. In 1607 an anonymous English explorer sailed into the mouth of the Hudson River, supposedly to converse with some Indians. Later he made a map on which he wrote "Mannahata" to the west and "Manahatin" to the east. Henry Hudson might have had a copy of that map with him when he made his expedition.[9]

In 1609 Hudson, an Englishman by birth but in the employment of the Dutch East India Company, left Amsterdam in search of the northwest passage. Hudson first sailed into Delaware Bay, but then coasted northward into New York Bay. After spending a month exploring the river that bears his name, Hudson returned to Amsterdam. Even though the expedition failed its objective, Amsterdam's mercantile interests plus the other Dutch towns perceived that the resources of North America might repay small investments. The locating of valuable fisheries was one possibility to the merchants, but Hudson had brought back a commodity that was to prove as valuable as gold. Because Hudson had traded some knives, beads, and ribbons for beaver and otter furs,

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[9]Kammen, pp. 1-5.

the Dutch were to embark on an economic colonization of the New World.[10]

Dutch settlements in New York commenced with the establishing of a trading post near Albany by Hendrick Christiaensen in 1611. Further colonization would not come about until 1624 when Cornelis Jacobsen May, in the employ of the Dutch West India Company, established four settlements of which only Fort Orange (Albany) was to flourish.[11] The colony's growth remained languid throughout the Dutch period. Even the English control of the province exhibited a slower growth than other colonies. By 1664 there were fewer than nine thousand inhabitants as compared to forty thousand in Virginia and fifty thousand in New England. Forty years later New York's population increased to just over twenty thousand. As late as 1756 New York had ninety-seven thousand inhabitants compared to the two hundred and twenty thousand in Pennsylvania. Even in 1770 New York was only the sixth largest colony, ranking behind Virginia, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Connecticut.[12] Even though New York's population growth was slow, it was probably one of the most diverse colonies in North America.

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[10]Allen Trelease, Indian Affairs in Colonial New York: The Seventeenth Century (Port Washington: Kennikat Press, 1971), pp. 25-30.

[11]S. G. Nissenson, The Patroon's Domain (New York: Columbia University Press, 1937), p. 13; Trelease, pp. 30-35; Kammen, pp. 26-29.

[12]Kammen, pp. 38, 145, 179-180, 278-279.

The colony of New Netherland, although founded by the Dutch, was not settled solely by them. During the seventeenth century five ethnic groups settled in the colony. Besides the Dutch, French Protestants called Walloons arrived in 1624. As early as 1640, the English were migrating to the colony from Massachusetts, while Spanish and Portuguese Jews arrived from South America in the 1650's. African slaves had arrived in the colony as early as 1626, where they would number approximately eleven percent of the population throughout the colonial period. In the first decade of the eighteenth century, immigrants from Scotland, Ireland, and the German states arrived in the province.[13] As the various ethnic groups settled in the colony, many brought with them the skills or trades they had practiced in their homelands.

New York's economy was as diversified as its population. The fur trade was initially the colony's only economic mainstay with Albany as its center, but in time other factors would become equally as important. Shipping, which commenced almost as early as the fur trade, would continue to expand as the colony did. Since the building of that first wharf in 1647, New York City was to become the colony's leading port. By 1773 New York ranked behind Boston and Philadelphia in exports, but within ten years

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[13]Thomas J. Archdeacon, New York City, 1664-1710: Conquest and Change (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976), pp. 33-35; Kammen, pp. 29, 38, 158-181.

only Boston surpassed the city's shipments. Agriculture was also important as corn, barley, and wheat were grown by farmers on large estates and on small plots. Local artisans, such as cordwainers, coopers, barbers, carpenters, tailors, gunsmiths, etc., were practicing in the colony;[14] but for the enterprising young New Yorker the political scene was the road to take whereby one could enhance his economic and social standing.

New York's political scene commenced in 1641 when the Dutch controlled the province. In that year Governor William Kieft called together the heads of all white families to inform them of his decisions and to secure their consent. The colony had become embroiled in an Indian war which precipitated the governor's meeting with the men of the colony. Twelve men were elected by the group to deal with the governor, but one year later Kieft dissolved their position. In 1643 the governor was again seeking advice, but this time he chose eight men to hear his decisions. By 1644 these men were responsible for getting Governor Kieft recalled to Amsterdam.[15] Kieft's decision to meet with members of the colony created the precedent for the

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[14]Thomas Elliot Norton, The Fur Trade in Colonial New York, 1686-1776 (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1974), pp. 4-5; George William Edwards and Arthur Everett Peterson, New York: As an Eighteenth Century Municipality (Port Washington: Ira J. Friedman, Inc., 1967), pp. 106, 263; Kammen, pp. 173-174, 183.

[15]Kammen, p. 46.

establishment of a council when the English took over control of the province.

A council of four men was appointed in 1664 by the first English governor, Colonel Richard Nicholls. The councilors were to assist the governor in Indian affairs, economic, defense, legal, and land matters. The council proved to be a valuable sinecure for the friends of the governor, as the Board of Trade often appointed those men the governor recommended whenever a seat became vacant. During the eighteenth century, the number of councilors fluctuated between seven and twelve. Besides its constitutional powers, the council along with the governor acted as the highest court of appeals in New York.[16] The governor and his council were not the only political roles in the colony as an elected assembly equally became a part of the government.

In 1683 Thomas Dongan arrived in New York to take over the governorship of the province. Almost immediately Dongan was beset by petitions from the populace calling for an elected assembly. But unknown to the people, the governor had received such instructions from James, the Duke of York. On the seventeenth of October 1683 New York's first assembly, comprised of seventeen members, met and drafted the Charter of Libertyes and Priviledges. This act was designed to protect the people of New York, while

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[16]Stanley Nider Katz, Newcastle's New York: Anglo-American Politics, 1732-1756 (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 40-41; Kammen, p. 46.

the assembly was to meet three times a year and assert its right as the lower house to appropriate all revenues for the colony. Initially the charter was accepted by the Duke of York, Governor Dongan and his council, but James, as the King of England, reversed his decision on the third of March 1685. This initial elected body would never meet again,[17] as New York lost its separate identity.

In 1686 New York became part of the Dominion of New England, but King James' plan for the megacolony dissipated when the "Glorious Revolution" commenced in England. In New York the province was thrown into a state of turmoil with the commencement of Leisler's Rebellion. The revolt was a protest of the dominion and an acceptance of England's new monarchs, William and Mary of Orange. The rebellion ended in 1691 when Colonel Henry Sloughter arrived in the colony as its new governor.[18] Even though the revolt had thrown the colony into a chaotic state, a positive factor did emerge, as an elected assembly became a permanent fixture of the government.

From 1698 to 1769, the number of assemblymen increased from twenty-two to twenty-seven. The assembly met twice a year to enact legislation and deal with appropriations. Laws or money bills remained in effect until the governor or king vetoed them. Thus, a law could remain

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[17]Kammen, pp. 101-105.

[18]Kammen, pp. 120-125.

in force for a couple of years until the king decided its fate. Between the years of 1736 and 1741 the assembly finally achieved its objective in controlling the province's revenues. All appropriations had to be granted by the assembly, thus long term revenues lost out to annual ones.[19] New York's political scene, during the latter decades of the seventeenth century and throughout the eighteenth century, was one of continuous infighting as the council fought with the assembly for control. The political structure of New York's indigeneous people was relatively calm, in comparison to the colonials.

The five Indian tribes, known collectively as the Iroquois Confederacy, were not originally the cohesive league that they came to be. Wars between the tribes were common, until Deganawidah and Hiawatha went among the nations preaching the "Great Peace". The founders' idea was that the tribes would join together in a defensive alliance and end the wars between themselves. Iroquois tradition states that the Seneca were undecided about joining the confederacy until a solar eclipse occurred, which they took as a sign they should join. Once established, the Confederacy was to become the center of Iroquois diplomacy.[20]

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[19]Kammen, pp. 138-140, 201-202; Katz, p. 43.

[20]Elisabeth Tooker, "The League of the Iroquois: Its History, Politics and Ritual" in William Sturtevant and Bruce Trigger eds. Handbook of North American Indians: The Northeast vol. 15 (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978), pp. 418-421.

The center of the league was located at Onondaga, the main village of the Onondaga tribe. Here fifty sachems would sit in council to discuss matters pertaining to the confederacy. Internal problems were also handled by the league. Foreign affairs were equally within the confederacy's realm as ". . . it declared war and peace, sent and received embassies, entered into treaties of alliance, regulated the affairs of subjugated nations, received new members into the League, extended its protection sic over feeble tribes . . . ." Thus the league would take whatever measure necessary to extend their domain and retain their prosperity. Usually the league council would convene in the autumn, but emergency sessions could be called; and not necessarily at Onondaga.[21]

As previously noted there were fifty league chiefs, but they were not distributed equally among the tribes. The Onondagas (Keepers of the Fire and Keepers of the Wampum) had the most sachems with fourteen in number. The Mohawks (Keepers of the Eastern Door) and the Oneidas had nine each. The Senecas (Keepers of the Western Door) had the fewest number with only eight, while the Cayugas had the second largest delegation with ten sachems. In the league councils there was a tripartite division as the Mohawks and Senecas were the "Elder Brothers," and the Cayugas and Oneidas were the "Younger Brothers," while

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[21]Goldstein, p. 37; Trelease, pp. 20-21.

the Onondagas acted as intermediaries. Proposals were discussed among the chiefs of one of the Elder Brothers and then passed on to the sachems of the other Elder Brother. The Younger Brothers would not receive the proposal until the Elder Brothers had finished their discussion; and then the process was started all over again, this time though among the Younger Brothers. The Onondaga sachems often acted only in an advisory capacity to make suggestions if problems arose between the other tribes.[22]

Even though there was such a disparity in the number of chiefs each tribe had only one vote in league councils. Decisions, passed in the council, were not binding upon any of the league members as the sachems' powers were persuasive not coercive. League sachems were not the only chiefs to meet at Onondaga, as "Pine Tree" or merit chiefs also sat in council, but did not have any voting powers. Often these chiefs were the ambassadors that met with other Indian nations and/or the Europeans. League sachems employed speakers, known for their rhetorical skills, who would announce league decisions.[23] As councils met at Onondaga to discuss proposals concerning the league, similar councils took place within each village.

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[22]Goldstein, p. 37; Tooker, pp. 428-429.

[23]William N. Fenton, "Northern Iroquoian Culture Patterns" in William Sturtevant and Bruce Trigger eds. Handbook of North American Indians: The Northeast (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978), pp. 314-315; Tooker, p. 429.

In each village civil chiefs along with the clan chiefs and the elders made local policy. Even though the men of the villages established policies, the women equally had a voice in Iroquois politics. Iroquois women had their own councils where they also discussed local and league issues, but their real power came from their positions as the clan matrons. As the Iroquois were a matrilineal society, the women would choose a deceased chief's successor. With each of the five nations separated into clans, the clan matrons would meet in council to appoint a new chief. In an elaborate ritual the new chief was "raised up" to take his place among the other league chiefs.[24]

The Condolence Ceremony was the ritual whereby a deceased chief was honored and his successor appointed. This ceremony was composed of three "words": the Roll Call of the Chiefs, the Condoling Song, and the Requickening Address. The Roll Call was a reminder for the people to remember the founders of the league, and that the present chiefs should counsel together. The second "word" was a farewell hymn to the deceased chief, which consisted of half a dozen verses that greeted the several classes of people in the Iroquois society. Finally, the Requickening Address, which consisted of fifteen "matters", was delivered to restore the minds of the grieving people and to raise up the new sachem. As in the league councils,

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[24]Fenton, p. 314; Tooker, pp. 425-426.

Iroquois society was separated into two moieties, the Elder Brothers and the Younger Brothers. When a chief died, it was the obligation of the one moiety to condole the other. Thus, the ritual was based on reciprocity, a fact found throughout the Iroquois' political world.[25] Even though politics was an important part of Iroquois society, it was only one facet of their life.

Within the Iroquois' society, there was a division of labor between the men and women. Agriculture was in the realm of the women, as they were responsible for the planting and tending of the crops. Corn, beans, and squash (the three sisters) were the main crops grown, although tobacco and pumpkins were also planted. Iroquois women also gathered various fruits, berries, nuts, and roots, which were a part of the Iroquois staple. As previously noted, the selection of a new chief was within the women's domain, as the sachem came from the woman's family. Iroquois men worked equally as hard as the women. Besides the possibility of being selected chief, or gaining a position as a merit chief, the Iroquois men hunted, fished, and trapped. In specifically designated hunting areas, the men hunted large game animals, such as the deer, bear, and moose. Smaller game animals were also hunted in the tribal areas, and there was the trapping of beaver and other fur-bearing animals. Unlike the women's tasks, which were usually

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[25]Tooker, pp. 437-439.

performed closer to the villages, the hunting and trapping areas were far from the villages. Fishing was often performed closer to the villages, since many of them were situated near streams.[26] One task the men did perform in the villages was the building of the longhouse. A longhouse was a multifamily dwelling which ranged in size from twenty feet long, fifteen feet high, and sixteen feet wide to sixty feet long, eighteen feet high, and eighteen feet wide. The longhouse was also the unit which housed the league councils.[27] The People of the Longhouse, as the Iroquois were called, were not always in the geographic positions they occupied when the Europeans arrived in the New World.

From the Hudson River in eastern New York to Lake Erie in the western portion of the state, and from the St. Lawrence River in the north to the state of Pennsylvania in the south, the Iroquois either occupied or controlled this expansive region. But the Iroquois were not always in this same locality, as they were when the province was founded. Historians have long disagreed as to the location of the Iroquois' prehistoric homelands. One group has the Iroquois migrating from a southerly or southwestern direction, while another has placed the migration

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[26]Barbara Graymont, The Iroquois in the American Revolution (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1972), pp. 10-11; Fenton, pp. 297-299.

[27]Graymont, p. 9.

from the north. The Hochelagans and Stadaconans that Jacques Cartier encountered in his voyages might have been the Iroquois' ancestors.[28] Whether they migrated from the south or the north, prehistoric Iroquoian society underwent technological changes. Primarily hunters and gatherers, the prehistoric Iroquoians commenced to rely more on agriculture; especially as the village sites, which changed from temporary ones near lakes and rivers, became more permanent as they were situated on low hills overlooking streams and rivers. Finally, the one aspect of the society that might not have changed from the prehistoric to the historic period was the Iroquois mode of warfare. The blood revenge method of warfare remained well into the seventeenth century, even though its origins dated back to before the fourteenth century. As warfare changed from village to tribal and finally to the confederacy as the league was formed, the power of the Iroquois was unleashed; which rivaled the French in Canada, and the Dutch and English in New York.[29]

Cadwallader Colden arrived in the colony of New York as a medical doctor, but he would have little use for the training he received in Scotland and England. He was able to garner numerous political positions during

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[28]Tooker, p. 419; Fenton, pp. 296-297; Trelease, pp. 18-19; Goldstein, pp. 29-30.

[29]James Tuck, "Northern Iroquoian Prehistory" Handbook of North American Indians: The Northeast, pp. 213-223.

his long career in the colony. Colden was, also, able to place his sons in political offices, as he firmly believed in nepotism. Besides his political interest, Colden was also one of the colonies' exemplary scientists. Colden's interest in science was not limited to just one branch, but rather was limitless as attested by the numerous articles he wrote on various topics, and his correspondence with the leading scientists of the world. He was able to persuade two of his children to enter the scientific domain, where both gained recognition for their efforts. Colden's scientific career rivaled that of his political life in longevity.

When Colden arrived in New York, he found a colony less populous than its neighbors, but one more diverse. New York's population would still lag behind other colonies by the time Colden passed away, but its major city rivaled its other colonial counterparts in shipping. New York's diversity was not solely within the population, because its economy was equally as diverse. Shipping, manufacturing, and the fur trade were the leading factors, but agriculture was equally as important. The province's political institutions underwent numerous transformations from the time the Dutch first settled in the area until the early decades of the eighteenth century. The Council first gained recognition during the 1640's, while it proved to be an important political sinecure for young New Yorkers in search of a place to make their mark in the world. The Assembly

was relatively new when Colden arrived, since it did not come about until the revolt in the last decades of the seventeenth century. But during the eighteenth century, the Assembly proved to be a most powerful unit in the provincial government, as it controlled the purse. Colden's own position in the government progressed through the years until he ascended to the leadership, although only temporary.

The indigeneous people of New York had progressed to a powerful confederacy by the time the Europeans arrived in the province. From five divergent tribes, the Iroquois Confederacy was molded into a league of mutual dependency and reciprocity. The league was governed by fifty chiefs, who would sit in council to discuss matters pertaining to the confederacy and the individual tribes. Although there was a disparity among the number of chiefs each tribe had only one vote accorded to each nation. Whenever a chief died an elaborate ceremony was instituted to install his successor, but the women known as clan matrons actually chose the new chief. Within Iroquois society, both the men and the women had separate and distinct tasks to perform, but the historic society had undergone technological changes by the time the Europeans had arrived. Prehistoric Iroquoian society was characterized by a dependence upon hunting and gathering, but also on the temporary nature of the villages. In the historic period, agriculture became an important mainstay of the society, while the villages became more permanently situated. One aspect of

prehistoric society that did not undergo changes in the historic period was the Iroquois method of warfare. For over three hundred years, Iroquois warfare remained relatively constant, but with the arrival of the Europeans, it was to change dramatically.

CHAPTER II

EUROPEAN-IROQUOIS RELATIONS: A BEGINNING

In 1608 Samuel de Champlain returned to the St. Lawrence River, after having left there five years earlier. Champlain wanted to establish a base for the fur trade. Within months he built his base at Quebec. Later that year, Champlain entered into an alliance with the Algonquin, Huron, and Montagnais nations. Since these tribes controlled an immense region, rich in fur-bearing animals, the French gained a strong foothold in the fur trade. But the French would have to provide aid and protection to their new allies against the Iroquois. Champlain had thus drawn the French into a conflict more than a century old.[30] Within a year Champlain was obliged to honor the French part of the alliance.

