

**BEING CATAWBA:
THE WORLD OF SALLY NEW RIVER, 1746-1840**

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partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
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ABSTRACT

Brooke Michele Bauer: *Being Catawba: The World of Sally New River, 1746-1840*
(Under the direction of Kathleen DuVal and Theda Perdue)

This dissertation analyzes a segment of the history of the Catawba Indian Nation of South Carolina by concentrating on how Catawba women in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries created, promoted, and preserved a Catawba identity through kinship, land ownership, and economic productivity. Catawba kinship, land, and pottery were and are the most important distinguishing attributes of being Catawba. Each of the three aspects are interconnected with land serving as the foundation upon which Catawba people formed a nation through their kinship connections and as a space where Catawba women collected clay for pottery. Whereas scholarship on the Catawbas has stressed dramatic transformation, focusing on the lives of eighteenth and early nineteenth-century Catawba women reveals startling continuities in Catawba ways of being. This dissertation tells a story of Catawba women's lived experiences and their adaptive responses to the immense change occurring in their world by focusing on their economic, political, and social relationships.

In honor of the Catawba women of my family and in memory of my uncle, Wayne George.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES.....	x
INTRODUCTION.....	xi
CHAPTER 1: HOW THE CATAWBAS BECAME A NATION, 1542 – 1750.....	1
The People Who Became the Catawbas.....	2
Catawba Life Ways.....	11
Catawba Belief System.....	20
Catawba Towns of the 1750s.....	24
Catawba People.....	31
Conclusion.....	39
CHAPTER 2: CATAWBA KINSHIP, 1700 – 1820	40
Ethnographic Evidence of a Matrilineal Kinship System.....	44
Sally New River.....	51
Conclusion.....	57
CHAPTER 3: INDIFFERENT TO CHRISTIANITY, 1716 – 1822.....	59
Catawba Education.....	61
English Education.....	63
Conclusion.....	80
CHAPTER 4: “STAY AT HOME,” 1700 – 1763	81
Crises in Catawba Territory.....	82
Disease.....	103
“Perish for Want”.....	110
Conclusion.....	114
CHAPTER 5: TRADING POTS, 1760 – 1820.....	115

Making of Pots.....	117
Catawba Women Go Trading Pots.....	125
Sally’s Household.....	139
CHAPTER 6: CATAWBA LAND OWNERSHIP AND LEASING, 1750 – 1840.....	143
Catawba Land Ownership.....	144
Land Leasing System.....	158
Conclusion.....	182
CONCLUSION.....	185
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	193

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: “A Map Describing the Situation of the several Nations of Indians between South Carolina and the Massisipi River; was Copyed from a Draught Drawn & Painted upon a Deer Skin by an Indian Cacique; and Presented to Francis Nicholson Esqr. Governor of South Carolina, 1721.....	7
Figure 2: Map by John Evans, 1759.....	25
Figure 3: Nassaw town site.....	27
Figure 4: Sketch of Captain Redhead.....	35
Figure 5: Drawing by John White Plate 43, “Cooking in a Pot”	117
Figure 6: Examples of pottery rim strips from Nassaw and Weyapee sites.....	122
Figure 7: Examples of incised sherds from bowls recovered from the Nassaw and Weyapee Sites.....	122
Figure 8: Catawba pottery sherds from the Old Town site.....	129
Figure 9: Variety of Catawba pottery forms at the late eighteenth-century Catawba town of New Town.....	129
Figure 10: Catawba bowl recovered from Sally New River’s home site at New Town.....	130
Figure 11: A Hagler-head mold made by Evelyn Brown George in the 1990s.....	132
Figure 12: A portion of the 1764 Samuel Wyly map with Catawba towns highlighted.....	157
Figure 13: One of James Spratt’s Catawba leases of 875 acres.....	178

INTRODUCTION

On an early spring day in 1796, one hundred Catawba Indians met in council at New Town to discuss urgent business regarding their land. Because Catawba politics dictated that issues relevant to the entire Nation required the consensus of all adult Catawbas, the council meeting probably transpired as follows. A headman told the men and women gathered at the meeting that just 500 acres of Catawba land remained. White South Carolinians, he reminded them, had taken a majority of their land. Within the remaining 500 acres stood three Catawba towns and a few smaller fields where Catawba women grew corn and beans. Because Catawba women controlled and managed both the agriculture and the daily running of the towns, their opinions were particularly important. The headman underscored the threat to Catawba land several times in his speech, causing a low murmur to circulate among his people. The anxious whispers of Catawba men and women reached the leaders, probably General New River, Colonel John Ears, and Major John Brown. In response, the leaders nodded a welcome to four white men who stood at the edge of the town, within eyesight but out of hearing range of the council. The men entered the council meeting. Standing before the Catawba people, they suggested that the Indians should deed the remaining 500 acres to a trusted Catawba in order to protect the land because then only that Catawba would be able to sell or lease the land legally. What we know for certain is that Catawba people chose to vest the remaining land in their women. By the end of the meeting, they had selected Sally New River, General New River's wife, and other "women of the Nation"

to receive the land in a deed contract.¹ Conveying the deed to women ensured that the headmen could not lease land that held the towns, fields, and burial grounds, spaces that held particular significance for women.

This land deed provides us with a rare glimpse into eighteenth-century Catawba politics and social structure, particularly the roles that Catawba women held. The document is the most tangible evidence for the authority, respect, and influence that Catawba women wielded within their society. By naming Sally New River, the Catawbas made her a representative of all Catawba women. According to Catawba custom, women controlled the towns, households, agriculture, and the clay holes from which they dug clay for pots. Although Catawbas recognized that white settlement posed a real threat to Catawba land, with the deed they used the American legal system to uphold one of the founding principles of Catawba life: women owned the land on which they lived, raised their children, and fed their families. The deed also safeguarded the ancestral land upon which First Woman gave birth to Catawba people. On this land, Catawbas derived a sense of themselves as Catawba individuals and as citizens of a Catawba Nation through their history, kinship, and connection to a homeland.

Families from diverse Siouan-speaking Indian groups in the Piedmont merged at distinct periods of social disruption between 1540 and 1760, eventually forming the Catawba Nation.² Language facilitated alliances between the Indians of the Piedmont, who spoke an eastern Siouan

¹ Although we do not have the details of this meeting, I have assumed one took place in which Catawbas selected Sally New River and other Catawba women as recipients of the land. For the deed, see Lancaster County (S.C.), Deed Book G, 166, Lancaster County Courthouse, signed April 6, 1796, recorded April 14, 1808.

²For a comprehensive treatment of social disruption among Piedmont Indians from 1450 to 1750, see Robin Beck, *Chiefdoms, Collapse, and Coalescence in the Early American South* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

language classified as Katába or Catawba.³ When trader James Adair visited the Catawba towns in 1743, he observed “their nation consisted...of above twenty different dialects...the *Kátahba*, is the standard or court-dialect,” a linguistic pattern that eased the shift from many autonomous groups to one united nation.⁴ Language was only one factor that served to link the various Piedmont people together in a world turned upside down, but the ability to converse with one another, despite living in distinctly autonomous towns, facilitated the Piedmont Indians coalescences into the Catawba Nation.

Recurring epidemic disease from the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries and the slave trade and amplified military conflicts of the eighteenth century triggered severe population decline, which in turn altered the Indians’ social and political structures considerably.⁵ During this two-hundred-year period, drastic depopulation hit smaller Siouan-speaking Piedmont Indian groups particularly hard. Most of these Indian people coalesced with the larger Siouan-speaking Esaw Indians (also known as Nassaw), an amalgamation that by the 1750s resulted in the emergence of the “Catawba Nation” that included a group of six loosely allied towns situated

³Albert S. Gatschet, “Grammatic Sketch of the Catawba Language,” *American Anthropologist*, New Series, Vol. 2, No. 3 (Jul. – Sep., 1900), 528.

⁴Adair, *Adair’s History of American Indians*, 224 [Adair’s emphasis].

⁵For a comprehensive treatment of Native North American demographics, see Alfred W. Crosby, Jr., *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1972); Henry F. Dobyns, *Their Number Become Thinned: Native American Population Dynamics in Eastern North America* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1983); Russell Thornton, *American Holocaust: A Population History Since 1492* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987). Robbie Franklyn Ethridge and Sheri Marie Shuck-Hall used the term “shatter zone” in *Mapping the Mississippian Shatter Zone: The Colonial Indian Slave Trade and Regional Instability in the American South* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 1-3. For other relevant studies on the transformation of early American Indian societies, see Alfred W. Crosby, Jr., *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492*, 30th Anniversary Edition (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2003 [1972]). For change specific to Catawba people, see David G. Moore, *Catawba Valley Mississippian: Ceramics, Chronology, and Catawba Indians* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama, 2002); James H. Merrell, *The Indians’ New World: Catawbas and Their Neighbors from European Contact Through the Era of Removal* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1989).

along the Catawba River. Individual towns often acted independently of the others, but they all came together during war and for diplomacy. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, an Indian living within a certain town maintained a distinct identity connected to that town. Indians living in the town of Nassaw, thought of themselves as Nassaw Indians. Being matrilineal, they traced their lineage through the Nassaw women of that town. By 1762, six towns shrank to three towns, but lineage practices continued, as specific family groups lived in each town. While the coalescence process of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries altered the lives of proto-Catawba people, they created and reinforced their identity as Catawba through kinship and homeland. How Catawbas selectively adapted to the changes in their world while holding onto some of their older practices is a story in which Catawba women and land are at the heart of the endurance and resiliency of Catawba people.

Beginning in the mid-1700s, Siouan-speaking people who lived in the Piedmont region of present-day South Carolina confronted unremitting pressure from European colonists to give up their land, coercion that continued over the next hundred years. According to an uncorroborated account written by one Euro-American settler, Catawba headmen welcomed a handful of soldiers with whom they had served in the American Revolution to settle on their land.⁶ If true, the Catawbas almost certainly leased the land to the soldiers. In a clever move to protect their land and validate their status as property owners within South Carolina's laws, Catawbas began negotiating legal land lease contracts for hundreds to thousands of acres of land to landless settlers. With the exception of 500 acres located on the eastern side of the Catawba River in present-day Lancaster County, Catawbas had leased nearly all of their land by 1790.⁷ Catawbas

⁶David Hutchison, "Catawba Indians," August 30, 1849, *Palmetto-State Banner* (Columbia), 1.

⁷Merrell, *The Indians' New World*, 244-245.

recognized the threat to this remaining land upon which they had built three towns, located their burial grounds, and cultivated fields. As a Nation, they devised a plan to safeguard the 500 acres. On April 6, 1796, as I have described, a headman from each of the three towns, met with four state-appointed Indian commissioners and deeded the land to Sally New River and other Catawba women.⁸

The practice of Indian women controlling and managing property was common among Southeastern Indian.⁹ Eleven Kussoe Indian women of South Carolina, for example, made their marks on a land cession treaty in 1675. The Kussoe Indians resided along the coast near the head of the Ashley River, fertile land that the Earl of Shaftesbury and a Lord of Proprietor for the province of Carolina wanted for himself.¹⁰ According to James Mooney, the Kussoe belonged to a coalescence of Indians known as the Cusabo, a group that included Etiwaw, Westo, Stono, and Edisto Indians. By 1746, some of the Kussoe who had joined with the Indians of the Piedmont still spoke their own language.¹¹ We will never know if Sally shared a military rank similar to the Kussoe female “captains” who signed the 1675 treaty, but the 1796 land deed demonstrates that Sally and other Catawba women held a high status that put them in the position to own land.

⁸Lancaster County (S.C.), Deed Book G, 166, Lancaster County Courthouse, signed April 6, 1796, recorded April 14, 1808.

⁹Marylynn Salmon argued that by the end of the eighteenth century, married women gained some rights as property owners, see *Women and the Law of Property in Early America* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1986); Mary Roberts Parramore, *For Her Sole and Separate Use: Feme Sole Trader Status in Early South Carolina*, MA Thesis, University of South Carolina, Columbia, 1991. In order to sustain the family, the feme sole status was much easier to get in South Carolina than in other British colonies and American states, see Ellen Hartigan-O'Connor, *The Ties That Buy: Women and Commerce in Revolutionary America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 63.

¹⁰Gene Waddell, “Cofitachiqui,” *Carologue*, Vol. 16, No. 3 (Autumn, 2000), 8-15.

¹¹Mooney, *Siouan Indians of the East*, 85-86.

Catawbas used the American legal system to uphold both Catawba landownership and the Catawba custom of women owning land.

We know very little about the meeting between the headmen and the Indian commissioners. The South Carolina state-appointed agents neglected to keep any record of the meeting, and the headmen rarely spoke English, much less wrote English. Whether the transaction created tensions centered on its validity with South Carolina officials is unknown, but with the support of the commissioners, who signed the land conveyance, Catawbas registered the deed as a legal contract in the state of South Carolina. Catawba people, optimistic that South Carolina would recognize the legitimacy of the deed, hoped the land would remain safe in the hands of Catawba women and out of reach of land-hungry white men.¹²

Few eighteenth-century documents mention Catawba women, a common problem that discourages researchers from focusing on early American Indian women. Accounts in the Lyman C. Draper Manuscript Collection stimulated my interest in the lives of early Catawba women, especially letters that mentioned the conveyance of land to Sally New River. When I read the land deed, I wondered why Sally was the only woman named in the contract. The deed, specifically Sally's name, inspired me to search for additional documents that mentioned her. One letter dated 1871 and written by an elderly resident of York County described Sally as a well-respected person, who carried "authority among the tribe." The writer recalled "seeing her once at a general meeting of the Indians with the agents settling a fierce collision" between two Catawba women. In that meeting, "Sally appeared & parted the belligerents & calmed the

¹²Whether the three headmen actually represented Old Town, New Town, and Ayers Town remains unconfirmed, see Lancaster County (S.C.), Deed Book G, 166.

excited tumult immediately.”¹³ Although I was excited to find more documentation about Sally, the deed and the letter also raised larger questions for me about the lives of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Catawba women. How did they fit into the narrative of Catawba history? How did she and other Catawba women of her time live? Most of all, can the story of Catawba women tell us more about the interplay of change and continuity in women's roles and lives and their decisions about what to adapt, what to blend, and what to keep to ensure the survival of Catawba people? Colonial records, travelers’ journals, historical newspapers, oral tradition, and archaeological data provide clues to how Catawba women of Sally’s time thought about kinship, education, land ownership, pottery, and war. The answers to these questions also reveal powerfully enduring practices that link Catawba women to the creation and preservation of a Catawba identity.

Like most American Indians, Catawba identity is bound to a homeplace and a shared history of the past. In addition, Catawbas distinguish their “Catawbaness” through storytelling, dance, song, and material culture (pottery and, recently, a rebirth of basket making). Most importantly, Catawbas recognize themselves as “Catawba” based on kinship connections. I focus on Catawba kinship, land, and pottery because these aspects were and are the most important distinguishing attributes of being Catawba, though certainly not the only ones. Kinship, land, and pottery show how Sally and her female relatives spent most of their lives creating, preserving, and adapting Catawba ways of being while remaining at the heart of Catawba identity.

¹³“Letter from T. D. Spratt, Fort Mill York County S.C. Jan 12th, 1871,” Thomas Sumter Papers, Lyman S. Draper MSS, 15VV100.

In the colonial period, Catawba women's lives were similar to those of their southeastern Indian neighbors. Continuing long established patterns of life, they cared for their families, homes, and fields while conforming to the matrilineal kinship system. Although Catawba men filled the most public political leadership positions, women participated in tribal politics and had a vital voice in tribal meetings. But rapid change also characterized Catawba life. When an influx of settlers into Catawba territory changed the demographics and economics of Catawba society, Catawba women's economic contributions increased in importance.¹⁴ In the early 1700s the Catawba population declined dramatically, and the economy based on deerskins and captives collapsed. In the latter half of the century, European colonists in the South Carolina backcountry began developing a plantation economy that depended on acquiring land, including that of the Catawbas. In this new economy, Catawba women continued their role as owners and managers of Catawba land by leasing land to white tenants. At the same time, Catawba women increased their production of pots, selling them to white and Indian customers throughout the Carolinas.

The history of Catawba pottery production and land ownership is intertwined spiritually and economically for Catawba women. On their ancestral land, where First Woman gave birth to Catawba people, they collected clay for making pots, an enterprise they continue to this day. In 1760, Catawbas moved their towns closer to the trading hub of Pine Tree Hill, South Carolina, where Catawba women participated in the exchange system as itinerant potters. With their families, they traveled from their towns in the Carolina Piedmont to Charleston, selling their

¹⁴Merrell, *The Indians' New World*, 171-181. For a comprehensive study on the development of a plantation economy in South Carolina's backcountry, see Rachel N. Klein, *Unification of a Slave State: The Rise of the Planter Class in the South Carolina Backcountry, 1760-1808* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990). For detailed treatment of Catawba population dynamics, see Theresa E. McReynolds, "Catawba Population Dynamics during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," in *North Carolina Archaeology*, Vol. 53 (Oct., 2004), 42-59.

wares along the way.¹⁵ They became the major earners for their families, and at the same time passed on knowledge of digging clay and making pottery to their daughters and nieces.

Catawba women's land management enabled their people to retain land and communal landholding in the face of the expulsion of most eastern tribes in the nineteenth century. In the early 1700s, Catawbas struggled to protect their land from settler encroachment. By mid-century, they realized that leasing their land would serve several purposes. Because the contracts were legal documents recognized in South Carolina and U.S. courts, they reinforced the Catawbas' status as landowners. Catawbas also used the lease agreements and payments to foster their economic independence by providing Catawba property owners with a small annual payment. Toward the end of the 1700s, when Catawba leaders had leased most of their land to white farmers, they decided to transfer a substantial tract of land to Sally New River in order to safeguard it against leasing. Although non-Catawbas viewed Sally as an individual landowner, she really held the land collectively for her people, not as a private proprietor. On the surface this timeline conveys a story of land loss and the decline of Catawba people. In reality, the transfer of land to Catawba women played a central role in Catawbas' successful persistence as they struggled to hold onto and remain on their land against forces that drove most eastern Native peoples west.

My study examines the role of women in early Catawba history with emphasis on Sally New River, a powerful woman and the largest singular landholder until her death in 1821. I begin this study in the early 1700s, during Sally's childhood, and end in 1840 when the people of the Catawba Nation relinquished their lands to the state of South Carolina in the Nation Ford Treaty. The central objective is to tell Catawba women's story, and, in so doing, enhance our

¹⁵Merrell, *The Indians' New World*, 191-193, 267-270.

understanding of Catawba history, Native American history, and the history of women in early America.

Writing early Catawba history, especially that of Catawba women, is a challenge. Eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Catawbas rarely left their own written records, and Europeans and Euro-Americans who wrote about these Indians focused on men. Yet, as James H. Merrell demonstrated in his 1989 groundbreaking study on Catawba Indians, presenting the story from the “actors’ point of view” is possible, albeit at times speculative.¹⁶ Such is the case when writing about Catawba women who left no written accounts about their lives. Rather than consider the issue of perspective as an impediment, I interrogate the primary sources that obstruct the presence of Catawba women by asking how they might fit into the story.

With this challenge in mind, I use the methodological approach of ethnohistory to glean information about Catawba women from historical documents, maps, oral tradition, material culture, museum collections, cultural anthropology, and data recovered from archaeological investigations of colonial and federal period Catawba Indian sites.¹⁷ When analyzing colonial legislative journals that catalogue trade goods shipped to the Catawba towns, for example, I looked for items intended for Catawba women—calico, earbobs, and gartering—articles the South Carolina Assembly sent to the women.¹⁸ These items demonstrate that while colonial officials neglected to write specifically about Catawba women, they recognized that Catawba women wielded authority and influence in their society. Catawba women had a voice, and their voice mattered. In addition, I employ the methodology of “upstreaming,” a practice that 1)

¹⁶Merrell, *The Indians’ New World*, ix.

¹⁷James Axtell, “Ethnohistory: An Historian’s Viewpoint,” *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (Winter, 1979), pp. 1-13.

¹⁸J. H. Easterby, ed., *The Colonial Records of South Carolina: The Journal of the Commons House of Assembly, January 19, 1748 – June 29, 1748* (Columbia: South Carolina Archive Department, 1961), 294-295.

asserts that major societal patterns and practices tend to change slowly when they change at all, 2) proceeds from what is known using that knowledge to interpret primary source data, and 3) uses sources that ring true at both ends of the time span under study.¹⁹ As a Catawba woman, I incorporate my understanding of Catawba kinship and pottery and Catawba beliefs about land based on the lives of my grandmother and great-grandmother. Doing so facilitates my own understanding of Catawba women in the eighteenth and early nineteenth-centuries. Approaching my study in this way is the only way to illuminate lesser known historical actors.

Archaeological data and artifacts, oral traditions, and oral histories provide researchers and readers with a glimpse of Catawba women's lives. Archaeologist Janet Spector, who was concerned with how cultural material reflected gender-based differences in power and status, argued that male-centered archaeological assessments of the past placed indigenous women in the stereotypical role of a dependent, submissive woman. "Bringing a feminist perspective to archaeology" Spector emphasized, was necessary to "counteract the negative effects" of the field's focus on men's activities and highlight "the activities of women and the centrality of gender as a significant and dynamic factor" that shapes the lives of American Indians and Europeans as they encounter one another.²⁰ Early European observers, who were almost always men, had limited access to the private lives and spaces of indigenous women. While Sally left no letters or memoirs, and oral histories of her that remain are negligible, incorporating archaeological data recovered from eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Catawba town sites reveals how Sally and other Catawba women carried out various tasks in their daily lives.

¹⁹William N. Fenton, *The Great Law and the Longhouse: A Political History of the Iroquois Confederacy* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998), xvi.

²⁰Janet Spector, *What This Awl Means: Feminist Archaeology at a Wahpeton Dakota Village* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1993), 8-9, 128.

My research engages in many historical debates, including lineality, gender roles, and changes wrought by colonialism. Scholars of early Southern history who write about women tend to give limited treatment of the lives of indigenous women.²¹ My work seeks to broaden our understanding of early Southern history by concentrating on the lives of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Catawba women and how they responded to historical events such as warfare, trade, disease, encounters with settlers, and dispossession.

Historians and anthropologists have studied Catawba Indians since the late nineteenth century, but they have missed the central role that Catawba women played in Catawba history. Anthropologists Mark R. Harrington, Albert S. Gatschet, Frank G. Speck, and Vladimir Fewkes sought to document and preserve aspects of contemporary Catawba customs, rituals, and language.²² In 1966 Douglas Summers Brown became the first scholar to provide a comprehensive study on Catawba Indians in *The Catawba Indians: The People of the River*.²³ In 1970, anthropologist Charles Hudson published a slim monograph, *The Catawba Nation*, based on fieldwork. He focused specifically on how Catawbas from the beginning of European

²¹For histories on colonial American women, see Kathleen M. Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Carol Berkin, *First Generations: Women in Colonial America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1997); Larry Eldridge, *Women & Freedom in Early America* (New York: New York University Press, 1997); Kirsten Fischer, *Suspect Relations: Sex, Race, and Resistance in Colonial North Carolina* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002); Ellen Hartigan-O'Connor, *The Ties That Buy: Women and Commerce in Revolutionary America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).

²²Mark R. Harrington, Mark R. Harrington Collection, National Museum of American Indian Cultural Resource Center, Suitland, Maryland; Albert S. Gatschet, "Grammatic Sketch of the Catawba Language," *American Anthropologist*, NS, Vol. 2, No. 3 (Jul. – Sep., 1900), 527-549; Frank G. Speck, *Catawba Texts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1934); Vladimir J. Fewkes, "Catawba Pottery-Making, with Notes on Pamunkey Pottery-Making, Cherokee Pottery-Making, and Coiling," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. 88, No. 2 (Jul., 1944), 69-124.

²³Douglas Summers Brown, *The Catawba Indians: The People of the River* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1966).

contact to the termination period of the 1950s and 1960s perceived of themselves as “Catawba” based on their remembrance of history.²⁴ In 1989, James H. Merrell emphasized Catawba survival, particularly the Indians’ responses and adaptations to a “new world.”²⁵ As in Hudson and Merrell’s studies, Catawba identity and survival are central themes in my work. My dissertation, however, reveals that Catawba women were at the heart of Catawba identity as they adapted repeatedly to a “new world” and ensured the survival of Catawba people.

Subsequent scholarship about Catawba Indians has focused on pottery and land. Thomas J. Blumer wrote in his 2004 book that Catawba pottery served as the unbroken line that linked Catawbans to their past.²⁶ In 2005, historian Louise Pettus investigated Catawba land leases but focused on the experiences of Euro-American tenants and their contracts, which provided me with the opportunity to use her sources to give a more inclusive picture of Catawba economics and social structure.²⁷ Furthermore, her research, together with the *Catawba Indian Rent and Plat Book, 1810-1825*, supports my argument that Catawba women retained control of Catawba land and cared for their relatives as dictated by a matrilineal kinship system.²⁸ My study shows

²⁴Charles M. Hudson, *The Catawba Nation* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1970), vii-viii. The termination period began in 1953 when Congress adopted and enforced House Concurrent Resolution 108 (HCR 108), which attempted to destroy tribal sovereignty, authorized selected states to assume criminal and civil jurisdiction over tribal lands, and withdrew federal aid and services to many reservations. For more on the termination policy and its affects see Larry W. Burt, *Tribalism in Crisis: Federal Indian Policy, 1953-1961* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1982); Daniel M. Cobb, *Native Activism in Cold War America: The Struggle for Sovereignty* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008).

²⁵Merrell, *The Indians’ New World*, viii-xi.

²⁶Thomas John Blumer, *Catawba Indian Pottery: The Survival of a Folk Tradition* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2004), 1.

²⁷Louise Pettus, *Leasing Away A Nation: The Legacy of Catawba Indian Land Leases* (Columbia: Palmetto Conservation Foundation, 2005).

²⁸*Superintendents of the Catawba Nation, Plat and Lease Book, 1810-1825* [1810-1831], South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia.

that these three facets—pottery, land, and kinship—are crucial to being Catawba and all are linked to women.

In the past forty years, scholars including Sylvia Van Kirk, Marla N. Powers, Clara Sue Kidwell, Rebecca Kugel, Lucy Eldersveld Murphy, Nancy Shoemaker, Theda Perdue, Kathleen DuVal, and Sarah Hill have broadened our understanding of how American Indian women lived. As Devon A. Mihesuah, a Choctaw historian and writer, has posited, American Indian women are multi-faceted individuals who faced similar struggles but responded in diverse ways. Although Catawba women shared with other indigenous women a struggle against colonialism, Catawba women confronted and responded to change in specific Catawba ways. Scholars like Kidwell, Perdue, DuVal, and Hill place women at the heart of their nations' histories.²⁹ These works argue that indigenous women influenced the world around them, and that they were “active agents” of change, not “passive victims.”³⁰ The story of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Catawba women reveals how, with great effort and awareness, they worked to ensure the survival of Catawba people and their Catawba identity through kinship, land ownership, and pottery.