Champlain in 1609 accompanied a Huron-Algonquin war party against the Mohawks. This initial encounter resulted in the near total destruction of the Mohawk war party, as they had their first "taste" of European weaponry. This victory enabled the French to lay claim to the region of the Richelieu Valley and Lake Champlain. A year later

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[30]Goldstein, pp. 27-28; Bruce G. Trigger, "Early Iroquoian Contacts with Europeans" William Sturtevant and Bruce Trigger eds. Handbook of North American Indians: The Northeast vol. 15 (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978), pp. 347-348.

that claim was strengthened as Champlain accompanied another war party against the Mohawks. Once again the Mohawks were defeated by superior weaponry, but the French failed to follow up their victory, or were successful in persuading their Indian allies to remain at war. An uneasy peace lasted until 1615, as Champlain accompanied another war party against the Iroquois. This time the Onondagas were attacked, but the French and their allies were defeated, since they had to attack a palisaded village.[31] This initial Iroquois victory ". . . was a turning point from which they were to climb to a position of astonishing supremacy . . . ."[32] Thus, the French and their Indian allies were placed on the defensive, but the Iroquois were not yet prepared for war.

After 1615 the Iroquois did conduct some minor raids, especially the Mohawks, but an unspoken truce was in effect. In 1622 Mohawk emissaries arrived at Three Rivers to commence peace negotiations. The Mohawks wanted a cessation of the hostilities and the establishment of reciprocal hunting privileges. Champlain agreed to the hunting concessions, but surmised the Iroquois would attempt to divert the fur trade from Quebec by persuading

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[31]William Eccles, The Canadian Frontier, 1534-1760 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), pp. 24-31; Goldstein, pp. 49-57.

[32]Marcel Trudel, The Beginnings of New France, 1524-1663 trans. by Patricia Claxton (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Ltd., 1973), p. 121.

the Hurons, Algonquins, and Montagnais to do so. The Mohawks' desire for peace centered on the fact that they were preparing to go to war against the Mahicans and needed to secure their northern boundary.[33] But French fears, that the fur trade might be diverted from Canada, were genuine; especially since the Dutch were quickly becoming established on the Hudson River.

Henry Hudson's voyage of 1609 claimed for the Netherlands, the region encompassing the river that bears his name. In 1614 the Dutch established a trading post at Castle Island on the upper Hudson. Three years later the post was abandoned due to continuous flooding. In 1624 another post was built, opposite the former site. This post, named Fort Orange, was to become the center of Dutch-Indian affairs, much the same way that Quebec was for the French. Early Dutch-Iroquois relations were limited because of the geographical proximity of the Mahican tribe to the Dutch.[34] This position was to lead the Mahicans into a war with the eastern member of the Iroquois Confederacy.

The Mohawk-Mahican War (1624-1628) commenced because of conflicting interests in the fur trade. The

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[33]George T. Hunt, The Wars of the Iroquois: A Study in Intertribal Trade Relations (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1940), pp. 69-70; Bruce G. Trigger, "The Mohawk-Mahican War (1624-28): The Establishment of a Pattern" Canadian Historical Review vol. LII (September 1971), p. 278; Goldstein, pp. 57-59.

[34]Trelease, pp. 25-35; Kammen, pp. 24-28; Trigger, pp. 276-277.

Dutch, who would not take an official role in the war, attempted to court the Algonquin-speaking nations of Canada to bring their furs to Fort Orange. The Mahicans equally wanted to make an alliance with the northern tribes. Thus, the Mohawks perceived their position in the fur trade to be even more insecure.[35] The Mohawk treaty with the French in 1622 was thus a diplomatic maneuver to eliminate one threat, while they dealt with another.

In 1624 the Mohawks ratified their treaty with the French, which freed them to prosecute their war with the Mahicans. By 1626 the Dutch at Fort Orange had become increasingly alarmed, since the war was disrupting the flow of furs to the post. In that year Daniel Van Krieckenbeeck acted in an unofficial capacity, when he accompanied a Mahican war party against the Mohawks. The existence of and subsequent defeat of the Dutch-Mahican force endangered the already precarious relationship between the Mohawks and the Dutch. In 1628 the Mahicans were defeated and later dispersed, which opened the trade at Fort Orange to the Mohawks.[36] After terminating one threat the Mohawks were able to turn their attention to a previous menace.

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[35]William N. Fenton and Elisabeth Tooker, "Mohawk" in William Sturtevant and Bruce G. Trigger eds. Handbook of North American Indians: The Northeast, p. 468; T. J. Brasser, "Mahican" Handbook of North American Indians: The Northeast, p. 202; Trigger, p. 278; Trelease, p. 46.

[36]Trigger, pp. 279-281; Goldstein, pp. 57-59; Fenton and Tooker, p. 468; Brasser, pp. 202-203.

In 1627 French ambassadors traveled to the Mohawk country to renew the treaty of 1624. While in council the ambassadors were attacked by the Seneca. With the termination of the treaty, raids were conducted by both the Mohawks and Indian allies of the French for the next several years. By 1635 the Dutch had received reports that the Mohawks had attempted to engage in an alliance with the Hurons and Algonquins, but the French managed to persuade their allies not to accept the treaty. The French had surmised that the fur trade would be diverted to Fort Orange, while the Dutch had concluded the trade would go to Quebec.[37] But neither the French nor the Dutch had realized that Iroquois diplomacy, particularly that of the Mohawks, wanted to control the fur trade for themselves. Thus, the Iroquois were to continue their raids, but as quickly as they had commenced, their termination came with equal swiftness.

In 1641 the Seneca, Cayuga, and Onondaga attempted to establish peace with the French, but a peace without the Hurons and Algonquins. Charles Huault de Montmagny, the French governor, refused to accede to Iroquois' demands, upon which the Iroquois ambassadors opened fire on the French. Four years later Governor Montmagny initiated peace negotiations with the Mohawks, because Iroquois raids were effective enough to place New France on the brink of economic disaster. De Montmagny, in a conference with the

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[37]Goldstein, p. 60; Trelease, p. 54.

Mohawks, agreed to a cessation of hostilities and the establishment of commercial relations. The governor, also, wanted the Mohawks to persuade the other four Iroquois nations to accept the peace, but the Mohawks did not succeed. French motives, for the peace, were to gain time until they and their allies were strong enough to renew the hostilities on their terms.[38] But time was not there, since the Iroquois had failed to obtain the furs they desired through peaceful means or by minor raids, they resorted to the last available avenue open to them.

By the late 1640's the Iroquois had virtually exhausted their own fur trapping grounds and combined with their inability to secure the northern fur trade, Iroquois diplomacy thus became one of survival. In order to endure, the Iroquois resorted to the unprecedented method of total warfare. This war was not against the French, but rather against their Indian allies. The Iroquois war cry resounded throughout the forests as the first "Beaver War" commenced in 1649 with the invasion of Huronia. Although the Hurons suffered few losses, the fact that the Iroquois had dared to make a total incursion into their country had so demoralized the Hurons that they fled their homelands. A year later the Petun and Neutral Nations suffered the same fate, as the Iroquois had secured an enormous area of the fur trade country. But the Iroquois were unable to secure the

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[38]Goldstein, pp. 63-73; Hunt, p. 77.

trade, since the Hurons' position as middleman was taken over by the Ottawas.[39] The first beaver war terminated as quickly as it had begun, since the Iroquois had to focus their attention on a new threat.

In 1653 the Onondagas led an Iroquois delegation to Montreal, where they wanted to negotiate for peace. The treaty was to establish a limited commercial alliance between the French, their Indian allies and the Iroquois. The Five Nations, in securing the treaty, employed another diplomatic maneuver designed to protect their homelands, while they engaged in another war. In 1654 Iroquois warriors attacked the Erie Nation, which was dispersed in the same manner as the Hurons had been; but the Iroquois were not any closer to their desired objective. Although the fur trade had played a major role in this war, another reason had been the numerous Erie incursions against the Seneca. Thus, with an old nemesis defeated, the Iroquois resorted to blockading the rivers in order to obtain furs. The Iroquois continued their effective blockade for years,[40] but by the early 1660's they were willing to discuss peace.

In 1662 a large Iroquois war party was defeated by an Ottawa-led war party, a plague had devastated many of

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[39]Bruce G. Trigger, The Children of Aataentsic: A History of the Huron People to 1660 2 vols. (McGill: Queen's University Press, 1976), 2:762-766; Goldstein, pp. 78-79; Hunt, pp. 92-97.

[40]Goldstein, pp. 80-84; Hunt, pp. 99-102.

the Iroquois villages, and the war with the Susquehannah nation had commenced. Invading Iroquoia from the south, the Susquehannah were to remain a threat until their defeat in 1675.[41] Thus, the Iroquois desire for peace was genuine, but the French, tired of temporary truces, rejected the overture. In France developments were taking place that were the underlying cause of the refusal. For sixty years the colony of New France had been governed under various company charters, but in 1663 the French government of Louis XIV had begun to take a stronger stance towards the colony. In 1665 two years after it had become a royal colony, New France was to become stronger militarily as the famous Carignan-Salieres regiment was sent to North America. Fearing the loss of the fur trade and possibly the colony itself, the French government wanted to insure its survival.[42] Thus, with a new breath of life, New France was prepared for the next Iroquois depredation.

The Iroquois raid did not materialize, because emissaries from the Seneca, Cayuga, and Onondaga arrived in Quebec in 1665 to discuss peace. Stating they were tired of war, the ambassadors agreed to terminate the disruption of the fur trade; but more importantly, they agreed to French sovereignty as proposed by the Marquis de Tracey. De Tracey based his claim on Champlain's treaty of 1624,

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[41]Goldstein, p. 84; Hunt, pp. 134-135, 142-143.

[42]Goldstein, pp. 85-90; Eccles, p. 101.

but apparently he did not know that the earlier treaty was with the Mohawks and not these nations. De Tracey was equally unaware that decisions made by some of the Iroquois nations were not binding on all the league members.[43] Thus, future military operations against the Iroquois would not be attempts to vanquish an enemy, but rather to punish errant "children".

By 1666 De Tracey and the new governor, Sieur de Courcelles, had resolved to punish one of its siblings, which commenced French invasions into the Iroquois' country. The first incursion occurred against the Mohawks, but the invaders only found empty villages, which they promptly destroyed along with the stored provisions. Another invasion against the Mohawks took place later that same year, but the results were the same as the previous one. Even though the French victories were shallow, Iroquois ambassadors in 1667 journeyed to Quebec to negotiate for peace. Proposals accepted by both the French and the Iroquois included the termination of hostilities, the continuation of the fur trade, and French claim of sovereignty over the Iroquois.[44] As with the earlier treaties between the French and the Iroqouis, this one proved to be equally impermanent, since the Iroquois had not been militarily

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[43]Goldstein, pp. 43-44, 90-92; Trelease, p. 22.

[44]Goldstein, pp. 94-99; William J. Eccles, France in America (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), pp. 64-67.

subjugated and their position in the fur trade had not changed; but both the French and the Iroquois were to have a more serious problem as they would have to contend with a new colonial power.

In September of 1664 the English gained control of the colony of New Netherlands due to the English victory in their war with the Dutch. After securing control of the colony, Governor Richard Nicholls concluded a treaty with the Iroquois, which provided the English with the same friendly relations the Dutch had.[45] But the Iroquois were to learn quickly that the English and the Dutch differed in at least one major area. Dutch policy had been mercantilist and unambitious towards dominating North America, but English policy, equally commercial, was based on the claim for the Empire. The English had quickly asserted their right to the territory between the Hudson and St. Lawrence rivers to Lakes Erie and Ontario; but included in this claim was an assertion that all Indian nations within the territory came under English suzerainty.[46] Since the Iroquois were included in the allegation, they were to become involved in the larger sphere of Anglo-French rivalry. Iroquois diplomacy was again linked to survival as the two colonial powers vied to become their "masters."

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[45]Trelease, p. 228.

[46]Trelease, pp. 137-214.

In 1667 Governor Nicholls, in a conference with the Mohawks at Albany reasserted English sovereignty, and stated that the French claims were fallacious. Nicholls had surmised that French sovereignty over the Mohawks would disrupt the trade at Albany. The treaty between the Iroquois and the French later in the year would seem to justify English fears, but the Iroquois were unwilling to be dominated by either of the colonial powers.[47] In 1677 the English reasserted their claim over the Iroquois as two treaties were signed between various English colonies and numerous Indian nations, including the Iroquois. The agreements gave birth to the Covenant Chain, which was a confederation designed to reduce conflicts between the English colonies and the Indian nations, and to facilitate English expansion against the French and their Indian allies. The colony of New York would act as the mediator between the English and the Indians, while the Iroquois held a preeminent position among the Indians. The English viewed their new allies as subjects, but the Indians, especially the Iroquois, viewed their position in the confederation as being equal to the English.[48] The Iroquois had, thus, served notice to the English that they were not subordinate

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[47]Trelease, p. 245; Goldstein, pp. 98-99.

[48]Francis Jennings, "The Constitutional Evolution of the Covenant Chain" American Philosophical Society Proceedings vol. CXV (1971), pp. 88-96; Francis Jennings, "Susquehannock" Handbook of North American Indians: The Northeast, p. 366; Trelease, pp. 239-242.

to anyone. Later they would make the same statement to the French, as the first colonial war loomed on the horizon.

In 1680 the Iroquois commenced the second "Beaver War" as they invaded the Illinois' country. Although not physically defeated, the dispersal of the Illinois caused grave concern among the French.[49] With the fur trade again in jeopardy the only French recourse was to launch an invasion against the Iroquois. Governor Antoine de La Barre made the necessary preparations for the incursion, but prior to leaving he dispatched a letter to Governor Thomas Dongan of New York. La Barre informed Dongan of his plans in order that the invasion would not be misconstrued as an attack on New York. Dongan was in conference with the Iroquois when he received the letter, and immediately apprised them of its contents. Governor Dongan proposed to protect the Iroquois if they would accept English sovereignty. The Iroquois accepted his proposal, but only on the pretext that they would remain a free and independent people. Dongan dispatched a message to Governor La Barre informing him of the results of the conference and that an attack against the Iroquois would be construed as an invasion of British territory.[50] Dongan placed the English in a direct confrontation with the French providing that La Barre continued with his plans.

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[49]Goldstein, pp. 118-120; Hunt, pp. 150-152

[50]Goldstein, pp. 132-140; Trelease, pp. 265-267.

Governor La Barre called Dongan's bluff and proceeded ahead with his invasion plans. Actually La Barre had to make a show of force because the previous governor had promised the western tribes protection against the Iroquois. The French army under La Barre advanced as far as La Famine where disease and lack of supplies forced it to halt. Iroquois ambassadors journeyed to La Famine to meet with the governor. In a conference La Barre was forced to accept the Iroquois proposals of French noninterference in their war with the Illinois and recognition of Iroquois independence. In an attempt to placate the French, the Iroquois ambassadors told La Barre that New France would not be attacked.[51] Thus, the Iroquois were able to assert their independence to both colonial powers, but La Barre had used an Iroquois stratagem of appeasement in order to gain time until the colony could rebuild.

In 1686 Governor Dongan met with Iroquois ambassadors in Albany to warn them that the French were preparing for another invasion. Dongan then admonished them for allowing the French to build a fort at Niagara, and counseled them to trade only at Albany. The ambassadors agreed to the proposals, but requested English support if they were invaded. The governor accepted the Iroquois' call for aid, but a year later he would be required to honor the

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[51]Goldstein, pp. 136-140; Trelease, pp. 265-267.

agreement.[52] In 1687 the French invaded the Senecas' country, but this expedition like previous ones was unsuccessful in chastising the Iroquois, as only villages and provisions could be found and destroyed. The Seneca had fled to their brethren the Cayugas, while in Albany Governor Dongan was exhorting Iroquois warriors from the other four nations to go to the Senecas' aid. Dongan refused to send English soldiers, since in his mind that would constitute a violation of the 1686 Treaty of Whitehall, which was a pact of neutrality between the English and French.[53] Dongan's refusal to aid the Iroquois was important since he had promised them aid, but also because a colonial war was on the horizon.

The Anglo-French rivalry continued to become more belligerent as Iroquois raids against the French became more numerous. The French governor, the Marquis de Denonville, believed that Governor Dongan was inciting the Iroquois against the French. But in a conference with the Iroquois ambassadors, he learned that his expedition against the Seneca was the cause for the raids. In 1688 Denonville received a dispatch from Governor Dongan, which informed him of the London agreement and that the pact acknowledged the Iroquois as English subjects. Edmund Andros, who became New York's governor in 1688, reiterated the statement

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[52]Trelease, p. 273; Goldstein, p. 146.

[53]Goldstein, pp. 151-154; Trelease, pp. 279-281.

in a dispatch to Governor Denonville. Since they were English subjects, the Iroquois would receive protection; but Andros urged them to make peace with the French, which was what Denonville had wanted.[54] The governors' plans for peace went awry as war broke out in Europe and in North America.

In 1689 King William's War, or the War of the League of Augsburg commenced. In North America, the Iroquois had the opening foray when they raided the French village of La Chine. The French retaliated by attacking the English settlement of Schenectady, but four years would elapse before the Iroquois suffered an invasion.[55] In September 1689 the Count de Frontenac returned to New France after having been recalled seven years earlier.[56] In order to strengthen waning French prestige among the western Indian nations and to put an end to Iroquois raids, Count Frontenac resolved to invade the Iroquois. The Mohawks were attacked in 1693, but unlike the previous expeditions this one was successful, as the Mohawks were taken completely by surprise. Three years later Count Frontenac invaded the Iroquois heartland, but the Onondagas were prepared and did not suffer the same fate as

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[54]Goldstein, pp. 155-160; Trelease, pp. 289-291.