²⁹Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980); Marla N. Powers, *Oglala Women: Myth, Ritual, and Reality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986); Clara Sue Kidwell, “Indian Women as Cultural Mediators,” *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 39, No. 2 (Spring, 1992), 97-107; Nancy Shoemaker, ed., *Negotiators of Change: Historical Perspectives on Native American Women* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Sarah Hill, *Weaving New Worlds: Southeastern Cherokee Women and Their Basketry* (Chapel Hill: University of Chapel Hill, 1997); Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998); Theda Perdue, ed., *Sifters: Native American Women's Lives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Devon Abbott Mihesuah, *Indigenous American Women: Decolonization, Empowerment, Activism* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003); Devon A. Mihesuah, “Commonality of Difference: American Indian Women and History,” *American Indian Quarterly*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (Winter 1996), 15-27; Rebecca Kugel and Lucy Eldersveld Murphy, eds., *Native Women's History in Eastern North America before 1900* (Lincoln: The Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska, 2007); and Kathleen DuVal, “Indian Intermarriage and Métissage in Colonial Louisiana,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 65, No. 2 (April, 2008), 267-304.

³⁰ Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties*, 8.

Other scholars have focused on the themes of coalescence, persistence, and identity. In Patricia Galloway's 1996 book on the genesis of Choctaw Indians, she showed how the Choctaws "emerged apparently from nowhere" and formed a common identity.³¹ More recently in 2006, Kathleen DuVal demonstrated that Indians within the Arkansas Valley region claimed "native ground" to maintain their sovereign identities and long continued to make independent decisions about how they ran their societies and used their land and natural resources.³² My research on Catawba Indians conforms to Galloway and DuVal's studies. I begin with the formation of the Catawba Nation with a focus on women of various Indian groups who, confronted with crisis, directed the course of change within their world.

Theda Perdue revolutionized the field of American Indian women's history by rejecting the declension and subordination models used by previous scholars. In her study of Cherokee women, she argued that Cherokee women acted as conveyors of culture. Even as the Cherokees became more dependent upon European trade, Cherokee women found ways to retain their traditional values through the matrilineal structures of Cherokee society.³³ In *Sifters: Native American Women's Lives*, Perdue highlighted the uniqueness of each woman's life. She argued that scholars must consider the distinctiveness of each Native woman's experiences because doing so provides us with a richer, more complete view of Native America.³⁴

DuVal also emphasized stability of Native cultural practices among eighteenth-century Louisiana Indian women, even in the event of intermarriage with non-Indians. When Indian

³¹Patricia Galloway, *Choctaw Genesis, 1500-1700* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 264.

³²Kathleen DuVal, *The Native Ground: Indians and Colonists in the Heart of the Continent* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 1-9.

³³Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 7-10.

³⁴Perdue, *Sifters*, 3-12.

women, such as the Quapaw, intermarried with French men, the women married according to their own customs, and they did not assimilate to French practices. Most Louisiana Indians, DuVal argued, maintained control over the sexual and marital landscape of Louisiana, and as relationships developed, the French relied on the assistance of the Indians to facilitate foreign trade relations.³⁵ My work looks at similar social changes that Catawba women experienced. Catawba women acted as cultural mediators for their people and colonial traders, and they took part in the trade economy. When eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Catawba women intermarried with whites and other Indians, something they did infrequently, they did so on their own terms, incorporating outsiders into Catawba society.

In the early colonial period, Indian women acted as important cultural mediators, yet European observers often overlooked or misunderstood women's roles. Women did not occupy the status of "squaw drudge" that white men used as evidence for Native savagism.³⁶ According to European observations, Native women worked more and harder than Native men did, a misleading view that ignored the labor men invested in hunting and going to war. Early Europeans grounded the notion of the overworked Native woman "on misunderstanding, ethnocentrism as well as the determination to rationalize white hegemony in America."³⁷ Furthermore, early European observers overlooked the parity of gender roles that existed in American Indian societies. Historian Clara Sue Kidwell asserted that the "mythology" of first contact women, such as Pocahontas and Sacagawea, is problematic in that previous historical narratives failed to present indigenous women as "real" women. American Indian women's lives

³⁵DuVal, "Indian Intermarriage and Métissage in Colonial Louisiana," 267-304.

³⁶David D. Smits, "The Squaw Drudge: A Prime Index of Savagism," *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 29, No. 4 (Autumn, 1982), 281.

³⁷Smits, "The Squaw Drudge," 281-306.

were more complex than the stereotypical label of squaw drudge or princess. Their lives had motivation that had little or nothing to do with Europeans. These women had intentionality in their actions, a determination rarely read in primary sources.³⁸ Although many of the historical documents written about Sally New River identify her as a “princess” or a “queen,” she was neither. Centering Sally and other Catawba women of her time as “real” women who made everyday life decisions and, at times, had the authority to make important decisions that were crucial to Catawba society is vital to telling a comprehensive Catawba history. Sally and other Catawba women placed themselves in a public economic and political sphere where they acted as agents of change to protect while ensuring a Catawba identity and the survival of Catawba people.

As Nancy Shoemaker has argued, Native women filled important roles in their communities—mother, wife, daughter, but also farmer, landowner, protector, healer, and breadwinner. Most important, they often “maintained the cultural traditions of their people,” even when advocating for change.³⁹ Catawba Indian women adapted creatively to immense change and acted for the benefit of their people. They enjoyed economic power and exercised political power. But they also made difficult choices that included sending some children to Virginia to receive a Christian education in the 1710s and 1760s. Nevertheless, they transmitted to future generations what it meant to be Catawba through oral tradition and a Catawba education.

Integrating written and oral histories with archaeological data is essential when telling the story of Catawba women. As historian Sarah Hill argued in *Weaving New Worlds*, material

³⁸Kidwell, “Indian Women as Cultural Mediators,” 97-107.

³⁹Shoemaker, ed., *Negotiators of Change*, 2.

culture traditions “occurred in the context of lived experience, ecological processes, social conditions, economic circumstances, and historical eras.” Like the Cherokee basket-making traditions of Hill’s study, Catawba women’s pottery making traditions also “occurred in the context of lived experience.”⁴⁰ Changes to age-old designs and methods were informed decisions so that they could retain a niche in the Catawbas’ changing economy while also providing for their families. In addition, their distinctive pottery helped outsiders recognize Catawbas.⁴¹ Distinguishing themselves to outsiders as Catawba became increasingly important as the South developed into a biracial society. Whether Catawbas “owe their survival as a people to their pottery,” as Thomas Blumer stated in *Catawba Indian Pottery* (2004), is debatable, but they owe the potters—Catawba women—for the persistence of Catawba identity and the resiliency of the Catawba Nation.⁴²

Analyzing the lives of Catawba women reveals startling cultural continuities that center on land, kinship, and economic sustainability. The chapters that follow are arranged thematically according to these three aspects of being Catawba. Chapter 1 establishes the natural and constructed world of early eighteenth-century Siouan-speaking people whose oral tradition tied them to an ancestral homeland through “First Woman.” An analysis of the history of the formation of the Catawba Nation reveals remarkable persistence and resiliency of a group of people, their Nation’s territorial boundaries and towns, and the natural resources located within that territory. Chapter 2 discusses eighteenth-century Catawba kinship. Using primary sources

⁴⁰Sarah Hill, *Weaving New Worlds: Southeastern Cherokee Women and Their Basketry* (Chapel Hill: University of Chapel Hill, 1987), xvii.

⁴¹James H. Merrell, “The Racial Education of the Catawba Indians,” *Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 50 (1984), 379.

⁴²Blumer, *Catawba Indian Pottery*, 2.

from the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries, I argue that early Catawbas traced their lineage through the female line. In Chapter 3, I examine Catawba schooling and Catawba indifference to Christianity because survival was Catawbas' foremost priority. In Chapter 4, I analyze how Catawba women responded to cyclical war, disease, and town removals to show that even during times of crises women continued blending old and new ways as a means to preserve Catawba life. Women still controlled the homes, villages, natural resources, and fields, but they became the primary heads of household and protectors in the absence of Catawba men. Chapter 5 focuses on Catawba women as income producers and cultural conveyors in the manufacture of Catawba-made pottery, the most visible marker of Catawba identity to outsiders. In the final chapter, I focus on the shrinkage of Catawba territory during the eighteenth century. I analyze the Catawbas' beliefs about land ownership and their struggle to hold onto their land, as well as Catawba women's role in the land leasing system of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Despite threats to their land by white settlement, Catawbas developed strategies to retain their land, not as individuals or as separate towns, but as a people.

Adding Catawba women to the historiography is essential to broadening our knowledge of Catawba history, American Indian history, and early American women's history. My research moves the narrative of early Catawba women from a position of historical silence to reveal their roles in maintaining a Catawba identity through the Catawba customs of kinship, land ownership, and the manufacture of pottery. Dramatic transformation did occur within eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Catawba society. However, the change that Catawba women experienced does not fit a simple declension model. Rather, Catawba women who lived during these years assumed the roles of protector of the land and people. As potters and landowners, Catawba women served as the economic heads-of-household involved in the

commercial exchange of pottery and land leases. During this period of immense change, Catawba women preserved all the crucial elements of Catawba identity.

CHAPTER 1: HOW THE CATAWBAS BECAME A NATION, 1542-1750

In 1746, a baby girl named *Sarii* was born in the Catawba Nation in what is today South Carolina. Colonists knew her as Sally New River, and she would become one of the most powerful Catawba women and the largest landholder until her death in 1821. Her birth ushered her into a world shaped by the rolling hills of the Piedmont region and the waters of the Catawba River. The Piedmont region and what became known as Catawba territory lay between the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Atlantic Coastal plains and is part of the Southeastern Mixed Forests. By the time of Sally's birth in the 1740s, the territory in which the Piedmont Indians lived extended northeast near the south fork of the Yadkin River.⁴³ To the northwest, Catawba territory extended the length of the Catawba River, an essential and spiritual component of Piedmont Indian life, which originates in the Blue Ridge Mountains.⁴⁴ Their territory reached southeast toward the PeeDee Indians' territory, south along the Catawba River into the homeland of the Wateree Indians, and west to the Broad River, the border with the Cherokees.⁴⁵

⁴³The term "Yadkin" may be an English derivative of "Yettken" Indians mentioned by James Needham and Gabriel Arthur's 1674 expedition from Virginia west through North Carolina, see Clarence W. Alvord and Lee Bidgood, *The First Explorations of the Trans-Allegheny Region by the Virginians, 1650-1674* (Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1912), 209-226.

⁴⁴The 1763 Treaty of Augusta confirmed a reduction of the sixty-mile tract to the fifteen-mile square tract; see "Minutes of the Southern Congress at Augusta, Georgia," October 1, 1763 to November 21, 1763, *North Carolina State Records-1776, And Supplement, 1730-1776*, Walter Clark, ed., Vol. 11 (Winston: M. I. & J. C. Stewart, Printers to the State, 1895), 156-207; and Merrell, *The Indians' New World*, 198.

⁴⁵This portion of the Catawba River is identified as the Catawba-Wateree Sub-basin. "York Technical College Study of the Catawba," <http://www.catawbariverkeeper.org/about-the-catawba/water-quantity-and-water-quality-information/york-technical-college-study-of-the-catawba> [accessed January 25, 2016].

For hundreds of years Catawbas and their ancestors had built their towns along the Catawba River, where they remained although they moved their towns from time to time.⁴⁶ Sally probably was born and lived in Weyane Town, known as Kings Town to colonials and one of six eighteenth-century Piedmont Indian towns located along the lower Catawba River.⁴⁷ The locale would later be known as Nation Ford. The environment of the Piedmont region offered her people an abundance of fauna and flora and provided them with almost everything needed to subsist. Trade with other American Indian groups and Europeans supplemented their economy.⁴⁸ To understand how Sally and other Catawba women of her time responded to the changes occurring in their world, we must step back to the period before 1750, one of transformation and coalescence.

The People Who Became the Catawbas

Understanding Catawba population history is necessary in order to comprehend the shattering of the Piedmont Indian social organization and the ethnogenesis of the “Catawba Nation.”⁴⁹ Although early European accounts provide little in the way of actual population counts, the demographic disaster in the Catawba River Valley is clear. When Hernando de Soto’s expedition traveled north through the Catawba-Wateree River Valley in 1540, chroniclers

⁴⁶Brett H. Riggs and R. P. Stephen Davis, Jr., “Archaeology at Ashe Ferry: Late Woodland and Middle Mississippian Period Occupations in the Lower Catawba River Valley, York County, South Carolina,” *Research Report 36*, Research Laboratories of Archaeology, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 2014.

⁴⁷I am speculating that Sally lived in Weyane based upon eighteenth-century Catawba matrilineal and matrilocal customs, a practice I discuss in detail in Chapter 2. For six towns, see Map by John Evans, 1756 in Merrell, *The Indians’ New World*, 163 [original entitled “Rough sketch-map of the towns of the Catawba nation, North Carolina and South Carolina, USA,” in *The Papers of the Maule Family, Earls of Dalhousie*, Digital format, National Records of Scotland, GD45/2/104].

⁴⁸Beck, *Chiefdoms, Collapse, and Coalescence in the Early American South*; Robbie Ethridge, *From Chicaza to Chickasaw: The European Invasion and the Transformation of the Mississippian World, 1540-1715* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Galloway, *Choctaw Genesis, 1500-1700*.