[55]Trelease, pp. 297-301; Goldstein, pp. 164-165.

[56]Goldstein, pp. 123-166.

their brethren.[57] Although the military strength of the Iroquois was not broken, a peace movement had begun to take shape among the Five Nations. The movement would grow in strength as the war came to a close.

As early as 1693 the Iroquois were willing to establish peace with the French, because the war had disrupted their hunting and ability to secure trade goods. Apparently the English were instrumental in keeping the Iroquois from finalizing the peace. A year later another attempt at peace was made by Iroquois delegates, but again the English were able to forestall the negotiations. Governor Benjamin Fletcher of New York rebuked the Iroquois for engaging in peace talks, but the Iroquois refused to be placed in a subordinate position by Fletcher. The Iroquois opposed the complete breaking away from the English, but wanted a durable peace with the French.[58] Thus precedents had been established during the war, for which the Iroquois could secure the best possible peace terms. In 1697 the war ended with the signing of the Peace of Ryswick. Within the treaty, the question of Iroquois sovereignty remained unsettled,[59] but Iroquois diplomacy was to force the issue.

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[57]Harold Blau, Jack Campisi, and Elisabeth Tooker, "Onondaga" Handbook of North American Indians: The Northeast p. 493; Fenton and Tooker, "Mohawk" Handbook, p. 473; Goldstein, pp. 179-187; Trelease, pp. 310-320.

[58]Goldstein, pp. 180-184; Trelease, pp. 313-317.

[50]Anthony F. C. Wallace "Origins of Iroquois Neutrality: The Grand Settlement of 1701" Pennsylvania History vol. 24 (1957), p. 229; Goldstein, p. 189; Trelease, p. 323.

Iroquois ambassadors in 1697 from four of the nations journeyed to Montreal to commence peace negotiations. Count Frontenac refused to meet with the emissaries unless all five tribes were represented. Two years later the French governor, Louis Callieres, invited the Iroquois to a conference at Montreal. Callieres reasserted the French desire for peace, but insisted their western Indian allies would be included. The Iroquois agreed to discuss the governor's proposal in a league council. For two years discussions between the French and the Iroquois continued until an agreement was reached in August 1701. The grand council was held in Montreal where delegates from the various western tribes, the French, and the Iroquois settled their differences and concluded a peace treaty. The Iroquois agreed to remain at peace with the western Indians, and to cease their disrupting the fur trade, but they were granted hunting concessions in the western territory as far as the post of Detroit.[60] The treaty with the French marked only one step in the Iroquois quest for peace, but the issue would not be settled until a similar treaty was concluded with the English.

In 1698 New York's governor, the Earl of Bellomont, met with the Iroquois at Albany, where he rebuked them for meeting with the French. Bellomont told the assemblage that they were English subjects and thus covered by the Ryswick

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[60]Goldstein, pp. 187-197; Wallace, pp. 229-230.

Treaty. The Iroquois refuted Bellomont's contention by stating they were not subjects of either the French or the English, but rather they were independent people. In 1701 Iroquois ambassadors concluded a treaty with Governor John Nanfan of New York. In a brilliant diplomatic maneuver, the Iroquois deeded their western hunting lands to the King of England. Encompassing an enormous tract from Lake Erie to the Michigan peninsula, the stratagem was to ensure the Iroquois' claim by having the English protect "their own territory." With the treaty, the Iroquois completed their quest, a quest to remain at peace with both powers; but also to remain neutral in future conflicts between the French and the English.[61] The Iroquois idea of neutrality was thus designed to ensure that they would remain a free and independent people by playing one power against the other. They would cling to this stance as another colonial war was not too far distant.

Within a year of their declaration, the Iroquois faced a severe test as another colonial war broke out. English attempts to enlist the Iroquois' aid in the early stages of Queen Anne's War did not succeed. The Five Nations would not waver from their position, while Albany traders argued against Iroquois intervention since it would disrupt the fur trade. The French honored the Iroquois neutrality, because they did not want a resumption of the

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[61]Trelease, pp. 361-362; Wallace, pp. 231-234.

Iroquois wars. Also the French had to forego any attacks either along New York's frontier, or within the colony, so as not to antagonize the Five Nations.[62] New England was, thus, the target of French raids, which prompted Governor Joseph Dudley of Massachusetts and New Hampshire in 1704 to plead with the Iroquois to enter the war. Four years later the Iroquois reconfirmed their stance in a conference at Albany. A year later Peter and Abraham Schuyler attempted to persuade the Iroquois to break their neutrality, but their efforts were unsuccessful.[63] As the war entered its final year, the Iroquois were to witness firsthand the power of England.

In 1710 four Iroquois sachems accompanied by Peter Schuyler sailed to England. Schuyler hoped that after seeing the English omnipotence, there would be a strengthening of the Anglo-Iroquois alliance. The ambassadors were presented to Queen Anne, to whom they requested the sending of missionaries among their people. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel was selected to send missionaries to the Iroquois, even though the teaching of Christian doctrines was not a novel idea to them.[64] Since the 1640's

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[62]Harry M. Ward, Unite or Die: Intercolony Relations, 1690-1763 (Port Washington: Kennikat Press, 1971), p. 134; Kammen, p. 144.

[63]John Lydekker, The Faithful Mohawks (New York: MacMillan, 1938), pp. 24-25; Ward, p. 134.

[64]Lydekker, pp. 24-28.

Jesuit priests periodically had been among the Iroquois, but their influence was minimal. Some Mohawk and Oneida tribesmen moved to the French settlement of La Prairie from 1667 to 1673. Known as the Caughnawagas, these Iroquois attempted to remain neutral in wars between the French and the Iroquois, but they assisted the French in the colonial wars.[65] Queen Anne's War ended in 1713 with the Treaty of Utrecht, while the question of Iroquois sovereignty remained unsolved; and yet both powers recognized Iroquois neutrality.[66] The Five Nations would not deviate from their stance, even though relations were not always cordial.

In 1712 English-Iroquois relations were strained as rumors had circulated that the Iroquois were ready to aid the Tuscaroras in their war with the English of North Carolina. Governor Robert Hunter of New York believed French intrigues were responsible for the rumors. Hunter felt the French had instigated the idea in order to break the English-Iroquois alliances, as the English would declare war on the Five Nations. Actually the Iroquois were not interested in joining the war, but rather were willing to mediate a peace between the Tuscaroras and the English. By 1713 the Tuscarora war had terminated with the remnants of that nation moving near the Iroquois. Nine years later the Tuscaroras were formally adopted into the Confederacy,

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[65]Fenton and Tooker, "Mohawk" Handbook, pp. 468-471.

[66]Lydekker, p. 42; Ward, p. 134.

but without any voting privileges in the league councils.[67] As the first era of colonial wars had ended with the Peace of Utrecht, three decades of amicable relations would reign as both the French and the English were unwilling to endanger their positions with the powerful Iroquois Confederacy.

Iroquois-European relations commenced with the arrival of the French in Canada, during the first decade of the seventeenth century. Once they became established on the St. Lawrence, the French were quickly drawn into an age-old conflict with the Iroquois. French alliances with the Hurons, Algonquins, and Montagnais became the focal point for these conflicts, which centered on the fur trade. Champlain's invasions against the Iroquois solidified the French position among their allies, but widened the gulf with the Iroquois. In 1610 the French enjoyed their last victory against the Iroquois, until Count Frontenac's expedition in 1693. Throughout this span of over eighty years, the Iroquois raids and offensives crippled the colony of New France. The Iroquois incursions were designed to strengthen their position in the fur trade, which many historians have perceived as the role of the middleman. In reality, the Iroquois were not about to dole out the trade goods they received, which they wanted for themselves. The crux of these relations was, thus, a

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[67] David Landy, "Tuscarora Among the Iroquois" Handbook, pp. 518-519.

constant state of belligerency, which remained until the Iroquois declaration of neutrality.

Iroquois relations with the Dutch commenced almost along the same lines as the French had pursued, but New Netherlands' untenable position engendered a more conciliatory stance. The Dutch were, also, tied into the fur trade, but the Iroquois were able to control that trade more efficiently, than with the French. The Dutch position in North America, based solely on commerce, was taken over by the English, who gained control of the colony in 1664. English-Iroquois relations were equally centered around the fur trade, but the belligerency was non-existent as the English quickly perceived, they needed the Iroquois as allies against the French. The treaties with the Iroquois in the late 1670's were thus designed to provide protection to the English not only from the French and their allies, but also the other Indian nations that signed the treaties. The English were then able to secure their frontiers while they geared for war against the French, but they were to learn that the Iroquois were not willing to remain at war with the French.

The Iroquois, after suffering initial losses to the French, were able to reverse their position and commence a war of attrition. Although the Iroquois did engage in treaties with the French, they did so only as a means to keep their enemies off balance. The Iroquois' wars against the French allies were the Five Nations' last hope to

garner the fur trade. The unprecedented method of invasion not only dispersed numerous Indian nations from their homelands, but also established the territory as the Iroquois' hunting grounds. The French invasions against the Five Nations were merely half-hearted attempts to chastise, but not destroy a needed enemy. The crux of the French position was that to destroy the Iroquois would thus remove the barrier separating them from the Dutch, then the English. The Iroquois equally were not about to destroy the French, for although they had established a pact of friendship with the English, their brilliant diplomatic maneuver of 1701 was designed to provide protection for themselves. The Iroquois would continually play one colonial power against another in order to keep their independence. The Iroquois' deed to the King of England was equally brilliant as the English would have to protect their lands. The attempts by both the French and the English to proclaim sovereignty over the Iroquois were accepted by the Iroquois only as measures of necessity. Once Iroquois diplomacy dictated a more belligerent stance, the Five Nations quickly asserted their independence. Iroquois-European relations were, thus, governed by French and English attempts to control the Iroquois, while the Five Nations continually fought to control their own destiny. The state of French-Iroquois affairs based solely on the fur trade usually ended in war, but English-Iroquois affairs were not as succinct, since relations were dictated by circumstances other than the fur trade. A

review of those problems was the basis of Cadwallader Colden's major works on the Iroquois.

CHAPTER III

PELTS, RUM, AND STROUDS: COLDEN ON THE FUR TRADE

In 1727, Cadwallader Colden had his first non-scientific study published, with his initial treatise on the Iroquois. Entitled, The History of the Five Nations, Depending on the Province of New-York in America, Colden had covered the period from the Iroquois' earliest contacts with the Europeans until the time of the Glorious Revolution in England. In 1747, he published a second edition which was enlarged and expanded to the Peace of Ryswick in 1697. Colden continued his study with a third edition, which covered the years of 1707 to 1720; but unlike the first two, this one was not published.[68] The histories were a narrative of European-Indian affairs and an in-depth view of the social and political life of the indigeneous peoples of New York and Canada. In essence, the histories were the culmination of a series of papers, written by Colden, that dealt with the commercial and military aspects of the fur trade.[69] Moreover, the histories

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[68]Stanley Pargellis and D. J. Medley Bibliography of British History: The Eighteenth Century, 1714-1789 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), p. 460.

[69]Wilbur R. Jacobs, "Cadwallader Colden's Noble Iroquois Savages" Historians of Nature and Man's Nature: The Colonial Legacy vol. 3 ed. Lawrence H. Leder (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), pp. 41-42.

were both prescriptive and descriptive, as Colden had described Indian-European relations and Indian life; but of equal importance, he had prescribed the policies and opinions of similar proponents.

Colden wrote the histories as a memorial to his friend, Governor William Burnet of New York. Colden had not simply praised his friend, but rather had argued for the policies that he espoused. He recorded that Burnet, aware of the importance of the western trade, had attempted to terminate the illicit trade between Albany and Montreal with the law that made it illegal to engage in this trade. On this point, Colden penned, ". . . he thought it necessary to put a Stop to the Trade between New-York and Canada, by which the French supplied themselves with the most valuable and necessary Commodities for the Indian Market . . . ."[70] Burnet not only wanted to put an end to the clandestine trade, but also to establish a trading post in the interior. He contended that considerable encouragement was given to young men to go into the interior and renew the trade with the Far Indians.[71] Colden's writings had, thus, become

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[70]Cadwallader Colden, The History of the Five Indian Nations, Depending on the Province of New-York in America (New York: Cornell University Press, 1958), pp. 77-78. Hereafter cited as History of Five Nations; Cadwallader Colden's "Account of the Trade of New-York" Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York ed. Edmund B. O'Callaghan 15 vol. (Albany, 1856-1887). Hereafter cited as NYCD,5:687; Colden's "Memoir on the Fur Trade" NYCD,5:732.

[71]Colden's "Account of the Trade of New-York" NYCD, 5:687; Norton, p. 136.

the vehicle by which Burnet's arguments were voiced.

Colden wrote the histories to those persons within the British government that were capable of ensuring the approval of Burnet's policies. Writing to Peter Collinson, the noted British scientist, he stated, " . . . if that book could in any measure draw the attention of the Ministry or of the Parliament to regard the Interest of North America in respect to the Fur Trade . . . ."[72] Colden wrote the histories to the Lords of Trade, with the hope that they would be valuable to them. Governor Burnet echoed Colden's sentiments, when he wrote that he believed the History presented a clear picture of the true nature of the fur trade. Laying Colden's works before the Lord Justices, the Lords of Trade stated they were going to annex them for their proceedings.[73] He had apparently achieved part of what he had set out to do; but the histories were more than just a memorial to a friend, for Colden had also written them in order to attack an influential group, located in London and New York.

Shortly after his arrival in New York, Governor Burnet signed into law an act that would terminate the illicit trade between Albany and Montreal. The law forbade

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[72]Colden to Peter Collinson, The Letters and Papers of Cadwallader Colden 9 vols., 3:42-44. Hereafter cited as CP.

[73]Governor Burnet to the Lords of Trade, November 11, 1724 NYCD, 5:725; Representation of the Lords of Trade on the New-York Indian Trade Acts NYCD, 5:760.

the selling of Indian trade goods by any New York inhabitant to any French person. Burnet was attempting to do what his predecessors had tried, because the clandestine trade was more than a quarter of a century old. As early as the 1680's, French traders had been traveling to and from Albany to exchange their furs for the less expensive English trade goods. By 1700 the trade had reached the point where an unofficial neutrality was established between Albany and Montreal.[74] Colden, in alluding to this, wrote "There had been some sort of Neutrality agreed on in the Lord Cornbury's Administration between the People of Albany & their Indians on ye one side & Montreal & the French Indians on the other . . . ." Colden, showing just how extensive the trade was, wrote ". . . Montreal was filled with Indian Goods and Albany exhausted . . . ."[75] Colden, in referring to the establishment of the illicit trade, was laying the foundation for his attack on those persons who benefited the most from it.

In 1724 prominent London and New York merchants petitioned the Board of Trade to disallow the 1720 law. The merchants centered their arguments on the belief that

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[74]Colden to Doctor John Mitchell, July 6, 1749, CP, 9:33; Arthur Buffinton, "The Policy of Albany and English Westward Expansion" Mississippi Valley Historical Review 8 (1922), pp. 348-351. Hereafter cited as MVHR; Norton, pp. 122-128.

[75]Colden, "Continuation of the History of the Five Indian Nations for the Years 1707 through 1720" CP, 9:412; Colden's "Memoir on the Fur Trade" NYCD, 5:732.

the law was detrimental to New York's trade and beneficial to the French. In clarifying this point, the merchants contended that the French traders would be able to procure the trade goods from other sources, while New York's trade would become damaged by the law.[76] Colden on behalf of Burnet stated, "The Merchants made like clamours and did not scruple to advance the grossest falsehoods in a petition to his Majesty . . . ." Furthermore, Colden remarked that the merchants were fond of the trade with Montreal, because they could sell large quantities of trade goods without any trouble. Finally, he showed that the Iroquois held the merchants in contempt when he wrote, "Merchants are looked upon by them as Liars, and People not to be trusted . . . ."[77] Colden, besides arguing against the merchants' allegations, was equally building the groundwork for the renewal of English expansion in the fur trade.

Colden praised the French explorers and coureurs de bois, who had far exceeded English attempts in traveling among the Far Indians. He believed that the English traders could outdo the French in the far trade, because of the advantages they possessed. Colden stated that the

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[76]Ruth L. Higgins, Expansion in New York: With Especial Reference to the Eighteenth Century (Philadelphia: Porcupine Press, 1976), p. 43; Norton, p. 142; Buffinton, p. 362.

[77]Colden's, "Remarks on the Subject Matter of the papers sent me by his Excellency" April 5, 1748, CP, 4:43; Colden's, History of the Five Nations, pp. 100-101; Colden's, "Memoir on the Fur Trade NYCD, 5:732.

people of New York had many advantages the French did not have, and that it would be impossible for the French to continue. Besides being in a good geographical position, the cost to bring Indian goods from England was cheaper than that paid by the French for imports. Also, he argued that the English traders could undersell the French because of the cheaper cost of transportation, and because of the number of goods available. Thus, Colden contended, ". . . it is only necessary for the Traders of New York to apply themselves heartily to this Trade in order to bring it wholly into their own hands for in every thing besides deligence and Industry and enduring fatigues the English have much the advantage of the French and all the Indians will certainly buy where they can at the cheapest rate."[78] As late as 1751, Colden was still arguing that the principal advantage the English had over the French was their ability to furnish goods at a cheaper rate.[79] To Colden, the advantages the English had were only one step in his argument on the fur trade because he also believed the English had to utilize their superiority over the French.

Colden transcribed that the French were established in the fur trade as far west as Michilimakinac. New York's

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[78]Colden's, History of Five Nations, p. 19; Colden's "Memoir on the Fur Trade" NYCD, 5:726-730.

[79]Colden to Governor George Clinton, August 8, 1751, CP, 4:280; Colden to Governor George Clinton, August 8, 1751, NYCD, 6:743.

Governor Thomas Dongan sought to expand English claims to the territory surrounding the Great Lakes and to extend the Albany fur trade by sending expeditions among the Far Indians.[80] Colden, who chronicled the English trading jaunts of the 1680's, was a firm advocate of English western expansion. Colden in arguing his position contended, "My Inclinations lead me to show what advantages not only the Indian Trade would reap by extending our Frontiers as far as the Lakes . . . ."[81] He argued that Governor Burnet attempted to persuade several men to go into the Indian country to renew the trade with the Far Indians. Colden equally supported Burnet's plan to construct a trading post on Lake Ontario at Oswego. When Burnet signed the act to prohibit the illicit trade, he also signed a bill for the establishment of the trading post. Furthermore, he advocated the building of a sloop to cruise around the lake trading with the Indians settled about Ontario.[82] Thus, Colden in supporting Burnet's western expansionist doctrines, was contending for a stronger position by New York in the fur trade.

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[80]Helen Broshar, "The First Push Westward of the Albany Traders" MVHR 7 (1920), p. 232.

[81]Colden's, "Memoir on the Fur Trade" NYCD, 5:733; Colden's, History of Five Nations, pp. 52-60.

[82]Colden to Clinton, August 8, 1751 CP, 4:283; Colden's, History of Five Nations, p. 77; Colden's "Account of the Trade of New-York" NYCD, 5:687; Colden to Clinton, August 8, 1751 NYCD, 6:745.

Within the histories, Colden had chronicled the travels of the Far Indians to Albany for trade goods. He wrote that Governor Dongan in a conference with the Five Nations had told them to open a path for the Western Indians to come and trade at Albany. Colden later penned of a conference between Governor Robert Hunter and the Five Nations, in which the Iroquoian speaker stated, "We shall always be willing to encourage their coming . . . ."[83] Governor Hunter in another conference with the Iroquois was assured that the Far Indians would receive free passage to Albany. Colden, who accompanied Governor Burnet to his conference with the Iroquois in 1721, stated that Burnet desired that a path be kept open for the Far Nations. He wrote that several Indian nations had traveled to Oswego to trade. These tribes, Colden stated, were previously unknown to the English before their coming to Albany. Finally, he wrote, ". . . a few days ago 80 Indian Men, besides Women and Children arrived at Albany from the furthest nation who live about the place called by the French Missilimakenak . . . ."[84] which was located at the Straits of Mackinac between Lakes Michigan and Huron. Colden thus depicted that increasing numbers of the western nations had

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[83]Colden's, History of Five Nations, pp. 67, 393.

[84]Colden's, History of Five Nations, p. 78; Colden's "Continuation" CP, 9:417-418; Colden's "Account of the Trade of New-York" NYCD, 5:687; Colden's "Account of the Conference between Governor Burnet and the Five Nations 1721" CP, 1:131.

journeyed to New York to trade, but he would not be satisfied until the British had acquired all of the trade.

When Colden had supported the elimination of the Albany-Montreal trade, he did so not only because he was against the English aiding the French; but also because he was an imperialist in the strictest sense of the word. Throughout his life, Colden remained an outspoken advocate of eliminating the French in North America. He viewed the fur trade as one important step in order to achieve this end. When Colden argued against the illicit trade, he perceived that it was more beneficial to the French than the English. He alleged that the French experienced great difficulties in the procurement and transportation of the trade goods. With these problems, unless the clandestine trade flourished, the French would not be able to compete with the English. Thus, he contended the French would cease to be competitors in the fur trade.[85] In arguing that the French could be driven out of North America through the fur trade, Colden also contended that the English must strengthen their imperial position.

From the introduction of the English into the Great Lakes, the French had perceived their position to be untenable. Colden elaborated on this fear when he wrote that the policy of the French government in Canada was

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[85]Colden's, "Account of the Trade of New-York" NYCD, 5:687; Colden's, "Memoir on the Fur Trade" NYCD, 5:726, 733.

turned solely towards the advancement of the fur trade.[86] The building of the forts at Niagara (1678) and Detroit (1701) was an aggressive attempt by the French to remain influential among the western nations. He used this fear to stir the English, when he stated that the French had hoped to persuade the Indians to accept the fortifications. Colden argued, ". . . if they can once be well secured by fortifications, at all passes between the lakes, they can then speak in a different tone to the Indians . . . ."[87] Colden continuing with this point recorded that such a fort would make the Iroquois depend on the French, while the English would lose all influence over them. Colden's fear of the loss of British influence was not confined solely to the Iroquois. Colden used this line of reasoning in his argument against the illicit trade, when he formulated that the western Indians' dependence on the French had increased to the degree where it posed a great danger to New York.[88] But Colden reasoned that without the trade, French dominance

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[86]Colden's, History of Five Nations, 1:46-47; Colden's, "Memoir on the Fur Trade" NYCD, 5:717; Norton, p. 153.

[87]Colden's, History of Five Nations, 1:46-47; Colden to Clinton, August 8, 1751, CP, 4:280; Norton, p. 12.

[88]Colden's, "Continuation of the Five Nations" CP, 9:419; Colden to Benjamin Franklin, November 19, 1753, CP, 4:414; Colden's, "Remarks on papers sent by his Excellency" CP, 4:43; Colden's, "Account of the Trade of New-York" NYCD, 5:687; Colden to Benjamin Franklin, The Papers of Benjamin Franklin 23 vols. ed. Leonard Labaree (1959-1983) (New Haven: Yale University Press), 5:121-122.

over the Far Indians would cease. To illustrate this point, Colden stated that the clandestine trade had given rise to the Caughnawaga, or Praying Indians, who were Mohawk deserters. Furthermore, Colden pointed out that these Indians depended chiefly upon the trade which, if terminated, would necessitate returning to their people.[89] Even though his writings had reflected an intense hatred for the pursuit of economic self-interest at the expense of national interest, and the threat of French aggression; there were equally other important points of contention within his manuscripts. Colden had not only argued that the English were powerful enough, particularly economically, to force the French out of the fur trade; he was also perceptive enough to realize that this could not be accomplished without instituting reforms, which he would continue to plead for throughout his life.

Just as Colden had severely criticized certain merchants, he also led frequent verbal assaults against traders. He did not complain about all traders, but rather against those who cheated the Indians. In the History Colden repeated Iroquois opinion when he chronicled that the traders were looked upon as liars, untrustworthy, and profit-seekers. Colden continued with this line of reasoning when he wrote, "Seldom any have been employ'd in

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[89]Colden, "The present state of Indian Affairs" CP, 4:286; Colden's, "Account of the Trade of New-York" NYCD, 5:687; Colden's, "Memoir of the Fur Trade" NYCD, 5:732.

managing public affairs with the Indians but a low ignorant set of mankind . . . ." He continued by saying that the traders had become contemptible in the Iroquois' eyes.[90] But Colden's writings were more than just a reflection of the Indians' opinions, as he was a leading colonial voice against the traders and the problems within the fur trade.

Colden focused on the price of the trade goods, that were sold to the Indians, as a major source of contention between the English and the Indians. During King William's War, Iroquois warriors, who journeyed to Albany, complained about the price of powder. The warriors asked, since they were soldiers of the king, why the powder could not be furnished at reasonable rates. In a conference with Governor Richard Ingoldsby, the Iroquois continued to ask why powder was sold at higher rates, when the English had requested their assistance against the French. He continued with this point, repeating the words of an Iroquoian speaker, "We are accustomed to buy Dear & the Traders always alledge the Bever is a Drug & worth nothing . . . ." Colden further expressed the Iroquois' desire to procure cheaper trade goods, because they complained that without them, they would not be able to defend their country. Moreover the Iroquoian speaker stated, "If we (they said)

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[90]Colden's, History of Five Nations, pp. 100-101; Colden to William Shirley, The Papers of Sir William Johnson ed. James Sullivan et al. 14 vols. (Albany 1921-1965), 9:43. Hereafter cited as JP.

shall be destro'd you will not be able to defend your selves as little as we can subsist without you."[91] Thus, Colden was using the Iroquois' complaints of high-priced trade goods to show just how much the English needed their allies. He continued to chronicle their grievances about the price of goods, because he was seeking to bring about reforms in this area of the fur trade.

In a conference with Governor Hunter, an Iroquoian speaker told him that they desired cheaper goods, and would never desist from wanting them. The speaker further remarked that since the Covenant Chain was founded upon this, it would be in the best interest of the people of Albany to sell cheaper trade goods, because all of the western nations would be drawn to it, and thus would depend on the English. Colden continued with his plea when he argued that the Iroquois did not want anything the French could furnish them, since the English could do so at a cheaper rate. But the Iroquois contended that the French sold them powder at cheaper rates. As late as 1745, the Iroquois stated that since trade had been the prime reason for entering into the alliance, they had to speak of the dearness of trade goods now that war was

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[91]Colden's, History of Five Nations, pp. 117, 125; Colden's, "Continuation" CP, 9:393, 408.

about to commence.[92] Although Colden's writings mirrored Iroquois desires to procure trade goods at less expensive rates, they also centered on a different type of complaint, one that dealt with a specific kind of trade item.

In the History, Colden wrote that the English traders, who had traveled among the western nations during the 1680's were responsible for introducing rum to the Indians. The French were concerned about this, because they believed the Indians would become troublesome. Rum was the one commodity which had given the English an additional advantage over the French. Manufactured in the West Indies, rum had been brought into the colonies in ever increasing quantities, much to the dismay of many colonial and Indian leaders. Iroquois sachems complained to the Indian Commissioners about the selling of rum to their tribesmen since ". . . it occasions more mischief that can be told . . . ."[93] The noted Seneca speaker Decanesora had also complained of the disorders that rum produced. Iroquois sachems were adamant in desiring that the selling of rum be prohibited and their sentiments were not taken lightly

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[92]Colden's, "Account of Conference between Governor Burnet and the Five Nations" 1721, CP, 1:133; "Propositions made by his Excellency the Honorable George Clinton Esq. . . . to five of the six united Nations of Indians . . . ." October 10, 1743, CP, 3:176; Colden's, "Continuation" CP, 9:411, 426.

[93]Colden's, History of Five Indian Nations, pp. 60, 384; Norton, pp. 6, 12; Broshar, p. 235; Wilbur R. Jacobs, "Unsavory Sidelights on the Colonial Fur Trade" New York History 34 (1953), p. 137.

by some colonial leaders. During the seventeenth century attempts to outlaw the sale of rum proved to be ineffectual. In 1709 New York's Assembly had passed a law that outlawed the sale of rum, but like its predecessors, and the one that followed in 1716, the law was not effective as traders and Indians alike argued against it. Even though both Indian leaders and colonial politicians had argued against the effects of rum and for its prohibition, neither were willing to relinquish it permanently.[94] Colden's brief chronicling of the rum trade and Iroquois response was, like his arguments on the price of trade goods, an introduction to his pleas for reform.

As strongly as Colden had argued against the merchants, his verbal assaults were equally intense against traders who took advantage of the Indians. To illustrate this point, Colden wrote of a trader at Oswego who had sold what were supposed to be kegs of rum to a far nation, but in reality they turned out to be filled with water. He argued further that such practices had raised the enmity of the Iroquois towards the traders, that only a constant supply of presents and the Iroquois' diffidence towards the French, had kept them within the British interest. To control these abuses, Colden believed that only one person be appointed to the position of Superintendent of Indian Affairs, and that person would not be allowed to trade

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[94]Colden's, "Continuation", pp. 384, 388, 414; Norton, p. 68.

with the Indians. Thus, Colden argued that the previous commissioners were viewed with contempt by the Indians.[95] In addition to the establishment of a single superintendency, Colden advocated other means to prevent abuses.

In July 1764, the Board of Trade wrote to the colonial governors and Indian superintendents that the responsibility of Indian relations would in the future be controlled by imperial officials. Included within the report were trade regulations which comprised the establishment of certain fixed posts for the trade. Equally important were the regulations that ensured the Indians against frauds and abuses by the traders.[96] Sir William Johnson, writing to Colden, stated that in order to prevent abuses in the trade and to secure the traders' lives and property, all trade should be prohibited in the distant Indian towns and only permitted at Detroit, Niagara, and Oswego.[97] Colden agreed with Johnson on the regulation concerning the granting of licenses to only certain traders, since

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[95]Colden to Peter Collinson, May 1742, CP, 2:259-260; Colden's, "The present state of the Indian affairs . . . ." CP, 4:282.

[96]Peter Marshall, "Colonial Protest and Imperial Retrenchment: Indian Policy 1764-1768" Journal of American Studies 5 (1971), pp. 1-4; "The Board of Trade to Sir William Johnson on Indian Affairs" July 10, 1764, CP, 6:326; "Regulations for Indian Trade" May 1, 1767, JP, 13:422-424.

[97]Sir William Johnson to Colden, July 9, 1764, CP, 6:315-316; Johnson to Colden, September 21, 1764, JP, 4:541-542; Colden to Johnson, September 3, 1764, JP, 11:345-346.

that would bind them against abuses in the trade, because the traders would be under forfeiture of their licenses. Moreover, Johnson wrote that the commanding officers should be required to keep a watch on the traders in order to prevent frauds and abuses.[98] Finally, Colden wrote that the New York Assembly had decided that the traders should regulate themselves, which was contrary to what he believed in. Colden had contended that the principle source of friction between the English and the Indians had been fraudulent traders. Thus, Colden's arguments were designed not only to provide a fair system of justice to the Indians to ensure their fidelity, but also to preserve the interests of the Empire in the fur trade. To Colden, those persons who pursued their own interests at the expense of the Empire's were detrimental to the trade.[99]

Colden had written the histories, not only as a memorial to Governor Burnet, but also to promote the policies that Burnet espoused. He supported Burnet's policies, because they coincided with his own views. With the writing of the histories as a memorial to his friend, Colden had hoped to draw attention to the problems in the

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[98]Johnson to Colden, June 9, 1764, CP, 6:315-316; Johnson to Colden, September 21, 1764, CP, 6:351; Johnson to Colden, December 18, 1764, CP, 6:398-399.

[99]Colden to Johnson, January 11, 1769, JP, 12:686; Siegfried B. Rolland, "Cadwallader Colden: Colonial Politician and Imperial Statesman 1718-1760"(Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1952), pp. 66-68.

fur trade and the policies that were designed to correct them. Colden believed that by informing the Lords of Trade of the nature of the fur trade and Burnet's policies, they would totally support his actions. The histories had thus become the vehicle by which Colden's and Burnet's arguments were placed against those of the merchants and traders. The merchants had contended that Burnet's law was detrimental to the interests of the province and their own. Colden argued that the merchants were only interested in the loss of profits, and thus did not care about the concerns of the province. He contended that the law was designed to eliminate the treasonous conduct of those merchants that engaged in the illicit trade. The histories, in one sense, were thus an argument against those persons who placed their interests above that of the Empire.

Colden equally supported Burnet's expansionist policies, especially the building of a post at Oswego. To Colden, this was to have a threefold effect. Western Indians would be drawn into the British sphere of influence, the fidelity of the Iroquois would be strengthened, and the French would be driven from an active role in the fur trade, and ultimately from North America. Colden's Histories were also the instrument by which he could argue against the frauds and abuses in the trade. Colden had echoed the Iroquois' sentiments for cheaper trade goods, which would further strengthen the advantages the English already possessed. Moreover, this would continue to

ensure the maintaining of the Iroquois' fidelity to the English. One trade item that Colden argued against was the selling of rum to the Indians, which he not only believed was detrimental to the Indians themselves, but also to the interests of the Empire. Colden's later writings were echoed by his friend Sir William Johnson, as both men exchanged ideas on how to control the fur trade. The establishment of certain trading posts and the licensing of the traders were necessary regulations designed to prevent frauds and abuses within the fur trade. Although the histories and Colden's other writings, which were a reflection of the histories, could be viewed as a memorial to a friend, an argument against fraudulent merchants and traders, and a plea for trade regulations, the underlying factor of these chronicles and the numerous other correspondence, must be viewed as an extension of Colden's imperialism.

CHAPTER IV

QUEST FOR THE IROQUOIS: INDIAN AFFAIRS THROUGH THE GREAT WAR FOR EMPIRE AND BEYOND

During their seventeenth century wars with the Iroquois the French in Canada had discovered that they were not powerful enough to militarily subjugate their enemy. The Iroquois declaration of neutrality in 1701 came as a blessing to the French, since no longer would Iroquois war parties harass Canadian settlements and disrupt the fur trade. Colden expressed French desires for the peace, when he stated that their only viable means of existence was the fur trade. Moreover, he contended that the French desired the peace before the English actively lent their assistance to the Iroquois.[100] The French were thus freed to pursue their imperialistic designs with even greater zeal.

An important instrument of that imperialism was the Jesuit priests, who since the late 1660's had been periodically among the Iroquois. Showing their effectiveness, Colden wrote, ". . . the Practises of the French Priests been so far gained that several of the Mohawks who live nearest the English have left their habitations, and are

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[100]Colden's, History of Five Nations, pp. 86, 164; Colden's, "Memoir on the Fur Trade" NYCD, 5:727.

gone to settle near Monreal . . . ."[101] By the 1680's the priests were among the Onondagas, Cayugas, and Oneidas, but their efforts with the Seneca were largely unsuccessful. Moreover, their effectiveness became clearer as the Senecas were brought into the French fold shortly thereafter. Colden expressing their methods for success argued, "The French had give Jesuits in the Countrys of ye Five Nations who did all they could by Presents and other wise to debauch ym from the English."[102] Although the Jesuits were relatively successful, they were only one facet of French expansion.

Another prominent factor came in the form of men like Chabert de Joncaire, who lived within the Iroquois villages. As an adopted Seneca, Joncaire was able to wield enormous power among "his" nation, but more importantly his influence extended to Onondaga. Moreover, he was a sachem, who took part in tribal and league councils, where he could voice the French position. After establishing a trading post at Niagara, Joncaire attempted to persuade the Iroquois to allow him to turn it into a fort.[103] The construction of a fort at Niagara was only one of several which the French

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[101]Colden's, "Memoir on the Fur Trade" NYCD, 5:727-728.