⁴⁹For a detailed account on Catawba population history, see McReynolds, “Catawba Population Dynamics during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries,” 42-59.

traveling with his army noted large populations of Indians living in the Piedmont region, a report substantiated during Juan Pardo's expedition two decades later.⁵⁰

By 1700, however, many of the larger, more powerful chiefdoms mentioned in the De Soto accounts had experienced profound population loss. Military encounters with rival Indian groups and the need for more fertile land led to the depopulation of the area, a situation accelerated by the introduction of new diseases.⁵¹ Explorers and traders who traveled into the region between Juan Pardo's expedition and John Lawson's travel of 1701 placed more emphasis on trade than on counting Indian populations, but conservative estimates put Siouan-speaking peoples' population between 1,500 and 6,000 in 1682.⁵² The most well-known and reliable account comes from Lawson, who noted that the Esaw Indians (later known as Nassaw, and then Catawba), "a very large Nation containing many thousand People," lived above the Congaree River.⁵³ Indian dwellings and people above the Congaree River grew denser, Lawson noted, in contrast to Indian populations around the Santee River region. Much of the coalescence that occurred in the region above the Congaree resulted from population movement caused by the

⁵⁰Moore, *Catawba Valley Mississippian*, 19-29; R. P. Stephen Davis, Jr., "The Cultural Landscaped of the North Carolina Piedmont at Contact," in *The Transformation of the Southeastern Indians, 1540-1760*, Robbie Ethridge and Charles Hudson, eds. (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2002), 137.

⁵¹Paul Kelton, "Great Southeastern Smallpox Epidemic, 1696-1700: The Region's First Epidemic?," in Robbie Ethridge and Charles Hudson, eds., *The Transformation of the Southeastern Indian, 1540-1760* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1998), 28-29.

⁵²James Mooney, *The Siouan Tribes of the East* (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1894), 73; James Adair, *History of the American Indians*, Samuel Cole Williams, ed. (Johnson City: Watauga Press, 1930), 224, 235; John Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina; Containing the Exact Description and Natural History of That Country: Together with the Present State thereof, and A Journal of a Thousand Miles, Travel'd thro' Several Nations of Indians*, Hugh Talmage Lefler, ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1967). Peter Wood supported this number and posited that the Catawbas' population stood at only 1,470 in 1715, a number that rebounded with the coalescence after the Yamasee War, see "The Changing Population of the Colonial South: An Overview by Race and Region, 1685-1790," in *Powhatan's Mantle: Indians in the Colonial Southeast*, eds. Gregory A. Waselkov, Peter H. Wood, and Tom Hatley, Rev. ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 74.

⁵³Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 40-51; Moore, *Catawba Valley Mississippian*, 17.

need for protection from their enemies. The small Indian groups, which sometimes included only a few surviving individuals, merged with larger Indian groups.

Indians in the Piedmont region identified the places in which they lived as independent wimutú (towns). Many of the maps from the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries show distinct towns, but the cartography fails to demonstrate clearly the political independence of these towns. A 1671 map, for example, entitled “A New Discription of Carolina by the Order of the Lords Proprietors,” depicts Ushery, Wisack, Sara, Watary, and Oenock towns in the Piedmont region.⁵⁴ The map does little to explain how these towns functioned politically and socially, but laying the map alongside John Lederer’s 1670 journal tells us more about the autonomy of the towns.⁵⁵ As late as 1721, Piedmont Indian mapmakers portrayed their towns as politically independent of one another. A closer examination of the map relates a story of Indian people’s social relations. Routes or lines drawn on the map suggest not only trade relationships, but an expansive kin network in which Piedmont people intermarried with one another and became “yewibahikure” in Catawba, which means kin or relative.⁵⁶ Piedmont Indian inhabitants of the 1721 towns shown on the map later coalesced with other Siouan-speaking people along

⁵⁴ Although the map shows these Piedmont Indian societies in the same region, the image only indicates the general location of each town; see John Ogilby and James Moxon, “A New Discription of Carolina by the Order of the Lords Proprietors,” 1671, North Carolina Maps, North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, accessed November 13, 2013, <http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/ncmaps/id/498/rec/3>.

⁵⁵ John Lederer, *The Discoveries of John Lederer in Three Several Marches from Virginia to the West of Carolina, and other Parts of the Continent* (London: Printed by J.C. for Samuel Heyrick, 1672).

⁵⁶ John Thornton, “A New Map of Carolina,” 1685, North Carolina Maps Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, <http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/ncmaps/id/119/rec/3> [accessed Sept 9, 2013]; Herman Moll, “The English empire in America: Newfoundland Canada Hudsons Bay &c. in plano,” 1701, North Carolina Map Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, <http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/ncmaps/id/35/rec/1> [accessed Sept. 9, 2013]; Herman Moll, “A Map of New France Containing Canada, Louisiana &c. in Nth. America,” ca. 1710 in Archer B. Hulbert, *The Crown Collection of Photographs of American Maps*. Series III, pl. 13-16. (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1909-1928); Herman Moll, “Carolina,” 1721, North Carolina Maps Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, <http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/ncmaps/id/27/rec/5> [Sept. 9, 2013]. For Catawba Indian Language, see Claudia Heinemann-Priest, *Catawba Indian Dictionary*, unpublished manuscript, 196.

the Catawba River, including the Nassaw, Weyane, Noostie, Charraw, Weyaline, and Suchah Indians.

The coalescence that the Piedmont Indians experienced was an ongoing phenomenon related to demographic peaks and lows caused by war and disease. In 1715, the Piedmont Indian population count stood between 1,500 and 1,600 with Siouan-speaking people living in many towns along the lower Catawba River.⁵⁷ Shortly after the Yamasee War (1715-1717), survivors of smaller native populaces, including the Congaree, Coosa, Eno, Natchez, Santee, Sewee, Wateree, Waxhaw, and Yamasee Indians began joining the Esaw Indians, also known as the Iswa, Nassaw, and even later, as the Catawba.⁵⁸ The amalgamation of these small groups with the militarily powerful Esaw Indians often included a handful of people or few families, people who needed protection in the face of Indian enemy raids.⁵⁹ Population loss and coalescence affected women profoundly, but they rebuilt their lives by integrating their traditional knowledge, subsistence patterns, and kinship networks with those of other Siouan-speaking Indian people within the region.⁶⁰

In 1721, a Catawba chief presented South Carolina Governor Francis Nicholson with a deerskin that illustrated connectedness to other native and non-native settlements through trade and kinship. The 1721 drawing that colonists recognized as a map shows how Piedmont Indians

⁵⁷Mooney, *The Siouan Indians of the East*, 73; William Byrd, *The Writings of 'Colonel William Byrd, of Westover in Virginia, Esqr.'*, ed. by John Spencer Bassett (New York: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1901), 236-237; Alan Galloway, *The Indian Slave Trade: The Rise of the English Empire in the American South, 1670-1717* (Cambridge: Yale University Press, 2002), n42, 203.

⁵⁸Mooney, *The Siouan Indians of the East*, 64-84.

⁵⁹Galloway, *The Indian Slave Trade*, 331.

⁶⁰R. P. Stephen Davis, Jr., and Brett H. Riggs, "An Introduction to the Catawba Project," Vol. 53 (October 2004), *North Carolina Archaeology*, 1. The Catawba Nation included Esaw, Katapau/Cataba, Sugaree, and allied tribes, such as Cheraw, Waxhaw, Wateree, Sissapahaw, Shakori, and Congaree; see Charles L. Heath, "Catawba Militarism: Ethnohistorical and Archaeological Overviews," Vol. 52 (October 2004), *North Carolina Archaeology*, 82, 93.

perceived their world.⁶¹ The map depicts thirteen circles that represent autonomous indigenous towns located in the Catawba River Valley (Figure 1). These towns were located within geographical area that expanded beyond the vicinity of Nation Ford, the place of Sally New River's birth.⁶² Seven paths linked Nassaw, the principal Catawba town, to twelve other indigenous towns and two colonial settlements. In mapping the territory, the cartographer drew Nassaw as a large circle at the center of the map, an indication that he saw Nassaw as the center of the world. At the margins of the deerskin and beyond the thirteen Indian towns, he drew the Cherokee (ye maṭera^h) and Chickasaw (yeṣimačekari, people fierce) towns, the Carolina colonial settlement of Charlestown, and the colony of Virginia.⁶³ Setting the Indian (yéyeh) and European (iskāteré yakekuraré, all white men) settlements apart visually, the cartographer depicted the indigenous towns as circles and the white settlements as squares, suggesting that he recognized a difference between the people who inhabited the towns or at least a difference in the way the inhabitants lived. As he attempted to demonstrate to Nicholson with the map, the Indians of the Piedmont still identified themselves distinctively as people who belonged to the Nassaw (Isaw/Eswa), Wiapie (Weyape), Nustie (Noostie), Succa (Sucah), and Charra (Cheraw) Towns.⁶⁴ The pathways symbolized Nassaw's political, economic, and social alliances with other people and towns. In the 1750s, as the population plunged, these relationships served to bring the Piedmont people together as a nation.

⁶¹Gregory A. Waselkov, Peter H. Wood, and M. Thomas Hatley, ed., *Powhatan's Mantle: Indian's in the Colonial Southeast* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 295-302.

⁶²Archer B. Hulbert, *The Crown Collection of Photographs of American Maps* (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1915), pl. 7-8.

⁶³The Chickasaw town depicted on the 1721 map is most likely the Chickasaws who lived at New Windsor, Georgia. Catawbas and the New Windsor Chickasaws traded with one another and had diplomatic relations, see Edward J. Cashin, *Guardians of the Valley: Chickasaws in Colonial South Carolina and Georgia* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2009).

⁶⁴Hulbert, *The Crown Collection of Photographs of American Maps*, pl. 7-8.

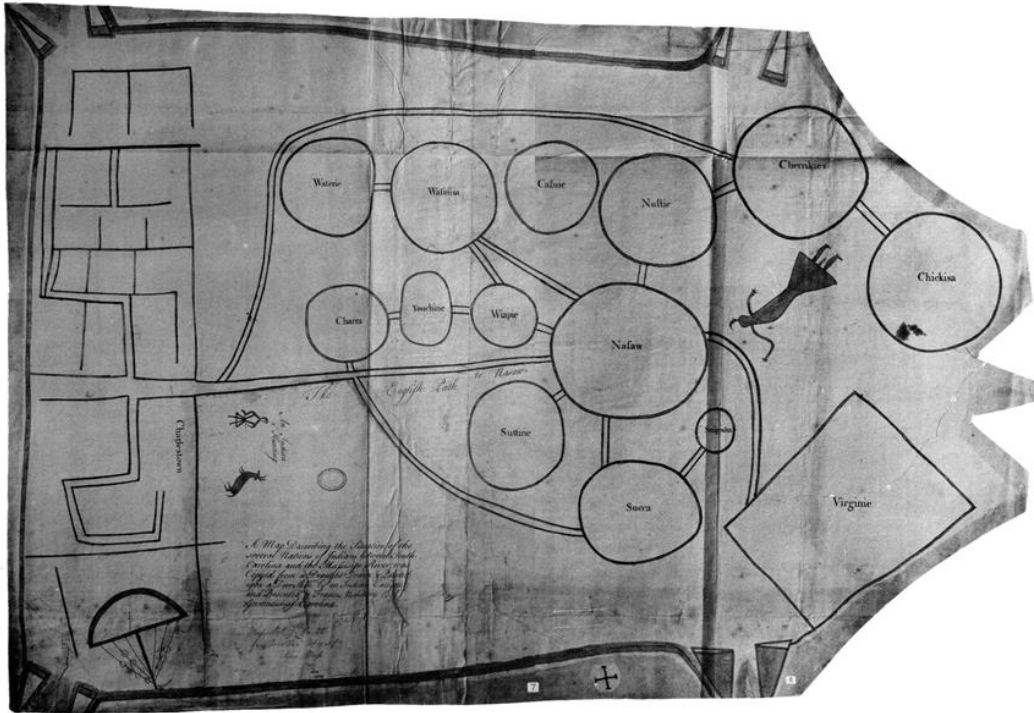


Figure 1: “A Map Describing the Situation of the several Nations of Indians between South Carolina and the Massisipi River; was Copyed from a Draught Drawn & Painted upon a Deer Skin by an Indian Cacique; and Presented to Francis Nicholson Esqr. Governor of South Carolina,” 1721. Courtesy of Archer B. Hulbert (original in Public Record Office (UK), CO 700 / North American Colonies General 6/1).

In the 1700s, paths tied Nassaw town socially and politically to outlying Indian towns and linked Piedmont Indian people to the wider world, as seen on the 1721 map. When traveling along the northeast path that ended at Williamsburg, Siouan-speaking Indians passed the Indian towns of Saponi, Keyauwee, Tutelo, Sara, Sissipahaw, Occaneechi, Shakori, and Eno. Two different paths led south from Nassaw. The southeastern path followed the Congaree and Santee Rivers toward the settlements of the Winyah Indians (Georgetown). From Winyah, Piedmont Indians traveled along the coast to Charlestown. A southwestern trail from Nassaw led toward the Savannah River, where a small band of Chickasaw Indians had established a town by 1723.⁶⁵ A fourth pathway headed west toward Tugaloo, North Carolina, and brought Piedmont Indians in

⁶⁵Edward J. Cashin, *Guardians of the Valley: Chickasaws in Colonial South Carolina and Georgia* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2009), 1-3.

contact with the Cherokee and the Creek Indians.⁶⁶ While the paths were significant to Indian-colonial diplomacy and trade, each route also linked Piedmont Indian people to the outside world socially.⁶⁷

People of each town traded with one another, and town leaders met to discuss political matters.⁶⁸ Most important, the Indians of the region established strong diplomatic alliances with one another and expanded their kinship networks through intermarriage. The inhabitants of each Indian town in the Piedmont region made political, social, and economic decisions based on the needs of their people, but they increasingly began thinking about the benefits from a larger, unified political entity.

One motivation for Piedmont Indians to consider merging was the population decline that occurred after European contact. The evidence for Catawba population between 1682 and 1826 comes from the warrior counts made by colonial traders and leaders. Colonists considered such counts significant for the security of the colonies, but these numbers excluded women, children, and elderly men. The tallies also failed to account for demographic variabilities caused by disease, war, and the slave trade.⁶⁹ Demographic decline was evident, however, and by the

⁶⁶Gladys Rebecca Dobbs, "The Indian Trading Path and Colonial Settlement Development in the North Carolina Piedmont" (PhD diss., University of North Carolina, 2006), 7 (north); John Henry Logan, *A History of the Upper Country of South Carolina: From the Earliest Periods to the Close of the War of Independence* (Charleston: S. G. Courtaney & Co., 1859), 311-313 (west and southwest). For the western path toward Tugaloo, see Verner Crane, *The Southern Frontier, 1670-1732* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2004 [1929]), 132-133; John Cary's 1811 map entitled "A new map of part of the United States of North America : containing the Carolinas and Georgia, also the Floridas and part of the Bahama Islands &c.," Hargett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia, <http://dlg.galileo.usg.edu/hmap/id:hmap1811c3> (accessed August 24, 2012).

⁶⁷Herman Moll, "Carolina," 1729, North Carolina Maps, North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, accessed November 13, 2013, <http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/ncmaps/id/355/rec/22>; Emanuel Bowen, "A New and Accurate Map of the Province of North and South Carolina, Georgia, etc.," 1747, North Carolina Maps, North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, accessed November 13, 2013, <http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/ncmaps/id/121/rec/34>.

⁶⁸Lederer, *The Discoveries of John Lederer*, 17; Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 46-49.

⁶⁹James Mooney argued that in 1682 Catawba warrior count numbered 1,500 the equivalent of 6,000 individuals, see *The Siouan Tribes of the East*, 73; Robert Mills, *Statistics of South Carolina: Including a View of its Natural, Civil, and Military History, General and Particular* (Charleston: Hurlbut and Lloyd, 1826), 114.

1750s, many of the Siouan-speaking Indian people living in the Piedmont region had united as a politically unified nation that colonists recognized as the Catawba Nation.⁷⁰ In 1759, after decades of epidemics and famine, smallpox hit the Catawbas, resulting in a depopulation of approximately sixty percent.⁷¹ Malnourishment often followed sickness and exacerbated the health of Catawba people and leading to more death.

Several non-disease factors contributed to the devastating population loss Catawbas experienced in the eighteenth century. Warfare was perhaps the most serious. Catawbas confronted numerous Indian enemies, especially the Iroquois. From 1740 through the 1780s, northern Indians killed and captured several hundred Catawbas.⁷² Second, the Catawbas' consumption of rum and whiskey and the fights that ensued because of drunkenness added to Catawba deaths.⁷³ In 1756, King Hagler, known as "Nopkehe" among his people, appealed to North Carolina Chief Justice Peter Henley to stop

⁷⁰Adair, *History of the American Indians*, 235-236. I use a 1:4 ratio to calculate overall population, see Stephen R. Potter, *Commoners, Tribute, and Chiefs: The Development of Algonquian Culture in the Potomac Valley* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1993), 21. For other diseases among Catawbas, see Merrell, *The Indians' New World*, 136 [1738]; J. H. Easterby, ed., *The Journal of the Commons House of Assembly, March 28, 1749-March 19, 1750* (Columbia: South Carolina Archives Dept., 1962), 360, 402; William McDowell, ed., *Colonial Records of South Carolina: Documents Relating to Indian Affairs, May 21, 1750-August 7, 1754* (Columbia: South Carolina Archives Dept., 1958.) 167-168, 205, 370-371; R. Nicholas Olsberg, ed., *The Colonial Records of South Carolina: The Journal of the Commons House of Assembly, April 23, 1750-August 31, 1751*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1974), 205; Terry W. Lipscomb, ed., *The Journal of the Commons House of Assembly, November 21, 1752 – September 6, 1754* (Columbia: University of South Carolina, 1983), 215; Terry W. Lipscomb, ed., *The Journal of the Commons House of Assembly, November 20, 1755-July 6, 1757* (Columbia: USC Press, 1989), 7.

⁷¹Merrell, *The Indians' New World*, 195. Theresa McReynolds argues that population loss during the smallpox epidemic of 1759 reduced Catawba population by two-thirds to three-fourths, "Catawba Population Dynamics," 16.

⁷²Besides the Indians of the Iroquois Confederacy, Catawbas Indian enemies included the Shawnee and the Delaware Indians. James H. Merrell, "Their Very Bones Shall Fight: The Catawba-Iroquois Wars," in *Beyond the Covenant Chain: The Iroquois and Their Neighbors in Indian North America, 1600-1800*, ed. by Daniel K. Richter and James H. Merrell (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1987), 115-133. The Shawnee Indians of the Ohio Valley had been enemies of the Catawbas since the Savannah Indians, a branch of Shawnee, were forced to abandon their settlements near Charlestown in 1717, see Ian Steele, "Shawnee Origins of Their Seven Years' War," *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 53, No. 4 (Fall 2006), 662.

⁷³John F. D. Smyth, *A Tour in the United States of America: Containing an Account of the Present Situation of that Country; the Population, Agriculture, Commerce, Customs, and Manners of the Inhabitants... With a Description of the Indian Nations, the General Face of the Country, Mountains, Forests, Rivers, and the Most Beautiful, Grand,*

selling strong Liquors by the White people to my people especially near the Indian Nation. If the White people make strong drink let them sell it to one another or drink it in their own Families. This will avoid a great deal of mischief which otherwise will happen from my people getting drunk and quarrelling with the White people.⁷⁴

Hagler, determined to care for and ensure the survival of his people, understood danger alcohol posed to the nation. Finally, Catawba women used abortion and infanticide to control their population and their difficult circumstances probably caused them to resort to these practices more often.⁷⁵

In a world transformed by disease, warfare, and trade, the Piedmont Indian groups had to adapt to the changes in their world, and one way they did so was by how they identified themselves politically. An Indian who lived in the town of Nassaw still distinguished her or himself as a Nassaw Indian who belonged to a specific Nassaw-based matrilineal kinship group. The Piedmont Indian groups that eventually became known as “Catawba” did not think of themselves in terms of a tribe or nation, but as a people who lived near the “iswā” (the Catawba River), land they recognized as “manú?a?,” their ancestral homeland.⁷⁶ In time, however, the diverse groups of Piedmont Indians began to recognize and call themselves Catawbas.

The term worked well for the Indians for several reasons. European colonists already identified the Indians as Catawba primarily because they found the name easier to pronounce. Although the name obscured the diversity of the Indians, it harkened back to a name familiar to

and Picturesque Views Throughout that Vast Continent. Likewise Improvements in Husbandry that May be Adopted with Great Advantage in Europe, Vol. 1 (London: G. Robinson, 1784), 186-187.

⁷⁴“Report by Peter Henley concerning his conference with King Hagler and the Catawba Nation,” May 26, 1756, *The Colonial Records of North Carolina*, William L. Saunders, ed., Vol. 5 (Raleigh: Josephus Daniels, Printer to the State, 1887), 581.

⁷⁵Smyth, *A Tour in the United States of America*, 189.

⁷⁶Early Euro-Americans used the term “nation” to identify land-controlling groups that displayed a relative amount of internal cohesion, had the military ability to oppose outsiders, made treaties, shared a common language, and maintained their own customs and distinctions; see Edward Holland Spencer, *The American Indians: Dimensions of Ethnicity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), 16.

them, Kadapau, a group of Indians who lived within walking distance of the Esaw in 1701.⁷⁷

Finally, the name “Catawba” served a political function, expressing the idea to colonials that the Indians had a collective, organized government capable of conducting diplomacy with the colonies.

Catawba Life Ways

The Catawba River and its tributaries played a key role in the lives of Sally and her people, providing proto-Catawba people with transportation, food, and a place for spiritual cleansing. Even more, the river brought Piedmont Indian women together. Women collected and used “yaye” (water) from the “iswə” (river), “yáneru” (creek), “yăči” (spring), or “yăča” (branch) to cook their food. They mixed water with wild vegetables, herbs, and roots to prepare medications for treating illnesses. They used the water to make dyes for clothing and baskets. Women went to water to learn the sex and health of an unborn child. They dipped “tųhere” (newborn children, literally little baby) in river water to ensure purity and a long-life, a ritual practiced among other Siouan-speaking women, men, and children.⁷⁸ The river was a key element of all Piedmont Indian women’s lives, as it was for their descendants, the Catawbans.

Constructing towns near the waterways made life easier for women, but the river also facilitated the concept of a common sense of homeland for Piedmont Indians. Siouan-speaking people called the river “iswə,” which simply meant “the river,” and they identified themselves as “yę iswə,” People of the River. Flowing 200 miles south from the foothills of the mountains, the Catawba River ran through valleys and hills until it reached the Carolina coast. Within the vast landscape, diverse groups of Piedmont Indians built their towns near the edge of the river and its

⁷⁷Mooney, *The Siouan Indians of the East*, 72-75.

⁷⁸Charles Hudson, *The Southeastern Indians* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1976), 321-324 [going to water]; Frank G. Speck, *Catawba Texts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1934), 53-59, 70, 72.

tributaries. The Esaw or Iswa people located their towns along the river below the mountains. The Waxsaw Indians built their town south of Esaw town near what was known by Siouan-speaking people as “munikču” (Waxhaw Creek). Further south along the Catawba River, the Wateree and Wateree Chickanee Indians built their towns.⁷⁹ The land up and down the Catawba River belonged to Siouan-speaking people. The region gave them life and an identity.

Indian women of the Piedmont lived in a territory filled with rich natural resources. The ecosystem provided women with large and small game, “kučín” (fowl), “yéí” (fish), wild vegetables, “wanekíú” (nuts), and “trii” (fruits). In the early 1700s, “yébye” (oak), “wanekú” (hickory), and “ičiiwę?” (pine) trees covered the terrain, and some trees reached upwards of sixty feet.⁸⁰ Thriving “mánu sará” (grasslands) scattered the land, and “wásawą” (canebrakes) grew thickly along the edges of the “yéki” (waterways).⁸¹

Women were particularly important in consolidating towns and bringing people of diverse towns together during the period of coalescence. Women chose the locations of the towns based on canebrakes. They cleared the dense growths of cane to get building materials and to prepare new agricultural land.⁸² In addition to using cane for house construction, Sally’s ancestors wove blankets and burial coverings of cane and reed, and they used cane to make

⁷⁹For more on Catawba language see, Albert S. Gatschet, “Sketch of the Catawba Language,” *American Anthropologist*, NS, Vol. 2, No. 3 (Jul. – Sep., 1900), 533, 546. Colonial settlers probably were the first to visually transpose the identity of these early native peoples to the waterways through cartography; see Robert Mills, *Mills’ Atlas: Atlas of the State of South Carolina, 1825* (Greenville: Southern Historical Press, 1980), pl. 77-78; Robbie Ethridge explained a similar naming pattern of the waterways in *Creek Country: The Creek Indians and Their World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2003), 32-33. Cartographer John Collet was the first mapmaker to identify “Catawbaw River” on the 1770 map entitled “A Compleat Map of North-Carolina from an Actual Survey,” Library of Congress, American Memory, Digital Map Collection, [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/gmd:@field\(NUMBER+@band\(g3900+ar150000\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/gmd:@field(NUMBER+@band(g3900+ar150000))) [accessed May 23, 2012].

⁸⁰Taylor H. Ricketts, *Terrestrial Ecoregions of North America: A Conservation Assessment* (Washington: Island Press, 1999), 197. For a description of the height and variety of trees that grew on Catawba land, see Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 74 [height]; Mills, *Statistics of South Carolina*, 774 [variety].

⁸¹Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 37-38, 107.

⁸²Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 39.

“wasáp” (baskets) for gathering crops, berries, nuts, and even clay.⁸³ Men used cane spears to catch fish and “puusuu?” (blowguns) made of large river cane to hunt small game.⁸⁴

Similar indigenous subsistence practices and ways of living off the land facilitated coalescence. When preparing the alluvial soil for “yapsę?iswá tak piire” (fields, good bottom land down at the river), Piedmont Indians used fire as a method to control the vigorously growing canebrakes.⁸⁵ Indian men managed the land with controlled burns to clear field for planting crops and forest underbrush for hunting.⁸⁶ They girdled the bark of large trees with stone or metal axes, a practice that caused trees to die. Once the tree decayed, they built a fire around the roots to clear the land. In the early 1700s, travelers recognized the cleared spaces as “an old Indian field” or “Fields of clear’d Ground.”⁸⁷ In these fields, women cultivated the Catawbas’ staple crops, corn (kus), beans, and squash. This vegetable troika had dominated southeastern Indians’ diet since about 1000. From corn women made “kusimeyu” (corn soup), and after the introduction of horses, women fed them corn until they were “as fat as a Hog.”⁸⁸

Catawbas’ ancestors used the low-burn fires in forests for several reasons. Heat-tolerant vegetation grew back quickly, yielding rich, green grasslands and sections of open forests—the domain of men. The new growth attracted “name” (bear), “wiidebúye” (deer), “yudehás”

⁸³Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 185, 34.

⁸⁴Frank G. Speck noted that Catawba men used cane blowguns to hunt small animals; see “The Cane Blowgun in Catawba and Southeastern Ethnology,” *American Anthropologist*, NS, Vol. 40, No. 2 (Apr.-Jun., 1938), 198-204.

⁸⁵Alluvium is a deposit of fine fertile soil along rivers and creeks left behind by flooding, see *The Oxford American Desk Dictionary and Thesaurus*, 2nd ed. (New York: Berkley Books, 2001), 22. Timothy Silver provided a detailed account of the uses of canebrakes by Indians who lived in the southeast in, *A New Face on the Countryside: Indians, Colonists, and Slaves in South Atlantic Forests, 1500-1800* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 22-24.