[102]Colden's, History of Five Nations, pp. 31-32, 47, 74; Colden's, "Continuation" CP, 9:370, 377.

[103]Lawrence Henry Gipson, The British Empire Before the American Revolution: The Great Lakes Frontier, Canada, The West Indies, India, 1748-1754 vol. 5 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1942), p. 81; Thomas S. Abler and Elisabeth Tooker, "Seneca" Handbook of North American Indians: The Northeast, p. 507.

hoped to build. The French governor wanted a post built at 'Swegasie,' while Governor Burnet mentioned a fort at Cadarackui. In response to a query from the Lords of Trade, Colden replied that the French had fortified their post at Crown Point, which he considered to be in control of a strategic pass.[104] Through these strongholds the French were able to increase their influence among the Iroquois.

French expansion within the Six Nations continued to increase to such a state that New York was in danger. In fact, French emissaries were circulating among the Onondagas and Senecas, prior to the outbreak of King George's War in 1744.[105] Colden in 1749 wrote that the French had attempted to create jealousy between the eight Iroquois and the English. A year later he argued that the French were inciting the Iroquois to war with the English. Sir William Johnson showed the same concern about French activity, while Governor Clinton invited the governors of the other colonies to put an end to French designs.[106]

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[104]Colden's, "Continuation" CP, 9:365-366; Colden's, "Account of the Conference between Governor Burnet and the Five Nations, 1721" CP, 1:130; "Mr. Colden's Answers to the Queries of the Lords of Trade" February 14, 1738, NYCD, 6:125.

[105]Colden's, "Account of the Trade of New-York" NYCD, 5:687; Daniel Horsmanden to Colden, March 25, 1734, CP, 2:109; John Rutherfurd to Colden, March 2, 1743, CP, 3:9.

[106]Colden to Governor Clinton, February 19, 1749, CP, 4:101; Sir William Johnson to Governor Clinton, January 6, 1750, CP, 4:187; Colden to Governor William Shirley in France, CP, 9:56.

Thus, English colonial officials were concerned over French imperialism, which they deemed as swaying the Iroquois into a war against the English. But French policy dictated a different set of circumstances.

French strategy, although never totally giving up the idea of engaging the Iroquois, turned to the possibility of securing a neutrality with them. Colden wrote of the reasons why the French would want such a pact which included the continuation of the Albany trade, the ability to fall upon New England without retaliation from New York, and the division of the English and Iroquois. His argument persisted when he stated that French emissaries told the Iroquois not to become dependent upon one side. Later Colden reported to Governor Clinton that the Iroquois and the French Indians had agreed not to make incursions against one another. Finally he contended "The French have been very industrious in propagating this maxim or piece of Policy among all our Indians."[107] French efforts to influence the Six Nations coincided with their attempts among the western nations.

Throughout the seventeenth century and well into the eighteenth, French aggrandizement had established an ascendency over many of the eastern Canadian nations.

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[107]"Remarks on the Subject Matter of the papers sent me by his Excellency" April 5, 1748, CP, 4:35, 39; Colden to Governor George Clinton, January 1748, CP, 4:5; Observations of Cadwallader Colden upon the plan against Louisburg, 1745, CP, 3:134-135.

French policy in the eighteenth century was dictated by an overwhelming desire to expand their control in North America. In 1749 the French governor La Galissoniere sent an expedition into the Ohio Valley region to reclaim the area. Led by Celeron de Bienville, the campaign was designed to link French Canada with French Louisiana, but also to expel the English traders there. Moreover, Bienville was to try and secure the allegiance of the Ohio Valley Indians.[108] Bienville's expedition demonstrated to the Ohio Valley nations French power, but before they would commit themselves further demonstrations would have to take place. French influence at this juncture took the form of incursions instead of their practice of establishing trade relations. In 1752 the English trading post at Pickawillany was destroyed by a French expedition, which led the Ohio Valley Indians to reassess their allegiance. The year 1754 proved to be one of great consequence for both the English and the French. In that year the Virginia governor sent an expedition into the region, but at Great Meadows the English force suffered a serious defeat. This setback led to the Ohio Valley Delaware, Shawnee, Mingo, and Miami joining the French fold. French prestige had greatly increased,

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[108]William J. Eccles, France in America (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), pp. 178-180; William J. Eccles, The Canadian Frontier 1534-1760 (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1969), p. 159.

but that expansion would not stop with incursions.[109] As with the posts in the Iroquois country, the French constructed several forts in western Pennsylvania, which extended from Presque Isle on Lake Erie to Fort Duquesne at the confluence of the Monongahela, Ohio and Allegheny Rivers.[110] French colonial leaders had, thus, pursued an aggressive policy to increase their prestige, while their rival, the English, remained inactive.

As active as the French had been, the English were exactly the opposite. Although the French and Iroquois had traditionally been enemies, English inertness actually led to the Iroquois defection. Colden contended that if the English had assisted the Iroquois, the French Indians would have been brought over to the English. Governor Fletcher had assured the Iroquois that they would receive more assistance, but that was not forthcoming. In fact, the Mohawks even complained about the lack of assistance

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[109]Eccles, France in America, p. 182; Lawrence Henry Gipson, The British Empire Before the American Revolution: The Great War for the Empire: The Victorious Years 1758-1760 vol. 7 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1949), p. 64; Jack Stagg, Anglo-Indian Relations in North America to 1763 and An Analysis of the Royal Proclamation of 7 October 1763 (Ottawa, Indian and Northern Affairs, 1981), p. 78.

[110]Randolph C. Downes, Council Fires on the Upper Ohio: A Narrative of Indian Affairs in the Upper Ohio Valley until 1795 (Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1940), pp. 62-63; Eccles, France in America, p. 179; Reuben Gold Thwaites, France in America 1497-1763 (New York, London: Harper & Brothers, 1905), pp. 157-161

which Colden stated ". . . might prove of ill consequences . . . ."[111] Continuing with this point, Colden wrote that New York often had made promises to the Iroquois concerning engagements, but did not support them. The Iroquois believed the English were thus too careful of their own lives but not of the Indians'. Consequently, Governor Clinton discovered the Iroquois to be unreceptive when a leading Mohawk sachem became angry at not seeing the English army. The Iroquois spokesman, complaining of English indifference, declared that the French quickly did what they proposed. Finally, Sir William Johnson stated that the English had not provided assistance that allies were required to do.[112] The lack of English support was a major cause of the Iroquois defection but other factors widened the rift.

In the realm of forest diplomacy, the art of gift giving was an accepted practice in European-Indian relations. Usually the gifts to the Indians were paid for by the Crown or an individual, but colonial assemblies sometimes voted funds for that purpose. English colonial policy, as dictated by the Board of Trade, regarded gift giving as an important factor in retaining the allegiance of the Iroquois. Sir William Johnson was noted for doling

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[111]Colden's, History of Five Nations, pp. 127, 152; Colden's, "Continuation" CP, 9:368.

[112]Governor George Clinton to Colden, July 8, 1747, CP, 3:404-405; Sir William Johnson to Colden, October 13, 1763, CP, 6:239-240; Colden's, History of Five Nations, p. 110.

out enormous amounts of presents, because he knew that it would keep the Iroquois faithful.[113] Colden, equally aware of the value of the custom, stated that if the King's present had been given out as it was intended then it could have been more beneficial to both the Iroquois and the English. He was complaining of the refusal of New York's Assembly to provide funds for the gifts. Subsequently, the Iroquois believed they were being neglected by the English. Furthermore, Colden recorded that this practice had kept the Iroquois from totally defecting to the French.[114] Thus, the English were struggling to retain the allegiance of their traditional allies within the fold as the last colonial war commenced.

During the early years of the Great War for Empire (1754-1763), the French were victorious which maintained their sovereignty over their Indian allies. Three members of the Iroquois Confederacy openly declared themselves in favor of the French. Colden expressed fear that the French would release their allies on New York in the autumn of

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[113]Wilbur R. Jacobs, Wilderness Politics and Indian Gifts: The Northern Colonial Frontier 1746-1763 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1950), pp. 11, 28, 44, 76; William N. Fenton, "The Iroquois in History" North American Indians in Historical Perspective ed. by Eleanor Burke Leacock and Nancy Oestreich Lurie (New York: Random House, 1971), pp. 146, 150.

[114]Colden's, History of Five Nations, p. 136; Colden's, "Continuation" CP, 9:413; Colden to Peter Collinson, May 1742, CP, 2:260.

1756. He showed genuine concern because the previous year the English army led by General Edward Braddock had suffered a devastating defeat near Fort Duquesne. Colden's apprehension continued as he wrote, "We are fully convinced that for more than a year passed french emissaries have been among our Indians inciting them to make a general irruption on the Colonies . . . ."[115] Moreover, Iroquois ambassadors from every nation, except the Mohawk, journeyed to Montreal to treat with the governor. Their objective was to establish peace with the French. The Iroquois had thus come under total French domination, which was further revealed in their allowing Oswego to be destroyed. Both Niagara and Oswego were tolerated by the Iroquois, since 1727, because the two represented a balance of power within the Iroquois scheme of stability.[116] Consequently, Oswego's destruction depicted the extent of French prestige and the lack of English influence.

Although the English had lost the initial encounters, by 1757 their power had commenced to drive back the French. In the spring of that year, Sir William Johnson

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[115]Stagg, p. 79; Lawrence Henry Gipson, The British Empire Before the American Revolution: The Great War for the Empire: The Years of Defeat 1754-1757 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946), 6:94-97; Colden to _____, January 8, 1756, CP, 5:65; Colden to Governor Charles Hardy, May 11, 1756, CP, 5:75.

[116]Stagg, p. 183; Gipson, The Victorious Years, 7:65-66; Gipson, The Years of Defeat, 6:195-200.

held a conference with the Iroquois in an attempt to offset the influence of the Montreal negotiations the previous year. In June 1757, the Senecas, Cayugas, and Onondagas declared their neutrality while the Oneidas and Tuscaroras leaned towards that direction.[117] This decision to leave the war foretold the impending loss of French power and influence. Without the powerful Iroquois Confederacy as allies, the end of the French was near.

In 1758 New France had suffered an acute shortage of food because of the poor harvests of the two previous years, and the inability of French ships to run the English blockade. Consequently, the French were losing the support of their Indian allies, because they could not supply them. The loss of strategic forts in that year also contributed to the diminishing of French prestige among their allies. Louisbourg, Frontenac, and Duquesne fell to the English, which shook French invincibility among the Indian nations.[118] But more importantly the fall of Fort Niagara had stronger repercussions for the French. The Iroquois wholeheartedly lent their support to the English by 1760.[119] Consequently, for all intents and purposes, the Great War for the Empire

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[117]Gipson, 7:74; Stagg, pp. 216-217.

[118]Gipson, 7:168-169; 246, 342-343; Stagg, pp. 216-217.

[119]Stagg, p. 230; Gipson, 7:342; Wilbur R. Jacobs, Dispossessing the American Indian: Indians and Whites on the Colonial Frontier (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1972), p. 86.

had reached its zenith at Niagara. Even though the treaty signed in 1763 officially terminated the war, French influence did not diminish totally.

The Indian uprising of 1763 was caused by French influence, according to English colonial leaders. As early as 1760 Colden wrote that a conference at Onondaga might have been instigated by the French governor. Sir William Johnson echoed Colden's sentiments about French prevalence among the Indians. As late as 1765 both men continued to regard the French as having a bad influence on the Indians. Colden wrote that the French had assured the Indians that no peace would be made until Canada was restored, and that a French fleet was sailing to their aid.[120] Although both men in all probability were genuine in their fears that the French were behind the insurrection, the real causes were deeper than mere influence.

General Jeffrey Amherst, Commander-in-Chief in North America, decided to economize on the amount of presents given to the Indians. He felt they should return to their hunting. Moreover, he placed an embargo on powder as a preventative of war, but the Indians viewed this measure as a British preparation for war. Sir William Johnson at a conference with the Iroquois wrote Colden that he be

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[120]Colden to Alexander Colden, March 1, 1760; Sir William Johnson to Colden, July 13, 1763, CP, 6:225-226; Sir William Johnson to Colden, January 22, 1765, CP, 7:10-11; Colden to Sir William Johnson, JP, 11:524.

required to redress the Indians' grievances, particularly land. Moreover, they firmly believed that the British were seizing their lands.[121] Even though the French were not physically a factor among the Indians, they still retained some degree of influence. Nonetheless, their presence was felt, but its effect would have been minimal if the English had not created their own problems.

Colden strongly believed that the French must be driven from North America, but in order to do so the Iroquois' allegiance had to be secured. He was assured that New York's Assembly was one of the major causes that led to the Iroquois defection. The Assembly often refused to support the governor's policies by not allocating funds for the proper regulation of Indian affairs. Moreover, Colden attributed their refusal to intense factionalism, as they would only support those policies which benefited them. His intense dislike for the Assembly centered on their role in the management of Indian affairs, which they attempted to manipulate to suit their own desires. Consequently, Colden believed that their role often hindered plans against the French, which subsequently led to Iroquois

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[121]Downes, pp. 106, 111, 113; Johnson to Cadwallader Colden, March 20, 1762, JP, 3:652-653; Lyle M. Stone and Donald Chaput, "History of the Upper Great Lakes Area" Handbook of North American Indians: The Northeast, p. 606.

dissatisfaction and an increase in French influence.[122] But his tirades were not solely directed against certain persons in the province because the root of the problem was in Canada.

As an ardent imperialist, Colden either initiated or supported proposals that would have terminated the French presence in North America. Arguing against French encroachments and English inactivity Colden wrote of the French attempts to withdraw the Iroquois' affections. He believed the consequences to be dreadful if the French should succeed. John Rutherfurd, a close friend, stated that the sole interest of the French was to reduce the English settlements, and gain the Iroquois' affections. Colden echoed Rutherfurd's contentions when he argued that the French must be chastised.[123] During the Great War for the Empire Colden learned that the French were seeking peace, at the time that they had gained numerous advantages. The peace would adhere the Iroquois to the French, while the English lost all influence. Consequently, he believed that the English colonies would ". . . for ever after be in a very precarious state."[124] But, Colden's imperialism

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[122]Colden's, "Continuation" CP, 9:402; Colden's, "The present state of Indian affairs" NYCD, 6:739-741; Rolland, pp. 111-112.

[123]John Rutherfurd to Colden, CP, 3:106-107; Colden to Governor George Clinton, February 19, 1749, CP, 4:101-02; Colden to _____, January 8, 1756, CP, 5:65.

[124]Colden to Peter Collinson, December 31, 1757, CP, 5:211-214.

did not stop him from recognizing French methods which he deemed advantageous. The French, he stated, showed an interest in their Indian allies, which greatly attached them to the French cause. Moreover, the French placed "experienced" men among the Indians to handle their affairs, while the army officers were required to take a tour of duty among the Indians. But more importantly, Colden argued, "The grand advantage the French have is that their affairs among the Indians are all directed by one Council, and no expence is thought too great . . . ."[125]

In praising French procedure in dealing with the Indians, Colden's own ideas on the subject were in strict accordance. Even though the French were his enemy he agreed with them on how to conduct Indian affairs.

During the seventeenth century Albany officials were occasionally referred to as commissaries of Indian affairs. In 1696 Governor Fletcher formally appointed a Board of Commissioners which replaced the Albany officials. With the change of governors two years later, the commissioners were succeeded by magistrates from Albany. This practice continued until 1720 when Governor Burnet took the control of Indian affairs out of the magistrates' hands and placed it directly under the auspices of several

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[125]Colden's, History of Five Nations, pp. 160-161, 163; Colden, "The present state of Indian affairs," NYCD, 6:744.

appointed men.[126] But even this did not put an end to the problems within the realm of Indian affairs.

Following the French example, Colden stated that experienced persons were needed among the Iroquois to advise and direct them. The Iroquois, themselves, complained about the lack of care they received. Colden attributed this to the fact that the Indians were often cheated by those with whom they dealt.[127] Colden was referring to the Indian commissioners who were also traders or merchants. These commissioners, because of the economic situation, refused to stop the Iroquois from going to Canada. In fact, they encouraged the Canadian trade which the Iroquois kept open by treating with the French governor. Moreover, the trade was more important than the allegiance of the Iroquois, because it served the commissioners' own interest. Thus, the commissioners had in a sense driven the Iroquois away from them as Colden stated, ". . . they have an absolute diffidence of ym."[128] Colden did not simply criticize how Indian affairs were conducted, but rather initiated and supported imperial plans.

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[126]Norton, pp. 74-75; Trelease, pp. 309-339.

[127]Colden's, History of Five Nations, pp. 163, 368; Colden's, "The present state of Indian affairs" NYCD, 6:741.

[128]Colden to ————, August 7, 1745, CP, 3:138; John Rutherfurd to Colden, CP, 3:106-107; James Alexander to Colden, July 26, 1754, CP, 4:460.

In 1746 the Indian commissioners resigned their positions, because of Colden's instigation, among others. Sir William Johnson was then given a commission as colonel of the Iroquois which received Colden's wholehearted approval. Consequently, Colden wrote that Johnson ". . . gained more influence among the Indians than any person before him . . . ."[129] But in 1751 Johnson resigned his commission because of New York's indifference to Indian-related problems, the lack of financial support and the continuance of provincial control over Indian affairs. The Iroquois expressed concern to Governor Clinton that Johnson had resigned. Three years later they strongly requested that Sir William Johnson manage their affairs, but were informed they had to be satisfied with the commissioners. Like Colden, Johnson strongly advocated the management of Indian affairs under royal auspices.[130] Instead of diminishing, support for imperial control increased significantly.

In 1751 Archibald Kennedy, a member of the New York council, urged a unified Indian policy and the appointment of a "Superintendent" of Indian Affairs. Kennedy presented his pamphlet to Colden and Benjamin Franklin requesting

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[129]Rolland, p. 108; John R. Alden, "The Albany Congress and the Creation of the Indian Superintendencies" MVHR, 27:194; Colden's, "The present state of Indian affairs" NYCD, 6:739.

[130]Stagg, pp. 71-72; "The Six Nations and Johnson" JP, 1:340; James Alexander to Colden, July 26, 1754, CP, 4:460.

their comments. Both men endorsed Kennedy's proposals, especially Colden, whose own thoughts on the subject were similar.[131] As early as 1745 Colden was arguing for a single superintendency, to be directed by New York's governor. He contended that the superintendent should receive a sufficient allowance in order to conduct affairs, but he should not be allowed to engage in the trade. Furthermore, Colden stated that the superintendent was to correspond with the Board of Trade and other colonial governors. Thus, he firmly believed that the proper management of Indian affairs would be beneficial to the "nation."[132] Even though plans had been submitted which would place Indian affairs into competent hands, the proposals were laid aside as the Great War for the Empire commenced.

During the Albany Congress of 1754, Thomas Pownall and Sir William Johnson revived the idea of a single superintendency under royal control. In October of the same year, the Board of Trade recommended to Sir Thomas Robinson, secretary of state for the southern department, that a royal official be appointed to manage Indian affairs.[133]

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[131]Alden, pp. 195-196; Stagg, pp. 110-111; Ward, pp. 11-12.

[132]Colden's, "The present state of Indian affairs" NYCD, 6:744; Rolland, pp. 108-109, 144; Colden to _____ August 7, 1745, CP, 3:139.

[133]Alden, pp. 197-201; Stagg, pp. 125-127.

Thus, after fruitless years of colonial complaints, the English government in London decided to change the methods of English-Indian relations. In fact, when the Board of Trade had submitted their plan, they had one person in mind for the position. That man was Sir William Johnson, who had received his commission in 1755 from General Edward Braddock. A year later, the commission received royal approbation which reflected the increasing concern in London over the proper regulation of Indian affairs.[134] With the ending of the last colonial war, the old problems in Indian relations were soon replaced by ones of a different nature.

Following the removal of the French, the realm of Indian affairs remained an enigma to colonial officials. Sir William Johnson's conference with the western nations in 1761 had been favorable, as had his conference with the Iroquois a year later. He informed Colden that peace would remain unless the Indians were provoked.[135] Johnson's words seemed prophetic since the Indian uprising occurred shortly thereafter. Although the causes of the war had been explained previously, a major Indian concern dealt with their feeling that the English were neglecting them.

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[134]Stagg, pp. 133, 167; Alden, p. 201; Gipson, The Years of Defeat, 6:190.

[135]Sir William Johnson to Colden, November 6, 1761 CP, 6:87; Sir William Johnson to Colden, May 15, 1762 CP, 6:175.

Colden stated, ". . . you may assure our faithful Indians that they will be far from being neglected as soon as the Ministry can attend to their affairs . . . ." In fact, the King and the Lords of Trade expressed their desire that the Indians be redressed, and that a regular plan of Indian affairs be instituted.[136] Within a year the Board of Trade had devised a plan of their own.

In July 1764 the Board of Trade circulated their proposal for the future management among the colonial governors and the Indian superintendents. Imperial officials were to wield the powers previously held by the colonies. The new superintendents had direct access to the secretary of state and the Board of Trade, but had to depend upon the Commander-in-Chief of the army for the payment of expenditures. The plan also provided for the appointment of deputies, commissaries, interpreters, and smiths, which were to ensure proper trade regulations. In 1768 the Board of Trade revoked its plan for various reasons, foremost of which was its enormous expense.[137] Consequently, the only unified imperial scheme had remained in effect for a short time, despite the approval it received in New York.

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[136]Colden to Sir William Johnson, July 28, 1763, JP, 10:759-760; Sir William Johnson to Colden, November 4, 1763, CP, 6:48; Sir William Johnson to Colden, August 10, 1763, CP, 6:232.

[137]Marshall, pp. 1-3, 13-17.

Colden writing to Sir William Johnson stated that Indian affairs were brought to such a state that he (Johnson) could exert his influence to the best advantage in securing future tranquillity. Previously, Johnson had contended that the government must settle the management of Indian affairs quickly, because he could not take proper steps. Furthermore, he argued that if the relations were managed under the old system, then the Indians would defect again. Johnson's plea for the Plan of 1764 reflected his desire to keep the Indian nations satisfied and in the British sphere of influence. Colden echoed Sir William Johnson's remarks when he wrote, "I feel sensibly for you in the disapointment you have met with in the Conduct of what you have don to reduce them to a regular System."[138] With the demise of the Plan of 1764, the old problems the Indians had to face, would commence once again. Consequently, imperialists like Johnson and Colden must have despaired at the thought of returning back to the dark age of Indian Affairs.

The realm of Indian relations underwent several changes because of the interaction between the two European powers, but also because of the needs the various Indian

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[138]Colden to Sir William Johnson, January 6, 1765, CP, 11:511; Sir William Johnson to Colden, February 14, 1765, CP, 7:16; Sir William Johnson to Colden, May 29, 1765, CP 7:36; Colden to Sir William Johnson, February 26 1769, JP, 12:698.

nations felt. The French-Indian relations developed the way they did mainly due to the inferior power they had in North America. The influence of the Jesuits among the various Indian nations, tended to negate the English power. These priests had become the leading tentacle of French imperialism, while certain traders reinforced that prestige. The construction of several forts within the Iroquois' country was one important example of French influence, which they were to effectively cultivate and expand. French expansionism was not confined solely to the Iroquois for the western nations received the same exposure. French claims to the Ohio Valley were, in effect, designed to end English expansion in the area and to secure the allegiance of the Ohio Valley Shawnee, Delaware, Miami, and other Indian nations of the region.

During the years preceding the Great War for the Empire, the French continued to expand their influence among the Indian nations of the Ohio Valley, but the English played a significant part in extending French prestige. English defeats at the outbreak of the conflict served to ensure the French position, especially since three of the Six Nations declared themselves in favor of the French. The early French victories were the result of having Indian allies, but English power eventually overcame the French. As the French started to lose the war, they lost their influence over the Indians, especially when they could not supply them. Thus, the Indians turned their attention

back to the English, and even aided them in driving out the French in North America. But the English were to find that the effects of French influence did not diminish with their leaving.

The Indian Uprising of 1763, according to many colonials, was the result of the remnants of French among the Indians. In reality the English had not cleared up the problems which caused the Indians to defect almost twenty years earlier. Men like Cadwallader Colden and Sir William Johnson had argued for a better system of handling Indian relations for many years. Indian affairs had been conducted by commissioners who often pursued their own desires at the expense of the Empire's, and especially those of the Indians. Consequently, the Board of Trade had decided that one person was needed to transact affairs with the Iroquois. Johnson would officially remain the superintendent, assuring that Indian affairs would be conducted in the interest of both parties.

English-Indian affairs had thus undergone significant changes; changes that Colden among others had been calling for. Most of the proposals presented by Colden for an imperial plan were subsequently put into effect in 1764. To be sure, other imperialists had a hand in developing the Plan of 1764, but Colden's pleas for a plan were the first. The termination of the unified plan, the only imperial program, in 1768 led to the renewal of old problems. As forceful as Colden had been in his arguments for the proper

management of Indian Affairs, they were to be slightly overshadowed by his concern for other problems of the land.

CHAPTER V

DEFRAUDING THE IROQUOIS: NEW YORK'S LAND PROBLEMS AND POLICIES

The English conquest of 1664 established a new era in the colony's land policies. The Duke's Laws of 1665 only required that previous land purchases be repatented as an acknowledgment of English sovereignty. The laws were obviously referring to the Dutch landowners, who had acquired their property when the province was New Netherlands. Subsequent instructions to the governors were vaguely worded as to the number of acres they could grant, and to whom. Governor Thomas Dongan (1682-1688) generally kept the number of acres granted to one person limited to two thousand acres.[139] One of his grants was to have important repercussions in the eighteenth century.

In 1686 Dongan granted a charter to Albany with a license to purchase an additional two thousand acres of Mohawk lands. The city fathers proceeded to acquire a tract known as the Mohawk Flatts, but the controversy surrounding this grant did not surface until 1733. In September of that year, the Mohawk sachems brought their

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[139]Armand La Potin, "The Minisink Grant: Partnerships, Patents, and Processing Fees in Eighteenth Century New York" New York History No. 56 (1975), pp. 32-33.

complaints before Governor William Cosby. In a council with Cosby, the chiefs contended that they were being cheated out of their lands. The sachems stated that in 1731 the city fathers had persuaded them the only way to protect their lands was to deed them to the city. The Albany officials told the sachems they would hold their lands in trust, as evidenced by the deed they were to receive. Apparently, the city fathers never gave the Mohawks a copy of the deed, for at the conference a deed was produced which the sachems claimed was fraudulent. Governor Cosby gave the deed to the Mohawks, who tore it up and threw it into the fire. Unfortunately, the controversy did not end there because Peter Van Brugh Livingston and Samuel Storke had petitioned the King for a tract along the Mohawk River which included the Flatts. President of the Council, George Clark wrote to Cadwallader Colden about the matter, and requested that he look into it. Colden replied that most of the lands in the petition had already been granted to other persons. Subsequently, the Livingston-Storke petition was rejected. The Mohawks made other arrangements in 1733 to insure their lands. In November they granted George II the Mohawk Flatts, which contained some thirty-two thousand acres.[140] Even though Dongan's grant had

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[140]Georgiana C. Nammack, Fraud, Politics, and the Dispossession of the Indians: The Iroquois Land Frontier in the Colonial Period (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1969), pp. 22-27; George Clark to Colden, May 10, 1736 CP, 2:149-150; Colden to Clark, June 9, 1736 NYCD, 6:68; Sir William Johnson to Colden, January 20, 1762 JP, 3:610.

touched off a half century long dispute, two of his successors' liberal use of their powers would prove to be more detrimental to the Iroquois.

Governor Benjamin Fletcher (1691-1698), unlike Dongan, was not averse to allocating grants in unlimited acreage. Godfrey Dellius, Minister of Albany, received a tract of land eighty-six miles in length and twelve in width. Dellius with four other persons was granted another tract which included the three Mohawk villages in its boundaries. Nicholas Bayard, also a recipient of Fletcher's magnanimity, received land along both sides of the Schoharie Creek. John Evans requested a tract paralleling the west side of the Hudson River which would extend forty-five miles in length and sixteen to thirty in width. As with previous petitions, Fletcher had no qualms about permitting this grant to pass in his administration.[141] Although Fletcher certainly granted other petitions, his grant to one of the colonial leaders was most unscrupulous.

In 1697 Adolph Philipse acquired a tract on the east side of the Hudson River from Jan Sebering and Lambert Dorlandt. Philipse petitioned Governor Fletcher for a patent to the land, which he issued without reservation. Philipse claimed ownership to approximately two hundred

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[141]Charles Worthen Spencer, "The Land System of Colonial New York" New York State Historical Society Proceedings vol. XVI (1917), p. 152; "Representation of the Lords of Trade to the King," September 26, 1722 NYCD, 5:651; La Potin, pp. 32-33; Nammack, p. 51.

and five thousand acres, but his hunger for land did not stop at that point. In 1702 he obtained a deed from the Wappinger Indians for additional land to expand his property. The controversy surrounding this grant did not surface until 1762 when Daniel Nimham of the Wappinger tribe claimed that the land had been fraudulently obtained. Three years later, Nimham petitioned Lieutenant-Governor Colden and the Council for a hearing to settle the matter. At the trial Nimham presented the Wappingers' claim, which was rejected by the Council as being valid. The next development in the case occurred when Nimham and three of his fellow tribesmen took their plight to England. The Wappingers petitioned the Lords of Trade for assistance, who subsequently sent instructions to Governor Henry Moore to investigate the situation. In 1767 the Council held another hearing, but as before, the Wappingers' rights were disregarded and that of Philipse upheld.[142] Although the Wappinger Indians had lost in this decision, not all Indian claims of fraud would be denied.

Governor Fletcher's generosity paled in comparison to that of an eighteenth century counterpart, Edward Hyde; Lord Cornbury (1702-1708) was, according to Colden, extremely generous. In fact, Colden stated that Cornbury's

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[142]Irving Mark, Agrarian Conflicts in Colonial New York 1711-1775 (Port Washington: Ira J. Friedman, Inc., 1965), pp. 131-134; Bonomi, pp. 219-220.

extravagance equaled that of his predecessors combined. Among Lord Cornbury's grants were the patents of Wawayanda (three hundred and fifty-six thousand acres), the Little Nine Partners (ninety thousand nine hundred acres), and the Great Hardenbergh grant (two million acres).[143] Out of these, and numerous other grants made by Cornbury, two would cause a lot of attention.

In 1704 Lord Cornbury granted twenty-three persons a tract known as Minisink. The grant covered approximately one hundred seventy square miles along the boundary between New York and New Jersey. In 1711 the proprietors decided to divide part of the property among themselves. Located east of the Shawangunk Mountains was an area known as the Minisink Angle, totaling fifty-six thousand acres. They decided to sell this portion of their land because it was the most fertile of the entire tract, and to retain the balance covered by the Minisink Patent.[144] They were able to retain most of their property, but this would not be true of the province's most scandalous land grant.

In 1703 New York's Attorney General, Sampson Shelton Broughton, petitioned Governor Cornbury, for himself and twelve other persons, for a patent to a tract of land known as Kayaderosseras. The tract covered some eight

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[143]Spencer, pp. 153-155.

[144]"Petition of Daniel Johnston and Oliver DeLancey for Confirmation and Grant of their Lots in the Minisink Angle" CP, 9:198; La Potin, pp. 43-45.

hundred thousand acres for which they were to pay the meager sum of sixty pounds in goods. Broughton did not complete the purchase until October 1704, and for some unknown reason, Cornbury refused to sign the letters of patent. Four years later, after Broughton's death, Nanning Harmense, one of the others involved, secured the necessary documents to complete the patent. Kayaderosseras was to be equally divided among the proprietors. For twenty years the tract lay dormant as none of the patentees attempted to take possession of their land, but in 1732 they petitioned Governor William Cosby for a warrant to have the land surveyed.[145] After acquiring the tract, and waiting almost a quarter of a century before taking possession, the patentees found the original owners unwilling to give up their land.

During the Albany Conference of 1754, the Mohawks expressed their concern to Lieutenant-Governor James DeLancey about the tract known as Kayaderosseras. DeLancey agreed with the Mohawks that the land patented was for more than that included in the deed but said he could not do anything except inform the Lords of Trade. Two years later, the Lords sent instructions to Governor Charles Hardy requesting that he advise the Assembly to pass an

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[145]"Indian Deed for Kayaderosseras Patent" CP, 6:359-360; "Grant of Kayaderosseras Patent" CP, 6:360-364; Nammack, pp. 53-56.

act which would annul the patent. Unfortunately, the Assembly refused to act, which brought another complaint from the Mohawks.[146] The Mohawks' concern was supported by certain colonial leaders who worked diligently for the annulment.

Sir William Johnson, in 1763, sent detailed accounts of the history of the grant and the Mohawks' complaints to the Lords of Trade. Colden also expressed his concern about the patent. Johnson wrote to Colden informing him of a speech made by a Mohawk sachem named Abraham in which he had requested that proceedings concerning the grant be stopped until the King's pleasure was known. Colden told his friend that the Lords of Trade were well aware of the situation and directed him to have the Assembly annul the patent. On October 5, 1764, the Assembly considered the Lords' instructions, but refused to comply.[147] This setback did not deter those working for the annulment, but rather served to intensify their efforts.

In November 1764 Johnson wrote to Colden saying the Assembly's arguments against the annulment came from ignorance of the grant. Colden stated that he had expected their answer and that it did not matter, since he

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[146]Nammack, pp. 57-60.

[147]"Speech of Abraham, a Mohawk Chief to Sir William Johnson, September 20, 1764" CP, 6:347-349; Colden to Sir William Johnson, October 1, 1764 JP, 11:367; "The Assembly Deliberations on the Kayaderosseras Patent" October 5, 1764 CP, 6:356-358.

was directed to send a copy of the patent to the Lords of Trade. Colden also told Johnson to procure any information about the grant that he could for the Lords.[148] In 1765 Johnson argued that the Mohawks were greatly alarmed about the injustice they had met with. Later, he added his own fears when he wrote, ". . . I heartily wish it may be ended in a Speedy & Satisfactory manner for the Indians, whose uneasiness on that Head, & the consequence they might produce . . . ."[149] Thus, both men had expressed their concern about Kayaderosseras and the possibility of losing the Mohawks, which served only to intensify their efforts to correct the situation.

The Patentees offered to settle the matter by vacating part of the tract, but the Mohawks refused to relinquish any section of their lands. Governor Henry Moore, in 1766, wrote to the Secretary of State, the Earl of Shelburne, that he had proposed to the patentees that they surrender the grant to the Crown, but his efforts were unsuccessful. Two years later Governor Moore wrote to the new Secretary of State, the Earl of Hillsborough, that a settlement of the dispute was near. The agreement

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[148]Sir William Johnson to Colden, November 3, 1764 CP, 6:375-376; Colden to Johnson, October 15, 1764 JP, II:381-382.

[149]Sir William Johnson to Colden, February 27, 1765 CP, 7:19-21; Sir William Johnson to Colden, March 21, 1765 CP, 7:26.

reached was to release a large section of the western portion of the tract to the Mohawks. Moreover, the patentees were to pay five thousand dollars for their section, and relinquish all claims to the Mohawk section. On their part, the Mohawks agreed to release their claim to the remainder of the tract providing the previous conditions were met.[150] Kayaderosseras represents a combined effort by colonial and imperial officials, and the Indian owners, to settle a longstanding land dispute. The fact that the Indians received any justice at all is witness to the efforts of all parties concerned. However, Colden felt the grant should not have been made in the first place.