⁸⁶Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 215; William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1983), 12.

⁸⁷William Bartram, *Travels Through North and South Carolina: Georgia, East and West Florida, the Cherokee Country, the Extensive Territories of the Muscogulges Or Creek Confederacy, and the Country of the Chactaws* (Philadelphia: J. Johnson, 1792), 158; Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 38.

⁸⁸Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 39, 44.

(buffalo), and “watkaṛú surié” (wild turkey), which made hunting much easier for Catawba men.⁸⁹ During winter, when the leaves had fallen to the ground, men used a circle of fire that pushed wild game toward the center where hunters killed them. With the understory cleared, hunters could track game quicker. Women ventured into the forest when they needed to gather “wanekíú” (nuts), “wayekuré” (berries), and “impi yap” (firewood).

Piedmont Indian women gathered a diverse array of natural resources to feed their families. Although Catawbas relied heavily on corn for food, women also roasted an astonishing quantity of “tuma?” (acorns). From A.D. 900 to 1540, Piedmont Indian women gathered at the temporary camp known today as Ashe Ferry, one of many sites where women collected and roasted acorns in late fall to early winter.⁹⁰ After roasting the acorns, they ground and used the nut meat to thicken venison broth and other soups.⁹¹ They picked peaches, which they stewed, particularly when preparing food for a feast. They also made a kind of peach jelly, which they spread onto “Loves like Barley-Cakes, these cut into thin Slices, and dissolved in Water, makes a very grateful Acid, and extraordinary beneficial in Fevers.

Food storage and preservation was an important part of Piedmont Indian women’s lives. They reportedly kept large stores of “Indian Peas...Beans, Oyl, Thinkapin Nuts, Corn, barbacu'd Peaches, and Peach-Bread.” They dug large pits, which served as storage facilities for hickory nuts and acorns,⁹² and they constructed “kússuoksunti” (corncribs) or granaries to store their corn, skins, and other goods.⁹³ Catawbas assembled the cribs similar to the houses, except they

⁸⁹Ricketts, *Terrestrial Ecoregions of North America*, 197; Silver, *A New Face on the Countryside*, 60-62; Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 167; Adair, *Adair’s History of the American Indians*, 435.

⁹⁰Riggs and Davis, Jr., “Archaeology at Ashe Ferry,” ii.

⁹¹Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 51.

⁹²Riggs and Davis, Jr., “Archaeology at Ashe Ferry,” ii.

⁹³Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 182.

elevated the storage houses seven feet off the ground with the support of eight posts. They filled in the latticework of the granaries tightly with “iintú” (clay) on the inside and outside, which prevented vermin from entering and destroying food and other goods. According to John Lawson, each corncrib had a door no larger than “a slender Man,” or, more likely, a small woman. Once they filled the storehouse with corn, they cemented the door shut with clay, which ensured the goods within could withstand the weather.⁹⁴

Animals that lived off the land were also an essential part of Catawba life. The use of low-level fires by Sally’s ancestors provided clear green spaces and abundant canebrakes on which deer, wild turkeys, bison, and other wild fed. In 1701, explorer John Lawson noted that the Tutelo Indians had “Plenty of Buffalos, Elks, and Bears, with other sort of Deer.”⁹⁵ The Southeastern historic buffalo (yudehás), according to Lawson’s journal, roamed as far north as Cape Fear and south into Georgia.⁹⁶ Although the evidence supporting buffalo in the Piedmont Indians territory is scant, many early European travelers documented seeing them.⁹⁷ In 1728, William Byrd II of Virginia observed buffalo in along the Roanoke and Hyco Rivers. The animal’s size equaled that of an ox. The similarity ended there—the buffalo Byrd sighted had thick, short legs with a broad “bunch” above its shoulders, long, shaggy hair that was soft

⁹⁴Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 23.

⁹⁵Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 48-49.

⁹⁶Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 51, 120-21. Although Indian agricultural practices did encourage bison in the South, the animal’s population was minimal east of the Appalachian Mountains; see Silver, *A New Face on the Countryside*, 51.

⁹⁷Silver, *A New Face on the Countryside*, 186. Archaeological evidence supporting the presence of the historic buffalo (commonly referred to as bison) is inadequate, but the lack of information does not disprove that bison existed. Toponyms that use the word buffalo to identify places (Buffalo Creek) date to the early 1700s and are probably English in derivation. While the names are not evidence for the presence of buffalo in the south, it does indicate a memory or tradition of the animal; see, Erhard Rostlund, “Geographic Range of Historic Bison in the Southeast,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 50, No. 4 (Dec. 1960), 399-404; The historic buffalo of the east was probably the same species as the Plains buffalo that migrated east of the Mississippi by the 1500s, see Ted Franklin Belue, *The Long Hunt: Death of the Buffalo East of the Mississippi* (Mechanicsburg: Stackpole Books, 1996), xii [historic buffalo].

enough to spin into thread, and a thick hide perfect for tanning. Byrd noted that buffalo were “seldom seen so far North as 40° of Latitude, delighting much in Canes and Reeds, which grow generally more Southerly.”⁹⁸

Piedmont Indian women spent a large part of their days preparing deerskin and perhaps buffalo hides as coats and blankets.⁹⁹ While skinning and tanning hides, women perhaps socialized, talking about their children, gossiping about neighbors, discussing concerns about crops, and voicing opinions about the state of affairs within their towns. The task of tanning expanded beyond the towns since few women traveled with hunters. These women took charge of the encampment, which included processing and curing animal skins.¹⁰⁰ Processing and curing skins was a laborious chore. After cutting the skin from the body of a buffalo or deer, the women removed any remaining flesh from the skin with a sharp awl (piece of deer bone or stone). Then, they left the skin to dry in the sun. Once the skins dried, the women punched holes around the outer edges of the skin in preparation for a final drying process.

Indian women who lived in the Piedmont towns followed several additional steps to make deerskins suitable for wearing as clothing or as moccasins. After the initial process of scraping, soaking, and drying, women worked to soften the skins. First, they soaked the skins once more in water mixed with pulverized deer brains. After removing the skins from the water, they pounded them with a large stone to make them even softer. Finally, using the punched holes along the edges, they stretched each skin on a frame and allowed it to dry above a low fire.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸Byrd, *The Writings of Colonel William Byrd*, 122, 224-226.

⁹⁹Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 120-121.

¹⁰⁰Hudson, *The Southeastern Indians*, 260-265.

¹⁰¹Hudson, *The Southeastern Indians*, 265-266; Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 120-21; Logan, *A History of the Upper Country of South Carolina*, 17-18.

Siouan-speaking people fished the river and creeks near their towns to provide their families with additional protein.¹⁰² Piedmont Indians had access to many varieties of fish, reptiles, and amphibians, including sturgeon, perch, bullfrogs, land frogs, black snakes, and corn snakes.¹⁰³ To catch fish or “yéi,” they constructed weirs of stone and cane across waterways. Men and women worked together constructing a shallow V-shaped wall of stone or cane that created a lagoon of sorts that captured fish as they swam downstream. Weirs made “yiičǎ?” (catching fish) easier, and Indians who lived in the region harvested fish whenever they had a need.¹⁰⁴

Sally’s ancestors valued turtles for nourishment as well and often used leftover parts to embellish ceremonial dress. The “kayá” or river turtle, in particular, was a favorite among pre-1750 Catawbas. Women used the meat of the turtle in stew, a delicacy they made well into the twentieth century. During the Green Corn ceremony, female dancers wore “dapa sistréha kayá” or turtle-shell rattles tied around their knees or ankles, while men carried “dapa sistréha wadi” or gourd rattles.¹⁰⁵ By the early 1900s, however, the gourd shell was no longer made or used by

¹⁰²For a complete list of the mammals John Lawson observed during his travels through the Carolinas, see *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 120.

¹⁰³For descriptions of the fish located in Catawba territory, see Mills, *Statistics of South Carolina*, 776; David Ramsay, *Ramsay’s History of South Carolina: From Its First Settlement in 1670 to the Year 1808*, (Charleston: Walker, Evans, & Co., 1858), 186; Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 131-139, 155-165. When dancing the Bear dance, the Buffalo dance, the Wild Goose dance, and the Green Corn dance, Catawbas often used turtle rattle shells strapped around their ankles; see Frank G. Speck, “Catawba Religious Beliefs, Mortuary Customs, and Dances,” *Primitive Man*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (Apr., 1939), 47-48.

¹⁰⁴The Nation Ford Fish Weir located near the Catawba towns depicted on the 1756 map is listed on the National Register of Historic Places for South Carolina. The weir provides evidence of early Catawba fishing practices. For an image, see “Nation Ford Fish Weir, York County (Rock Hill vicinity),” South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, <http://www.nationalregister.sc.gov/york/S10817746048/index.htm> (accessed Sept. 16, 2014).

¹⁰⁵Speck, “Catawba Religious Beliefs, Mortuary Customs and Dance,” 52-53.

Catawbas, who only recalled or heard of its use in the *kustatcera himunáre*, the corn roasting ear dance.¹⁰⁶

Indians in the Piedmont ate birds and used bird parts for spiritual purposes. Early eighteenth-century Piedmont Indians hunted a variety of birds, including the passenger pigeon, which was “so numerous in these Parts, that you might see many Millions in a Flock; they sometimes split off the Limbs of stout Oaks, and other Trees, upon which they roost o' Nights.”¹⁰⁷ An early European traveler noted that Piedmont Indians kept “more than 100 Gallons of Pigeons Oil, or Fat” stored in large clay pots near their doorways. Women used fat rendered from a cooked pigeon as flavoring when cooking beans and as spread on breads, as we do today with butter.¹⁰⁸

Piedmont people believed that bird feathers had sacred qualities that helped rid their world of impurities. Women used the feathers of turkey, geese, and hawks to purify living spaces, sweeping the doors and the outer premises of their homes clean of all pollutants, a practice Catawba women continued into the twentieth century.¹⁰⁹ Indian men, meanwhile, had specific uses for feathers in diplomatic settings. As a sign of peace, the chief carried a standard or staff to which he attached turkey feathers.¹¹⁰ In the summer of 1751, while completing the ritual of peace with the Iroquois Confederacy, King Hagler carried a standard of feathers into the council. When Hagler and several “*yę miigrá?hare*” (Catawba headmen) approached the

¹⁰⁶The equivalent to the *kustatcera himunáre* was the Corn Dance, see Speck, “Catawba Religious Beliefs, Mortuary Customs and Dance,” 50-53.

¹⁰⁷Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 44.

¹⁰⁸Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 50-51, 140-155. The passenger pigeon became extinct by the late nineteenth century due to overhunting and the destruction of their habitat, see William Butts Merston, *The Passenger Pigeon* (New York: The Outing Publishing Company, 1907), x-xi; William C. Herman, “The Last Passenger Pigeon,” *The Auk*, Vol. 65, No. 1 (Jan. 1948), 77-78.

¹⁰⁹Speck, “Catawba Religious Beliefs, Mortuary Customs, and Dances,” 47.

¹¹⁰Mills, *Statistics of South Carolina*, 126; Speck, “Catawba Religious Beliefs, Mortuary Customs, and Dances,” 39.

Iroquois council, they sang “a song of peace, their ensigns, or colored feathers, borne horizontally,” an indication of harmony and goodwill. After all the headmen present smoked the calumet and the singing stopped, the Catawbans fastened their gourd rattles, calumet, and feathers to a tent pole for safekeeping.¹¹¹

Clothing served to distinguish social status, age, and gender among Catawbans. “Yinterú,” or babies and toddlers, typically went naked. “ʔyataru kure,” young girls ages 4 to 10, wrapped skins around their waist with a deerskin mantle draped over their shoulders.¹¹² Men wore breechcloths made of leather, woven grass, or other plant fiber secured with decorative sashes tied around their waist.¹¹³ Indian women made some clothing of plant fibers and feathers, but they also used buffalo hair and turkey feathers to make heavy mantles or coats. They harvested and pounded mulberry tree bark into a silky fiber that they used when weaving feathers into coats.¹¹⁴ “ʔya” (women) and “bračči” (men) wore “iéwute” (moccasins) in the winter or when traveling. They often added deerskin leggings, known as “isap,” which they tied to “widepis wiyáre,” a leather strip or waist belt. Leggings helped protect their legs from thorns and briars,

¹¹¹Mills, *Statistics of South Carolina*, 126. In the Catawba language, yé mirahé or yi miraré means commander or Catawba chief, while yę miigráʔhare means headmen. The term “eractasswa,” which has been used by some scholars to describe King Hagler is probably an English derivation of yętaʔswaʔ, which means man great. Siouan-speaking people used the term to identify the English “governor.”

¹¹²Merrell, *The Indians' New World*, 125; Hudson, *The Southeastern Indians*, 264; John Fontaine traveled to Fort Christianna near present-day Williamsburg, Virginia where he witnessed Saponi Indian women with long black hair, blankets tied about their waist, and deerskin mantles draped over their shoulders; see *The Journal of John Fontaine: An Irish Huguenot Son in Spain and Virginia, 1710-1719*, Edward Porter Alexander, ed., (Williamsburg: Colonial Williamsburg, 1972), 93-94.

¹¹³Hudson, *The Southeastern Indians*, 260-261.