In 1720 Cadwallader Colden arrived in the province of New York to assume the duties of surveyor-general. For over forty years he was to hold this appointment, and his policies were to lead to land reforms. In fact, it was Colden's inquiries into land grants that led to the controversy surrounding Cornbury's administration. Shortly after taking office, Colden quickly let it be known that the surveyor-general could stop any patent, even if the governor and council had agreed to pass it. This statement had brought him into open conflict with the council and its president, who insisted they had the sole right to pass or reject a patent. Colden forcefully stated

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[150]"From a Committee of the Kayaderosseras Proprietors" July 22, 1765 JP, 11:864-866; Nammack, pp. 65-69.

that he would not be a rubber stamp for the council or the Assembly, since his instructions were received from the imperial government.[151] Consequently, for the first time the province had an energetic surveyor-general who viewed his position as an extension of the imperial government, and performed his duties in that manner.

Colden's penchant for learning, and writing on almost any subject that caught his imagination, was the underlying reason for accepting the position; he could expand his knowledge. In all probability, Colden had not received any formal training as a surveyor, although some of his education might have included related topics. Apparently, he was a self-taught surveyor, which was not unusual. For authoritative texts on the subject, Colden might have read Aaron Rathborne's The Surveyor (1616), or William Leybourn's The Compleat Surveyor (1653). Six years after Leybourn's work, Richard Norwood published Epitomie, which dealt with the problems of locating courses on sea and land, and provided formulas for their location. These works were widely used until 1688 when John Love published Geodaesia, or The Art of Surveying and Measuring of Land Made Easie. Geodaesia was based on Love's personal experiences as a professional surveyor for North Carolina and Jamaica. Love's work was designed to meet the problems of surveying in the New World. Love not only advised the

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[151]Rolland, pp. 49, 144, 190-191; Shammas, p. 108.

colonial surveyor on the instruments he should use, but how to proceed in his work. A colonial surveyor might have carried with him chain stakes, a plane table, a circumferentor, semi-circumferentor, a Jacob staff, a theodolite, and above all, a surveying text. Although a surveyor could use any of these instruments, plus others not mentioned, Love recommended certain instruments for specific areas. In densely wooded areas, he advised using the circumferentor, while for the measurement of angles, he suggested the use of the circumferentor, theodolite, the semi-circumferentor, and the plane table.[152] Thus, Colden had an opportunity to use any or all of the surveying texts, and probably carried with him into the field, some of these instruments. His position as surveyor-general included duties other than that of surveying a tract. They included the commissioning of all colonial surveyors for the province, and the recording of all surveys made, and in this respect, he was most diligent.[153] Because of the knowledge gained in this position, Colden was able to write effectively in his treatises on land reform.

In order to obtain a patent, a person first had to petition the governor in council for a license to purchase

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[152]Silvio A. Bedini, Thinkers and Tinkers: Early American Men of Science (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975), pp. 53, 151; Alfred R. Hoermann, "A Figure of the American Enlightenment: Cadwallader Colden" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1970), p. 2.

[153]Bedini, p. 55.

a tract of land. This license permitted the patentee to meet with the sachems of the Indian tribe whose land was to be purchased. A deed was drawn up and signed by both parties. After securing the deed, the next step was to petition the governor and council for a warrant to survey the land. The attorney general drew up the warrant, and after the actual survey was completed, the patent was then considered by the governor in council. Finally the patent was recorded by the secretary of the council. Throughout the procedure the patentee was required to pay certain fees, including the "gifts" to the Indians.[154] With a standard procedure to follow, the problems encountered should have been minimal, but that was not always the case, especially with a generous governor.

Richard Coote, the Earl of Bellomont, succeeded Governor Fletcher in 1698. Bellomont received instructions from the Lords of Trade to annul Fletcher's exorbitant grants by lawful means. A year later he persuaded the Assembly to pass an act that would cancel several grants. For some reason, the Lords of Trade did not act upon the law until 1708, but more importantly, they sent instructions for the granting of land. Patents were not to exceed two thousand acres for one person. The annual quit-rent was established at two shillings six pence per every one hundred acres. Moreover, the patentee had to settle

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[154]Higgins, pp. 29-31; Spencer, p. 161.

on and cultivate at least three acres for every fifty owned within the first three years after acquiring the tract.[155] Unfortunately, the instructions were not followed to the letter, especially about monies due the Crown.

The fees paid annually to the King were called quitrents, which in essence were "a charge upon an estate for some special purpose."[156] Thus, the landowners were required to pay a small fee for their property, since in effect, they had purchased the King's lands. Few people paid the customary quitrent, which deprived the Crown of its just dues. Colden stated he had inquired into eight patents and found they had paid seventeen pounds, seventeen shillings and six pence, whereas they should have paid four thousand one hundred and seventy-six pounds. Further instances of minute payment included the Salisbury grant of seventy thousand acres on which only a half bushel of wheat was paid a year; the Dellius grant remitted one

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[155]"Representation of the Lords of Trade to the King" September 26, 1722 NYCD, 5:652-653; Colden's, "The State of the Lands in the Province of New York in 1732" ed. E. B. O'Callaghan The Documentary History of the State of New York (Albany: Weed, Parsons & Company, 1849), 1:380-382; Spencer, pp. 153, 158; Mark, p. 25.

[156]The Oxford English Dictionary: Being a Corrected Re-Issue with an Introduction Supplement and Bibliography of a New English Dictionary on Historical Principles vol. VIII Poy-Ry (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961).

raccoon skin annually.[157] The lack of proper collection of payments, prevalent in the province, provided Colden with reasons for stressing the need for proper payments.

Colden wrote that the quitrents, if paid in full, would be sufficient to support the government; which in his estimation would be an equitable taxation. Moreover, he contended this would remove the merchants' dissatisfaction, and provide an independent source of income for the receiver and auditor. Further, it would allow the governor to be free from his dependence on the Assembly.[158] Colden believed that if the quitrents were properly collected, they would not only benefit the King, but the province as well. His arguments on quitrents coincided with those on land partitioning.

In 1708 New York's Assembly enacted a measure which would permit the partitioning of lands held in join tenancy, or those in common. Subsequent acts were passed in 1718, 1721, and 1726. The landowners contended these laws provided a moderating effect on what they felt were expensive and cumbersome procedures in acquiring and retaining land tracts. Under these acts, the patentees could partition

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[157]"Representation of Cadwallader Colden, Surveyor-General of the Province of New York, to Governor William Burnet, against the Bill for Facilitating the Partition of Lands in Joint Tenancy" November 1721, CP, 8:164; "Representation of the Lords of Trade to the King" September 26, 1722 NYCD, 5:653; Nammack, p. 52.

[158]Colden's, "The State of the Lands in the Province of New York in 1732" The Documentary History of the State of New York 1:386-387.

their land among themselves without the need for colonial courts. Moreover, they could employ surveyors to lay out their claims, after which the grantees would draw lots in the presence of three disinterested persons.[159] In 1721, a year after being appointed surveyor-general, Colden presented his arguments against the acts. He contended that the patentees could hide the number of acres granted because previous surveys were not completed. Furthermore, he argued, the grantees could enlarge their boundaries because they were expressed in the Indian names. Consequently, said Colden, since names for hills or rivers were used, the landowners could establish their boundaries at whatever hill or river they chose. Moreover, he reasoned, the acts did in effect discourage the settling of the province because of the enormous tracts owned by a few. In Colden's estimation, this was a reason why New York's population lagged behind that of other colonies.[160] Thus, Colden presented excellent arguments against the acts, something he would have to do forty years later.

In 1728 the partition acts were repealed by the Crown, but the issue remained open. In 1742 the Assembly enacted a similar measure, which was maintained through

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[159] La Potin, p. 39.

[160] Representation of Cadwallader Colden, Surveyor-General of the Province of New York to Governor William Burnet, against the Bill for Facilitating the Partition of Lands in Joint Tenancy" November 1721 CP, 8:160-164; "Mr. Colden's Memorial against the Act for the Partition of Lands held in Common" December 4, 1726 NYCD, 5:808.

provisions in 1755 and 1762. At this latter time, Colden took issue with what he felt was a repetition of the previous laws. He contended that this act was designed to partition the large land tracts granted before 1708. Again he argued these grants contained no definitive boundaries, which kept the question of land fraud open.[161] Colden's arguments against fraud reflected his desire to have the abuses corrected.

Although Colden was a devout imperialist, his strongest arguments against land frauds perpetrated on the Indians were an extension of expansionism. To be sure, Colden's concern about the plight of the Indians was genuine, as witnessed by his never-ending attempts to secure justice for them. Upon taking office as surveyor-general, Colden discovered that his predecessor, Augustus Graham, was inefficient. Unlike Graham, Colden was an active surveyor who insisted upon accurate surveys. Moreover, he executed the surveys issued to his office instead of placing them on someone else.[162] Consequently, he had become a leading spokesman in dealing fairly with the Indians.

Prior to Colden's appointment, many of the Indian deeds were loosely worded, which more often than not, led the claimant to over-extending his boundary. Trees, hills,

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[161]La Potin, p. 41; Lieutenant-Governor Colden to the Lords of Trade, January 25, 1762 NYCD, 7:486-487.

[162]Spencer, pp. 159-160; Higgins, p. 30; Keys, p. 54.

or rivers were the landmarks by which a surveyor would often have as his reference points. Consequently, the surveyor could find these impermanent boundaries were no longer there. Colden commented that the Indians often compounded the problem because they used the same name for different landmarks, or various names for the same one. Subsequently, these problems led Colden to argue for precise surveys in order to alleviate fraudulent dealings. Another problem which surfaced dealt with the wording of the deeds. He wrote that the deeds were in the English language and the Indians were persuaded to sign them without having an interpreter explain them. Thus, the Indians not only signed deeds they did not understand, but had to watch while their lands disappeared because of their own ways of setting out boundaries, and because of greedy landowners.[163] Colden's arguments in favor of the Indians continued as he fought against land sales.

Colden's arguments against land sales were also an expression of his imperialism, but he was not alone in this respect. Sir William Johnson wrote that the Iroquois had expressed concern over the continued selling of their lands. Moreover, they contended their lands were often taken from them as some of their own people signed deeds after becoming

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[163]Colden's, "The State of Lands in the Province of New York in 1732" Documentary History of New York 1:383; The Memorial of Cadwallader Colden Esqr Surveyor General of Land of the S[d] Province, November 3, 1726 CP, 3:158-159.

drunk. Colden replied by saying that as long as he had the administration of government, he would not allow them to suffer any abuses. He further said, ". . . you may assure them of my doing everything in my power for their relief . . . ."[164] However, the Iroquois had another problem, that of illegal tenants.

At a conference with Lieutenant-Governor James DeLancey in 1754, the Mohawk sachems complained about George Klock, who had not only settled illegally on their land, but was claiming it also. Klock had laid claim to Conojohary, the very land upon which one of the Mohawk villages was situated. Although DeLancey had promised to rectify the matter, seven years would elapse before proceedings would commence. Alexander Colden, Cadwallader Colden's son, wrote that Klock had obtained a license for a tract of land, which happened to be the tract the Indians had reserved for themselves. Cadwallader Colden stated that Klock had purchased a quitclaim, which in Sir William Johnson's opinion ". . . carries with it a bad look . . . ."[165] The Mohawks not only had to contend with Klock proclaiming the land as his, but also his saying what could

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[164]Sir William Johnson to Colden, February 20, 1761 CP, 6:11; Cadwallader Colden to Johnson, March 7, 1761 JP, 10:233; Cadwallader Colden to Johnson, December 27, 1761 JP, 10:350.

[165]Nammack, p. 41; Alexander Colden to Johnson, January 18, 1761 JP, 3:307; Cadwallader Colden to Johnson, March 7, 1761 JP, 9:233; Sir William Johnson to Colden, March 19, 1761 CP, 6:18.

be done with it.

Sir William Johnson wrote that Klock had ejected several persons the Mohawks had allowed to reside on their land. Johnson reiterated his statement that the Mohawks had become greatly alarmed over Klock's behavior. His expelling of the Conojohary settlers was detrimental to the Mohawks since the residents had paid rent for the land on which they were living.[166] Colden replied that he had placed the matter before the council, which would decide the proper course to take. Johnson, in turn, said he hoped that Colden had received the affidavits on Klock which he had procured. Later he contended, ". . . I most earnestly recommend it to your Consideration, and that of the Gent^{n}. of the Council to enable me as soon as possible to give the Indians satisfaction concerning their Grievance . . . ." Furthermore, Johnson argued that without receiving justice, the Mohawks would have strong prejudices against the English.[167] Consequently, the New York Council brought proceedings in April 1762 against Klock in order to restore the lands to the Mohawks, but the matter remained unsettled. Colden advised Johnson that Conojohary must be

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[166]Sir William Johnson to Colden, November 6, 1761 JP, 3:562; Sir William Johnson to Colden, December 8, 1761 JP, 10:337.

[167]Cadwallader Colden to Johnson, December 27, 1761 JP, 10:350; Sir William Johnson to Colden, February 7, 1762 CP, 6:117; Sir William Johnson to Colden, March 20, 1762 JP, 3:653.

decided by the King. Johnson replied that any effort to dispossess the Mohawks from the lands must be stopped until His Majesty's pleasure became known. By December 1764 Sir William Johnson was still seeking justice for the Mohawks against Klock;[168] at the same time another person was causing a disturbance among the same tribe.

Like George Klock, Cobus Maybe was residing on the Conojoharies' lands without securing permission. Sir William Johnson wrote that the sachems were complaining about Maybe, who had refused to leave. Moreover, the chiefs charged that Maybe had turned his cattle into their corn fields, and then beat the women and children who attempted to drive out the animals. Johnson asked Colden to give the necessary orders to have Maybe removed. Colden replied that Maybe had presented a petition in council for the land. He added later that if Maybe did not settle the dispute with the Conojoharies, he would order the attorney general to seek prosecution. In January, 1765, Johnson again wrote to Colden about Maybe, because the Indians were still uneasy. Furthermore, he stated that Maybe had refused to appear before him, as ordered by the council. Moreover, Johnson argued that justice must be done, especially since Maybe had threatened to burn the Indian

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[168] Proceedings Against George Klock, April 7, 1762 JP, 3:674; Sir William Johnson to Colden, August 10, 1763 CP, 6:232-233; Sir William Johnson to Colden, December 11, 1764 CP, 6:396.

village.[169] Cobus Maybe, like George Klock, had attempted to steal the Conojoharies' lands, but Colden and Johnson did all they could to prevent this from happening. Consequently, the Iroquois had found in these two men, strong supporters of their rights.

Why Colden and Johnson fought for the Iroquois' rights must be viewed in terms of their imperialism. Johnson, from his position as superintendent of Indian affairs, would be expected to favor the Iroquois, but Colden's reasons must be viewed in light of his overall policies towards the Iroquois. In a letter to the Lords of Trade, Colden stated that only the Mohawks and Oneidas were being cheated out of their lands, and yet they remained faithful. He said the reason the Iroquois must be supported was ". . . that the Quieting the Indians minds by doing them Justice may be of the greatest Consequence - not only in Settling & improving the Lands in that part of the Country but likewise in preserving the Peace of this Province & securing it from Invasions & incursion of other Indian Nations . . . ."[170] Thus, Colden argued that the Iroquois must be treated fairly in order to keep them as a

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[169]Sir William Johnson to Colden, August 23, 1764 CP, 6:346-347; Cadwallader Colden to Johnson, November 19, 1764 JP, 11:468-469; Sir William Johnson to Colden, February 14, 1765 JP, 4:644-645.

[170]Lieutenant-Governor Colden to the Lords of Trade, March 1, 1762 NYCD, 7:493; The Memorial of Cadwallader Colden Esqr Surveyor-General of Land of the S^{d} Province, November 3, 1736 CP, 2:159.

buffer zone against outside encroachments. Moreover, Colden's arguments were designed to compel the Lords of Trade to recommend to the King that action be taken against fraudulent land claims. In their instructions to Governor Robert Moncton, the Lords of Trade initially stated that the peace of the province depended upon retaining the amity of the Indians within and bordering New York. Furthermore, they contended that since the security of the province was endangered by fraudulent land claims, certain precautions must be followed in order to remove that threat. Each new petition for land must be approved by the Lords of Trade, while any person residing illegally on Indian lands was to be ejected.[171] Thus, the British government had deemed it necessary to provide certain restrictions with regard to land, as brought to their attention by Colden. Although Colden's correspondence had provided the impetus for the proclamation of 1761 by the Lords of Trade, his communication with Sir William Johnson was also a contributing factor.

Like Colden, Sir William Johnson was deeply concerned about the potential loss of the Iroquois. He stated that Colden's refusal to allow no further land purchases would certainly ensure the continuation of Iroquois fidelity towards the English. Johnson's worries were

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[171]Additional Instructions for Governor Robert Moncton Concerning Indian Land Deeds, December 9, 1761 CP, 6:102-104; Stagg, pp. 259-260; Nammack, p. 93.

evident when he wrote that if they did not receive justice, it could become a serious matter. He felt that by pressing the Indians for their lands, it would alarm all of the nations.[172] Unfortunately, within two years Johnson's remarks were to become a reality because of "Pontiac's Conspiracy."

On October 7, 1763, King George III issued a royal proclamation designed to provide a boundary line between the English settlements and Indian territory. Included in it were restrictions on Indian lands within the colonies. Unfortunately, land-hungry settlers ignored the proclamation. The continuous appropriation of the Indians' lands was a major cause of the Indian uprising of 1763.[173] Sir William Johnson attributed the war to English encroachment, which continued as late as 1765. He argued, "We can never expect the Indians will be at rest, so long as any great matter of Complaint Subsists amongst any one of them . . . ."[174] The protection of Indian lands was of genuine concern to Johnson yet within three years he would not give them this protection.

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[172]Sir William Johnson to Colden, February 20, 1761 CP, 6:13; Sir William Johnson to Colden, March 19, 1761 CP, 6:17; Sir William Johnson to Colden, June 18, 1761 CP, 6:45.

[173]"By the King A Proclamation, October 7, 1763" JP, 10:977-984; B. A. Hinsdale, "The Western Land Policy of the British Government from 1763 to 1775" Ohio Archaelogical and Historical Quarterly (1887), p. 210.

[174]Sir William Johnson to Colden, February 27, 1765 CP, 7:20.

Sir William Johnson had been one of the leading spokesmen against land encroachments. Although he had personally procured thousands of acres of Iroquois lands, he undoubtedly had done so by legal means. Johnson's concern for the Iroquois' plight had been so sincere they gave him a tract of land amounting to forty thousand acres. To his credit, Johnson reportedly paid twelve hundred dollars for the gift. However, in 1768 the loyalty they had given him would mean nothing.[175] In that year Johnson completed the negotiations for a treaty with the Iroquois and the Delaware. His task was to finish the boundary line from the Great Lakes to the Great Kanawha River, since John Stuart had finished his treaty on October 14, 1768, which took the line from the mouth of the Great Kanawha. Johnson extended the boundary to the Tennessee River; opening up a vast territory for settlement, which began almost before the ink had dried on the document. Speculation as to why Johnson had extended the boundary to that length would be fruitless, particularly since it was a complete reversal of his longstanding policy towards the Indians. The boundary line remained unchanged until the American War for Independence, which changed everything.[176]

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[175] Jacobs, p. 112; Colden to the Lords of Trade, March 1, 1762 NYCD, 7:492; Sir William Johnson to Colden, April 6, 1764 CP, 6:298; Nammack, p. 87

[176] Ray A. Billington, "The Fort Stanwix Treaty of 1768" New York History vol. XLII (1944), pp. 182-194; Jacobs, p. 100; Nammack, p. 95.

Sir William Johnson's reversal was in essence a return to the policies of the previous century, when Iroquois land was ruthlessly taken.

The province of New York, although founded by the Dutch, had become an English colony less than sixty years after its establishment. The Dutch had a number of large estates, and were desirous of having others join the colony. However, their efforts failed. After the English conquest, their initial policies were simply a continuation of those of the Dutch. In order to retain their property, the Dutch landowners were asked to acknowledge English sovereignty. New York's land problems did not begin until two decades later.

Two of New York's early governors were especially generous with Indian lands. Their policies, in effect, were to give away as much land as they could. Both Fletcher and Cornbury allowed numerous large land grants to pass through their hands, resulting in problems for the province. Although most of Governor Fletcher's grants were eventually annulled, a few were allowed to remain, causing a great deal of concern in the eighteenth century. The majority of Cornbury's grants caused problems between the Indians and the English. The generosity of both governors caused repercussions which almost drove the Mohawks away from the English. Only one of the grants reverted back to the Indians, after sixty years of struggle on their part to regain their property. Nevertheless, two

of the leading officials of the province were ardent supporters of protection for the Indians against land fraud.

Sir William Johnson, the Indian superintendent, strongly advocated policies that would insure protection for the Indians against land fraud. While he had a genuine concern for their plight, he also knew that protecting the Indian lands would serve to keep their allegiance, especially that of the Mohawks. He warned that unless protection were forthcoming, the Mohawks and other Indians, would no longer be influenced by the English, and trouble would ensue. The Indian Uprising of 1763 was certainly proof of the accuracy of his warnings. In spite of his early concern, Johnson negotiated a land deal in 1768 which again placed the Indians on the defensive, and at the mercy of greedy settlers. Johnson's counterpart in the province was an equally forceful supporter of Indian rights.

Cadwallader Colden arrived in New York eager to assume the duties of surveyor-general. He put the same enthusiasm into this task as he had in others, as evidenced by his numerous treatises on the subject of land. His arguments against the non-payment of quitrents, and the partitioning of lands were attempts to establish a more efficient colonial government. Although he worked earnestly for the Empire, he, too, had a deep concern for the problems of the Indians. Like Johnson, he was aware of the danger of alienating the Indians and

endangering the province. He not only spoke out in their behalf in the colony, but brought to the attention of the Lords of Trade the problems they encountered. He was sincerely interested in the Iroquois as a people; he found them fascinating. Because he was truly a seeker of knowledge, he left behind a fine record of his interest in the Indians, his concern for his country, and his personal experience as an active member of the colony, as well as treatises revealing his interest in science.

CHAPTER VI

IN REFLECTION:
REEVALUATING NEW YORK'S INDIAN AFFAIRS

The state of New York was founded and initially settled by the Dutch. For less than sixty years, the Dutch held control over the fledgling colony. The English became the second owners of the colony, after they had driven out the Dutch. Population growth in the province lagged behind the other colonies. The fur trade was one of the major economic mainstays, followed by shipping and agriculture. Economically, the province was solvent. Local trades also flourished, but the enterprising New Yorker often entered politics since it seemed to be the quickest way to make his mark. New York's political scene was often characterized as diverse and tumultuous, as political infighting was common. New York's governors were appointed in England; the Council and Assembly were selected locally. The council, founded by the first English governor, ultimately became a powerful sinecure for the governor. The Assembly was different; they had been elected, not appointed. Consequently, the province's political scene was often turbulent; this was not the case among New York's indigeneous population.

The Iroquois Confederacy, consisting of five tribes in the seventeenth century and six in the eighteenth, was the third major power in North America. Both the French in

Canada and the English in New York vied for their friendship and allegiance. The French established a colony at Quebec a year before New York was founded, but their initial relationship with the Iroquois was a belligerent one. The French had established their colony as a base for the further development of the fur trade. This position ultimately brought them into conflict with the Iroquois, because of the French alignment with the traditional enemies of the Iroquois. The conflict was further aggravated by the fur trade. By the 1640's the Five Nations had begun to engage in aggressive thrusts against the French and their allies. The Iroquois continued their incursions without fear well into the 1680's before the French could retaliate. The initial French reprisals ended in failure; each time they seemed to gain an advantage, the Iroquois sued for peace. The Iroquois declaration of neutrality in 1701 was designed to play the English and French against one another, while the Five Nations remained officially non-belligerent. They would continue this stance as the two major powers underwent a series of wars in the eighteenth century. Unofficially, the Iroquois had warriors in all of the conflicts, since the political structure of the confederacy was based on the art of persuasion, not compulsion. Any member of the league was free to pursue its own course, as was true for each individual tribal member. Thus, the Iroquois Confederacy, while clinging officially to a neutral position, was unofficially engaged on one side or

the other. Because of the Iroquois political structure, one of New York's most astute men became interested and was led to study and write treatises about the Iroquois culture.

Born and educated in Scotland, Cadwallader Colden left for the colony of Pennsylvania to practice medicine. However, his greatest achievements came after he left Philadelphia to live in New York. Colden went to the province at the request of his friend, Governor Robert Hunter, who appointed him surveyor-general. Colden really entered into the political arena after having been chosen to the council. During the 1740's he was Governor George Clinton's chief advisor; in 1761 he became lieutenant-governor of the province. From this position, Colden assumed the leadership of New York periodically until his death in 1776. Colden was not simply a politician; he was a man who wore many hats.

The appointment as surveyor-general gave Colden an opportunity to argue vociferously and often on the need for better control of the province's lands. His arguments involved the collection of quitrents, which would make the colony economically solvent; limitations on the number of acres to be granted to one person, which would permit more persons to settle within the colony; and proper surveys of the land. He had another argument of equal importance, the need to halt the land frauds perpetrated against the Iroquois. Colden contended that the attempts to steal the

Indians' lands would subsequently drive them away from English influence. Without the Iroquois as a buffer zone against the French, the English would have to face the French incursions. Colden's actions and arguments with regard to several fraudulent purchases were a reflection of this attitude as he fought vigorously for their annulment. In fact, his writings brought to light numerous illegal patents permitted by Lord Cornbury. Colden's concern over the province's land problems was no less genuine than the deep-seated feelings he had about the fur trade.

As he had brought the province's land problems to the forefront, Colden also sought attention for the fur trade. His treatises on the Iroquois and the fur trade were attempts to inform the British government of the problems within the trade. He argued for stricter controls over the traders, especially the unlicensed ones; the type of goods they could trade, and where the trading could be done. To Colden, the illegal traders were a major problem to the Empire's imperialism. The illegal trade between the merchants of Albany and those of Montreal was equally reflective of that lack of imperialism. He was also aware of the need to provide controls for the Iroquois' sake, as tighter restrictions would keep the Iroquois aligned with the English. These contentions were seconded by other colonial leaders, most notably Governor William Burnet and Sir William Johnson.

Consequently, the correspondence between these men and the British officials provided the groundwork for the changes made in the 1760's. The underlying purpose was to assure that the Iroquois would remain aligned with the British.

The realm of Indian affairs, which encompassed many things, has too often received scant attention. Colden's role in this sphere has been totally ignored, even though his arguments in favor of stricter controls emerged before most of those presented by his contemporaries. Colden's correspondence and numerous treatises reflect his imperialism, which centered on the allegiance of the Iroquois. He argued that the English must in some way emulate the French, who were extremely active in Indian affairs. He argued that the English were often inactive, which allowed the French to gain significant ground. Moreover, both Colden and Sir William Johnson stated that the Iroquois complained about the lack of English assistance. Here lay a genuine concern as the French had developed an aggressive policy of aggrandizement. By the beginning of the War for Empire the French-Indian allies were numerous and equally as belligerent. Consequently, the French were initially victorious in this conflict. However, the English power overcame those setbacks and ultimately won over many of the French allies. Even though the French were defeated their presence lingered, which caused consternation among colonial imperialists. The Indian Uprising of 1763 was caused by a variety of reasons, including the fear of

French reemergence, but the main causes involved land and the fur trade. Consequently, both Colden and Johnson had definite ideas about assuring the Indians of the concern of the English for their welfare.

Indian affairs received unbounded attention from both men, especially the need for a single superintendent. Here again, Colden was in the forefront with the idea, and advocated that Johnson be named to the position. During the War for Empire, the British government had listened to numerous proposals on the subject and favored the idea. In 1755 Sir William Johnson received the appointment, which he held until his death. Thus both men had fought for and secured a single superintendency. Their fight was to continue as the realm of Indian affairs required attention. In 1764, the Board of Trade established the first and only imperial plan, but four years later it was rejected as being too expensive. Consequently, Indian relations went back to their previous footing, controlled by the individual colonies, and Indian affairs reverted back to the "Dark Ages."

Colden's concern for the Iroquois was more than a desire to have controls over the problems of the Indians, the fur trade, and the provincial lands. Colden saw in the Iroquois a society reminiscent of the ancient Greeks and Romans. His reflections on the Iroquois were divergent, as they centered on the conflict over barbarians or nobility. When the Iroquois exhibited signs of barbarianism

Colden quickly brought to light ancient civilizations who had had the same qualities. Moreover, he placed the Iroquois on a higher plane in some respects, especially that of their government. Colden was fascinated by their republican form of government where no one had absolute power. As an imperialist Colden fought for the Empire's rights, and yet he was perceptive enough to recognize the value of another form of government. Cadwallader Colden was an important colonial leader whose efforts on behalf of the Empire and the Iroquois must be reevaluated.

APPENDIX

COLDEN'S FIVE NATIONS: BARBARIC OR CIVILIZED?

Cadwallader Colden wrote his treatise The History of the Five Indian Nations, Depending on the Province of New-York in America, principally as an argument on the fur trade and a memorial to his friend Governor William Burnet. But there was another important reason. Colden's intense interest in past societies and civilizations led him to see the Iroquois in those terms. Thus, within the History was an in-depth view of the Iroquois' social and political life. Consequently, his treatise was a tribute to ". . . the greatest of all the woodland peoples, the Iroquois."[177]

In studying the Iroquois, Colden compared them with the ancient Greeks and Romans. He focused on both negative and positive aspects. In this respect, he was undecided as to whether they were barbaric or civilized. In one instance, he stated that the Iroquois were ". . . a poor barbarous people under the darkest Ignorance . . . ." but in the next line he argued, ". . . yet a bright noble Genius shines through these black clouds." Colden's dilemma was further obscured by his reference to the Iroquois' unshaken courage, which was darkened by their passion for revenge.

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[177]Hoermann, "A Figure of the American Enlightenment," p. 444; Jacobs, p. 57.

To Colden, because of their vindicative nature, the Iroquois were deserving of the name of barbarians.[178] The duality of their character was further clouded as Colden compared them to ancient societies.

Returning warriors were received with plaudits from their people, which according to Colden, was reminiscent of the arrival of the Roman armies. Colden believed the Iroquois' customs and laws had rendered the people physically and mentally prepared for war, which reminded him of the state of Lacedaemon. Moreover, the Iroquois' ability to make themselves heard at great distances by the raising of their voices was similar to that practiced by Homer's heroes.[179] But the comparisons were not always equal for in some instances, the Iroquois outshone the Romans and Greeks.

Colden wrote that in order to avoid shame or torture, the Romans would often kill themselves. The Iroquois, on the other hand, would endure the cruel treatment of their enemies when they believed their country's honor was at stake. He argued against the Iroquois' penchant for cruelty towards their enemies, but said that the histories of the ancient heroes were similar in that respect. To illustrate this point, he contended, "Does Achilles'

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[178]Colden's, The History of the Five Nations, p. vi.

[179]Colden's, "The Five Nations, And of Their Laws, Customs, &c." ed. Neville B. Craig, The Olden time, (Pittsburgh: Dumas & Co., 1847), pp. 302-303, 305.

behaviour to Hector's dead body in Homer appear less savage?"[180] Further he provided the key to his arguments when he stated that the Greeks and Romans were once as barbaric as the Iroquois, but they became deified as heroes after being taught the virtues of civilization.[181] Consequently, according to Colden, barbarians could be civilized.

Colden stated that civilization would curb their revengeful nature. His contentions were further strengthened when he spoke against those person who taught the Iroquois vices instead of virtues. He continued, "But what have we Christians done to make them better we have reason to be ashamed that these Infidels by our Conversation and Neighborhood are become worse than they were before they knew us."[182] Colden's statements in regard to certain persons who acted no better than barbarians were followed by his views on how to eradicate the vices.

Colden said that treating all men with high respect was one way to eliminate the vices. Also, that they must not become immoral, as it had ruined civilized and barbaric nations. Rather they must adhere to justice and strict discipline, which were the keys for nations to

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[180]Colden's, The History of Five Nations, p. vi; Craig, pp. 299-300.

[181]Colden's, The History of Five Nations, p. vii.

[182]Colden's, The History of Five Nations, pp. vi-vii.

flourish and grow powerful.[183] Colden not only suggested how the Iroquois could become civilized, but why they must.

Instead of being despised, the Iroquois would become an ally who would bring honor to the British Empire. He added that if the teaching of the vices did not cease, the Iroquois would become ". . . faithless thieves and robbers and join with every enemy that can give them the hopes of Plunder."[184] Thus, the imperialist Colden found a way to express his views, contending that the Iroquois would become essential to the Empire. He did not simply denounce them as barbaric because he found items worthy of praise.

In the art of negotiating and speech-making, the Iroquois were geniuses. In fact, Colden said that the Iroquois without any knowledge of the Arts and Sciences, were able to effectively manage their own affairs against the ". . . most learned, most polite and artificial nation in Europe." In fact they acted with the greatest regard for their treaties, even when their own affairs dictated otherwise; and especially when they were not reciprocated.[185] Finally, Colden was intrigued by the Iroquois' form of government. To the imperialist, this government was an

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[183]Colden's, The History of the Five Nations, p. 14.

[184]Colden's, The History of the Five Nations, p. vii.

[185]Colden's, The History of the Five Nations, p. 135; Craig, p. 305.

absolute republic whose affairs were conducted by the sachems. The sachems' power was based upon the opinion their people had of them. Moreover, they could not compel anyone to do anything, but rather they used the art of persuasion to achieve their objectives. Consequently, Colden said of the sachems, "Honor and Esteem are their principal rewards as Shame and being despised are their punishments." Colden wrote of the positive aspects of the Iroquois because he admired those qualities which placed the Iroquois in a state between civilization and barbarianism.[186] Colden's dilemma was further clouded by the conflicting nature of the Iroquois. There was much he admired, and much he disliked.

Colden's fascination with past societies was enhanced by his interest in that of the Iroquois. The dilemma he faced was whether they were barbaric or civilized. He believed that some of the Iroquois' customs were savage, especially their intense desire for revenge, and their cruelty towards their enemies. But Colden quickly pointed out that ancient civilizations were once no different than the Iroquois.

If Colden drew similarities between the ancient Greeks and Romans and the Iroquois, he did so with the firm conviction that the comparisons were genuine. From

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[186]Colden's, The History of the Five Nations, p. xx; Craig, pp. 297-298; Lawrence H. Leder, The Colonial Legacy, pp. 5-6.

the heroes in Homer to the Roman Legions, his comparisons showed the Iroquois to be in many respects comparable, and in others to excel. He saw in them many qualities reminiscent of the ancient civilizations, while in other ways they were not equal.

Colden's comparisons were not only those on the detrimental aspects but were also focused on their natural abilities. The Iroquois were gifted in the arts of speech-making and negotiating, without having prior knowledge of the arts and sciences. He argued that with regard to their treaties, nothing could be found to show that they had not honored them. In this respect, they acted more honorably than most civilized nations. The Iroquois' form of government was equally advantageous since the leaders could not act without the consent of the people. Although this was contrary to this imperialistic view, Colden recognized and admired these attributes.

Colden's concern for the Iroquois was genuine, but he also had another reason for wishing to civilize the Iroquois. He firmly believed they could act as a buffer zone for the English. He felt they must be taught the virtues of civilization, or the spreading of vices among them would make them bitter enemies of the British Empire.

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