¹¹⁴Frank G. Speck, “The Rappahanock Indians of Virginia,” in *Indian Notes and Monographs: A Series of Publications Relating to the American Aborigines*, ed. F. W. Hodge, Vol. 5, No. 1 (New York: The Heye Foundation, Museum of the American Indian, 1919), 63.

as well as from cold weather. Most men and women wore the coats in the winter, but some Catawbas of high status wore the coats during the summer season as a sign of prestige.¹¹⁵

Catawba Belief System

Although it is impossible to fully reconstruct Catawbas' belief system prior to and during early European contact, we know that Southeastern Native peoples shared similar cultural beliefs about purity, pollution, order, and chaos. Catawbas and other Southeastern Indians frequently traveled far beyond their territorial boundaries, had diplomatic relations with and traded extensively with other Southeastern people, and exchanged and shared beliefs, practices, and goods.¹¹⁶ Because of these circumstances, Piedmont Indians already shared many customs as they coalesced to forge the national polity and identity "Catawba."

Storytelling was central to being Catawba because the stories connected children to Catawba history, customs, and an ancestral homeland—where they came from, where they belonged, and to whom they were connected. Catawba children watched and listened to *yę dupa hitapaksuré* (one who tells stories), usually a grandparent, recount their origin stories.¹¹⁷ The story of "First Woman" provided Catawba people with a historical account of the creation of the Catawbas and their world. The narrative identified them as a specific people born of First Woman and established Catawbas as originating at a specific place. Unpacking the Catawba origin story helps us to re-construct the world of women and understand how Catawbas associated women with the land through production and reproduction.

¹¹⁵Victoria Lindsey Levine, "Feathers in Southeast American Indian Ceremonialism," *Expedition*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (1991), 5.

¹¹⁶Alexander Lesser, "Kinship Origins in the Light of Some Distributions," *American Anthropologist*, New Series, Vol. 31, No. 4 (Oct.-Dec., 1929), 710-730; James Mooney, *Myths of the Cherokee* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1902); Hudson, *The Southeastern Indians*, 120-122.

¹¹⁷Many Southeastern Native American origin stories portray a woman as the central character and the mother of their people, see Mooney, *Myths of the Cherokee*, 242-250.

Sally's people heard storytellers describe First Woman as the "the ruling spirit" and "the mother of mankind." At the beginning of the story, First Woman emerged from a "manu kepere" (cave), a feature that Catawbans associated with fertility, agriculture, and the Under World.¹¹⁸ A "sikare tapapananiiha" (scarlet butterfly and of the Upper World) drew her out of the cave one day. The butterfly led her to the base of the "iswā huktugere patkire" (big waterfall) where it disappeared. Lost and desolate, First Woman "ná umba utkaniré" (slept for a long time). When First Woman awoke, a "yewi kuinakure hinda" (warrior spirit) stood over her. Dressed in a "cloud-like robe," he identified himself as "a native of the far off sky"—a deity from the Upper World. As he traveled through the sky, he had noticed First Woman's condition, and compassion moved him to visit her. In revealing himself to the woman, the warrior spirit went against the commands of the "wárawe" (creator, the one who never dies). Afraid to return to the "wápit" (sky), he remained on earth with First Woman where they lived as husband and wife. After the birth of their first child, the man feared that he had offended the creator. As Charles Lanman recorded the story,

The man was unhappy because he had offended the Master of Life, and the mother was anxious about the comfort and happiness of her newly-born child. Many and devout were the prayers they offered the Great Spirit for his guidance and protection, for they felt that from them were to be descended a race of beings more numerous than the stars of heaven...in answer to their prayers, he [Master of Life] caused a mighty wind to pass over the world, making the mountains crowd closely together, [creating] the prairies and valleys and rivers...The Master of Life also told his children that he would give them the earth and all that it contained as their inheritance.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸In 1853, Charles Lanman traveled into the interior of South Carolina where he collected "The Origin Story of the Catawba Indians," see *Adventures in the Wilds of the United States and British American Provinces*, Vol. 2 (Philadelphia: John W. Moore, 1856), 410-411. For details on the relationships American Indian women had to their land, see Peggy R. Sanday, "Theory of the Status of Women," *American Anthropologist* 75 (1973), 1698; Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 13-40.

¹¹⁹Lanman, *Adventures in the Wilds*, 412.

The Catawbas' origin story explained the link between First Woman and the land, her spiritual connection to the land, and the resources the land possessed. The descendants of First Woman and the Sky God ultimately created a new nation—the Catawba Nation.

For Sally and her people, the story illustrated the creation of the Catawba world and explained their place in it. A scarlet butterfly, a being from the Upper World covered with the most powerful color of their world, had appeared to First Woman, an omen that she, like the “čuičuparu musawa kure” (caterpillar), transformation awaited her. During “wéra” or winter, while sitting around a fire, Catawba children heard how a relationship developed between an Earth Mother and a male being from the Upper World. They learned that First Woman, who emerged from the earth, linked Catawba women to the land and its bounty.¹²⁰ Surrounded by mountains, valleys, rivers, and streams, the story grounded Catawbas as a people from an ancestral land. The account validated their continuous occupation of that land, and provided them with a beginning and a shared history, important factors for people experiencing extreme changes to their world.

Catawbas traditionally place Catawba women as central characters in narratives about their creation and survival because they recognized women as the givers and supporters of life. In a time of much death, Piedmont Indians considered these two roles especially crucial to the survival of their people, which is evident in another story, one better known by Catawbas today. In “Ugni the Comet,” a mother must rescue her kidnapped son from a “poor woman” or Ugni, who represented evil. After the mother located her son, they escaped to live in the sky, where the mother became “nuṭi” (the sun), a female deity, and the son became “nuṭii wiičáwa” (the

¹²⁰European contact probably influenced “The Origin Story of the Catawba Indians.” Adair, *Adair's History of the American Indians*, 20-24; Hudson, *The Southeastern Indians*, 122-24.

moon), a male deity.¹²¹ When the Ugni tried to follow them, she fell from the sky becoming a comet. Among Catawbas, Ugni's transformation into a comet came to symbolize and foretell disaster. At the same time, all three characters demonstrated how to survive through transformation.¹²²

During a time of violence and death, eighteenth-century Catawba storytellers narrated and performed Ugni's story, while emphasizing the important role of the wačák (woodpecker). In the story about Ugni, Sally and other Catawba children heard how a woodpecker, an Upper World animal that symbolized commerce and power, approached the mother and offered to help her find the child in exchange for her earbobs. The woodpecker perhaps embodied the characteristics of a great Catawba warrior who orchestrated the return of captured children. The story also creates a paradigm for gender division. The mother retrieved corn bread from "the breast of her dress" for her child, an act that linked agriculture and motherhood, while the son, who hunted and protected his mother, epitomized traits important to Catawba men.¹²³ The mother's role in production and reproduction was especially vital to Catawba identity and survival since it was through the mother that Catawba people gained their identity.

Catawba storytellers breathed life into Catawba history and customs as they transmitted powerful stories orally to teach and entertain. Children of all ages sat around "įpi?" (fire) as the storyteller recounted the stories in the privacy of their homes, a custom enhanced with "námure," "įbaré," "ayąbarii?here tusake?hkinseré" (singing, dancing, and drumming). Stories connected Catawba children to a homeland and taught them to *be* Catawba. Storytellers taught the ways of Catawba life, provided children with a moral compass, and equipped them to recognize dangers

¹²¹Speck, "Catawba Religious Beliefs, Mortuary Customs, and Dances," 30 (beliefs on the sun and moon); Claudia Heinemann-Priest, *Catawba Dictionary*, unpublished manuscript, 321.

¹²²Speck, *Catawba Texts*, 1-3, 39.

¹²³Speck, *Catawba Texts*, 1-3.

close to home. They refused to tell stories in the summer or after dark because doing so would “invite the annoyance from snakes,” a creature of the Under World that symbolized danger and evil.¹²⁴ Catawbas used storytelling “to develop the mind, to make children think, to teach them the ways of life.”¹²⁵ One of Sally’s older relatives with the gift of storytelling would have passed these sacred tales and many more along to her and other young Catawbas as accounts of their history and as cautionary tales. Stories connected Catawbas to their past and prepared them for the future.

Catawba Towns of the 1750s

By 1750, the Piedmont Indian women and their families had coalesced into six towns along bluffs adjacent to the Catawba River and its small tributaries. In 1756, trader John Evans drew a map depicting the six Catawba towns of Nassaw, Weyapee, Noostie, Charraw, Weyane, and Sucah (Figure 2).¹²⁶ By this time, the towns were known collectively by colonists as the Catawba Nation. Sally and her people lived in these towns from 1750 to 1759, a period when Nassaw served as the principal Catawba town and the place where Catawbas practiced diplomacy.¹²⁷ Weyaline or Weyane Town was known as “King’s Town” by colonists. The name signified it as the town in which King Hagler lived, who was grandfather to Sally and leader of the Catawbas from 1750 to 1763.¹²⁸ Catawbas positioned Weyane three miles east of

¹²⁴Speck, *Catawba Texts*, xiv-xv.

¹²⁵Speck, *Catawba Texts*, xv.

¹²⁶“Rough sketch-map of the towns of the Catawba nation, North Carolina and South Carolina, USA,” in *The Papers of the Maule Family, Earls of Dalhousie, National Records of Scotland*.

¹²⁷Early eighteenth-century travelers most often recorded Nassaw town in their documents as Esaw, Iswa, Yssa, Nauvasa, Nassau, or Nasaw; see “Sketch Map of the Rivers Santee, Congaree, Wateree, Saludee, etc. with the Road to the Cuttauboes [1750],” PRO, CO Library, Carolina 16 (copies in LC, and Hulbert, comp., *Crown Collection of American Maps*, 3d Ser., I, pls. 25-26); John Evans 1756 “Rough sketch-map of the towns of the Catawba nation.”

¹²⁸“Glen to Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantations,” Oct. 2, 1750, BPRO-SC. XXIV, 129; William McDowell, *Documents Relating to Indian Affairs, 1754-1765* (Columbia: South Carolina Archives Department,

Nassaw along a tributary creek of the Catawba River.¹²⁹ While we are not certain where Sally lived as a young girl, she probably resided in Weyane at the home of her mother or maternal relatives.¹³⁰

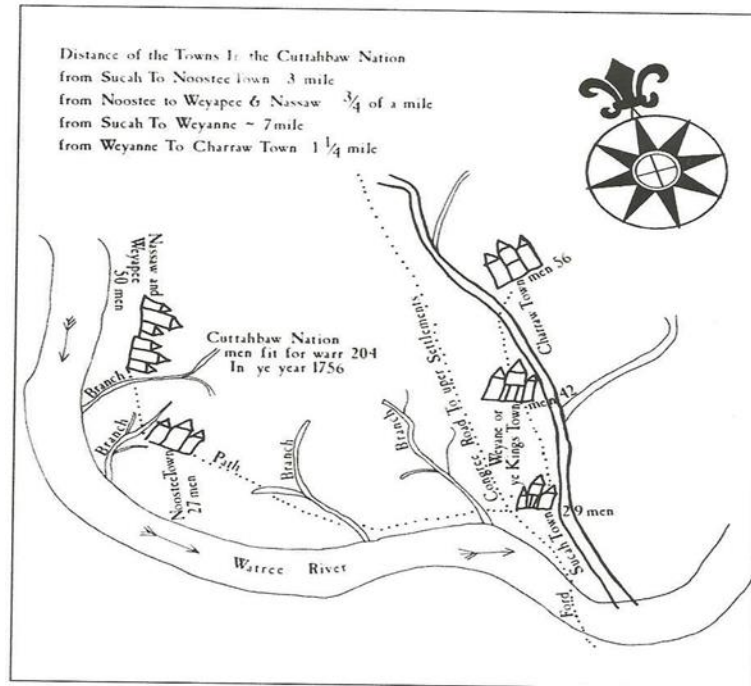


Figure 2: Map by John Evans, 1756—“Cuttawbaw Nation, men fit for Warr 204...” The Estimate of “7Mile” between Suchah and Weyane is incorrect. The original map held at the National Archives at Scotland reads “1 Mile.”

During the 1750s, Nassaw functioned as the town in which Catawbas held celebratory feasts and welcomed visitors. When conducting diplomatic business, Catawbas met in a lodge “much bigger than their other Dwellings.” Benches made of cane stretched along the inner edges of the walls of the building. When making decisions about war or debating specific town issues,

1958), 106-107. I have chosen to use “Weyane” because the “-li-“ stem used by Evans in “Weyaline” is rarely used in the Catawba language.

¹²⁹The Research Laboratories of Archaeology at UNC have tentatively located the Weyane town site near Fort Mill; see “Archaeology in the Old Catawba Nation: Excavations of the 2003 UNC Archaeological Field School, <http://rla.unc.edu/Teaching/Fieldschool2003/> (accessed Sept. 17, 2014). Weyane has been heavily disturbed by development; see R. P. Stephen Davis, Jr., “An Overview of the Catawba Project, 2001-2011” (paper presented at the Conference on Native American Archaeological Research in the Catawba/Wateree Valley, 800-1860 A.D., Lancaster, South Carolina, March 23, 2012)

¹³⁰Hudson, *The Southeastern Indians*, 185.

headmen called the town people together in a large town house, constructed in a similar fashion. During Hagler's time as chief, headmen of each town came together at Weyane to discuss issues important to the entire Nation.¹³¹ Because no single leader ruled the separate towns, Catawbas made decisions by consensus. If Hagler acted on his own, Catawbas shamed and ridiculed him for doing so.¹³²

By the mid-eighteenth century, the people in these towns began to represent themselves politically and socially to colonial officials and traders as one nation. The residents of the towns, however, held onto their autonomy in other ways. Specific Catawba families or lineages lived in and affiliated with certain towns based on kin relations. Catawba people who took the surnames George, Robins, and Harris, for example, lived in the Charraw Town of John Evans's 1756 map, and King Hagler lived "at his Town (which is called Weyaline)." This internal town/lineage distinction probably continued well into the 1820s when Catawba people settled further south along the Catawba River.¹³³

At Nassaw, Weyape, Weyane, Suchah, and Noostie, women probably constructed dwellings similar to those of their ancestors. With the help of men, they built permanent houses along the bluff of the Catawba River, using construction practices they had learned from mothers, aunts, or grandmothers. Nassaw people built many of the houses at Nassaw with right angle alignments, which suggest that some of the houses were either square or rectangular

¹³¹Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 42-43; When Hagler and the headmen met in council in 1754, they decided to go to war against the French and Ohio Indians; see McDowell, *Documents Relating to Indian Affairs, May 21, 1750-August 7, 1754*, 488.

¹³²Merrell, *The Indians' New World*, 142.

¹³³Ian Watson, *Catawba Genealogy* (Geneseo: The Geneseo Foundation and the Department of Anthropology, State University of New York at Geneseo, 1995), 83-84 [George, Robin, Harris]; McDowell, *DRIA, 1754-1765*, 106-107 [Hagler]. The Charraw/Cheraw/Sara Indians merged with the Catawba Indians by the mid-1700s; see "Charles-Town, June 2," *South Carolina Gazette*, June 2, 1759, 1. Evidence is lacking regarding a list for each town's inhabitants in the mid to late-1700s.

(Figure 3).¹³⁴ Weyane or King's Town, heavily damaged by modern development, probably had houses similar to those at Nassaw.

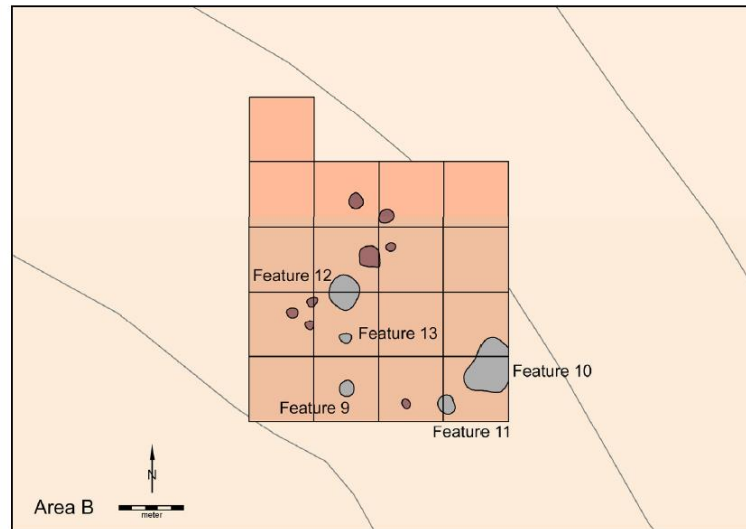


Figure 3: Right angle posthole pattern (brown) at Nassaw-Weyapee town site.
Courtesy of the Research Laboratories of Archaeology.

Piedmont Indian women assumed responsibility for the construction of their homes, although men helped with the heavy lifting and cutting of wood. Women constructed their four-sided houses of wattle and daub. Wattle was the poles of thick river cane, cypress, or red or white cedar. Fixing the poles upright about two yards apart, they buried one end of the pole into

¹³⁴Mary Beth Fitts, Brett H. Riggs, and R. P. Stephen Davis, Jr, "Summary Report of 2007 Archaeological Investigations At Catawba Nassaw Town (38YK434), York County, South Carolina," Research Report No. 27, Research Laboratories of Archaeology, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (December 2007), 15 [right angles]; Brett H. Riggs, Email to author, February 7, 2012. The dwelling style discovered at Nassaw corresponds to Lawson's description of house roofs made of pine bark; see Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 65. A Charlotte-based development firm has slated the property for residential development, which has limited archaeological investigations at Nassaw and Weyape towns, Archaeological investigations, which were limited to two summers, did not uncover building patterns the scale of a longhouse or other public buildings, nor did they discover any evidence of a chunky yard; see Fitts, et al., "Summary Report of 2007," 13-16; Brett H. Riggs, "Temporal Trends in Native Ceramic Traditions of the Lower Catawba Valley," *Southeastern Archaeology*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (Summer 2010), 31-35; "UNC archaeological dig confirms principal Catawba Indian village," June 27, 2008, UNC News, <http://www.unc.edu/news/archives/jun07/nassaw062807.html> [accessed Feb. 7, 2015]; Anna Douglas, "Fort Mill land donated to former county museum sold for \$10 million," November 7, 2014, *The Herald*, http://www.heraldonline.com/2014/11/07/6506783_fort-mill-land-donated-to-former.html?rh=1 [accessed Feb. 7, 2015]. In June 2015, Crescent Communities, a residential development company, discovered 16 graves while excavating the area where the mid-eighteenth century Catawba towns once stood, see John Marks, "Grave Discovery Means Some Changes for 1,000-Home Fort Mill Subdivision," *The State*, June 11, 2015, <http://www.thestate.com/news/state/south-carolina/article23818972.html> [accessed June 13, 2015].

the ground.¹³⁵ With the help of the men, women constructed the roof with sturdy saplings. They bent the smaller saplings into an arch and buried the ends deep into the ground for stabilization. The women used hickory bark to hold the poles together by interweaving smaller cane, wood strips, or vines through the large poles and bark. The daub was a mixture of mud and grass to reinforce the walls and to protect the inhabitants from the elements. Each house had a thatched roof constructed of reed, grass, or bark lightly sealed with a mud-grass mixture with an opening large enough to allow smoke from indoor fires to escape, but small enough to retain heat.¹³⁶

At the six towns, women controlled the property connected to the household. For example, women of Sally's family kept a "kitchen garden" close to the house, as did women of other towns. In this smaller garden, they grew smaller varieties of beans, peas, and corn.¹³⁷ Women adjusted to a few European customs, specifically the enclosure of gardens with long branches of hickory or white oak to prevent horses and pigs, which Europeans had introduced, from eating the vegetables.¹³⁸ Additional property controlled by Catawba women included large communal fields, where women cultivated corn, beans, squash, and watermelons. In close proximity to the agricultural fields, they also planted peach orchards and gourd fields.

In addition to agriculture, Catawba women harvested a diversity of floral and faunal resources, a custom practiced by their ancestors. They roasted "wanekú," "yerupeh," "waru" (hickory nuts, chestnut, and walnuts). Archaeological findings show that subsistence remains at one late eighteenth-century Catawba town included persimmon, blueberry, blackberry, plum,

¹³⁵Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 46-49, 180-182.

¹³⁶John R. Swanton, *Indians of the Southeastern United States*, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1946), 411-413; Hudson, *The Southeastern Indians*, 213.

¹³⁷Hudson, *The Southeastern Indians*, 264.

¹³⁸Adair, *History of the American Indians*, 435; Virginia DeJohn Anderson, *Creatures of Empire: How Domestic Animals Transformed Early America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 9-11.

maypop, and small quantities of maize, barley, and maygrass. Faunal remains included deer, raccoon, opossum, rabbit, squirrel, turkey, passenger pigeon, and a variety of turtles and fish.¹³⁹

By the mid-1700s, Piedmont Indian women had adapted to the changes in their world, mixing Old World foods with a New World diet. Unlike Siouan-speaking women of the early 1700s, Sally's relatives relied less on acorns for nourishment, but they continued to depend upon a variety of animals such as deer, bear, squirrel, turtle, cow, and pig.¹⁴⁰ By the 1750s, women had to deal with white settlers' domesticated animals like horses, cattle, and pigs, especially the latter, which destroyed much of the habitat that attracted deer.¹⁴¹ Women of Nassaw and surrounding towns found wild pigs especially troublesome because the animals acted like vacuums inhaling every edible thing in their path. Whether women cultivated large cornfields near Nassaw and other towns remains unclear because of incomplete archaeological work on the mid-eighteenth-century Catawba town sites; however, early ethnographic accounts document a single field of "seven miles extent," surrounded by several smaller fields that Nassaw women used as peach and mulberry fields.¹⁴²

The immense varieties of available food resources required Catawba women to have a place near their homes in which to store food and other goods. To meet this demand, they built small storage pits under or near their houses, a continuation of the custom of Piedmont Indian

¹³⁹Riggs and Davis, Jr., "Archaeology at Ashe Ferry."

¹⁴⁰Fitts, et al., "Summary Report of 2007, 24; R. P. Stephen Davis, Jr., "Archaeology at Ayers Town: An Early Federal Period Community in the Catawba Nation," Final Report Submitted to the South Carolina Department of Transportation, Research Report No. 37 (2014), Research Laboratories of Archaeology, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 36.

¹⁴¹Moore, *World of Toil and Strife*, 28 [horses and cattle].

¹⁴²Adair, *The History of the American Indians*, 225.

women. Women used many of the below ground pits to hold an assortment of foods, while women used other pits to burn pottery or as trash dumps.¹⁴³

Piedmont Indian towns also included space for community activities. While archaeological investigations at Nassaw have not revealed a square ground or plaza, such a place served most southeastern Indians as an important space where a coalesced people came together communally for recreation, common work, diplomacy, and ceremonies. Early eighteenth-century Piedmont Indians enjoyed gambling immensely, and both men and women participated in the sport. The towns likely had a large yard where the men played the popular game of chunky, a ceremonial game in which two men from different towns competed against each other in a cleared section of the yard. Numerous onlookers made wagers on the outcome, while a third man rolled the discoidal shaped stone across the yard. The participants threw a pole or stick in the direction of the stone, attempting to hit the stone or knock his opponent's stick away from the stone. The man whose stick came closest to the stone won the game, as did those who bet on him.¹⁴⁴

Another form of gaming played by Piedmont Indians was a version of dice made from fragments of broken pottery. They ground the edges of potsherds, shaping the pieces of pottery into a circular form. Each die had a smooth side and a scored side, that the women had marked with cord when making the pot.¹⁴⁵ Exactly how Catawbas used the dice in gaming remains a

¹⁴³Fitts, et al., "Summary Report of 2007," 12-18.

¹⁴⁴Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 180; Swanton, *Indians of the Southeastern United States*, 682; Hudson, *The Southeastern Indians*, 221. Anthropologists collected many discoidal stones in the 1890's and early 1900's from the Piedmont region near the present-day Catawba Indian Reservation; see Mark R. Harrington Collection, H. K. Deisher Collection, George H. Budke Collection, and W. de F. Haynes Collection, National Museum of American Indian Cultural Resource Center, Suitland, Maryland.

¹⁴⁵"Disc-shaped Objects, South Carolina, Fairfield County, Ridgeway, Wateree River," 098357, 26 objects, National Museum of American Indian Cultural Resource Center, Suitland, Maryland.

mystery, but the game may have resembled the “platter” game of other Indian societies that included various ways of scoring with dice.¹⁴⁶

In the 1750s, Catawba women living at the six towns along the Catawba River in Catawba territory continued following many of the customs of their Piedmont Indian ancestors. Catawba women still constructed their homes in a fashion similar to their ancestors. Other enduring customs included managing the land and crops. Although Catawba women still observed some of the customs of their ancestors, they also were adapting to a changing world. They began integrating a few European practices, such as fenced gardens, into their lives. As Catawba people struggled to maintain their political presence as a distinct people in this new world, they began identifying as a united people rather than people of individual, autonomous towns. Even as they adapted, they were still Catawba, and women remained at the heart of being Catawba.

Catawba People

In the 1700s, Catawba women and men lived in distinctly different worlds within their society where each fulfilled distinct responsibilities according to customs passed on to them by earlier Piedmont Indian people. Even so, Catawbas did not perceive men as superior to women, or women superior to men. On occasion, gender boundaries blurred among Catawbas; men sometimes did the work of women, and women did the work of men. In doing so, Catawbas cooperated to ensure the survival of their people and to maintain balance in their society. While Catawba men did much of the hunting, diplomacy, and fighting, women filled prominent and respected roles within Catawba society.¹⁴⁷ Women controlled the houses, and the towns were

¹⁴⁶Andrew McFarland Davis, “Indian Games,” *Bulletin of the Essex Institute*, Vol. 17, No. 7-9 (July – Sept., 1885), 110.

¹⁴⁷In recent years, a number of historians including Lillian F. Klein and Lillian A. Ackerman, Devon Abbott Mihesuah, and Theda Perdue have written exceptional monographs about the equality and complementarity of American Indian gendered roles. Laura F. Klein and Lillian A. Ackerman, *Women and Power in Native North*

spaces occupied primarily by women. Catawba men, after all, stayed busy hunting, fishing, and going to war—activities that took place outside of the towns.¹⁴⁸

Catawba women's constant presence within the towns enabled Catawbas to form a nation. Because men were often away at war, meeting with colonial officials or hunting, women did most of the work within the towns and households. In addition to tending their homes and families, they cared for the kitchen garden and large fields, where they weeded the fields, planted, cultivated, and protected the crops.¹⁴⁹ They made baskets, which they used to gather crops, sift corn, and collect clay for pottery. They made a variety of pots for cooking food and collecting water. They also prepared large meals for celebratory feasts.¹⁵⁰ During the fall and winter, some women traveled with their husbands when they went on hunting expeditions, and on occasion, they traveled with war parties and diplomatic delegations.¹⁵¹ The numerous responsibilities of women elevated their prestige and esteem of their families and communities.

In addition to Catawba gender roles, Sally's people heeded certain rules or taboos that helped keep their world in balance. They kept the corncrib door shut three days following the death of a Catawba relative, and they refused to mention the name of the deceased for three days.

America (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995); Mihesuah, *Indigenous American Women*; and Perdue, *Cherokee Women*.

¹⁴⁸For details on the archaeological findings at Nassaw, see Fitts, et al., "Summary Report of 2007," 17.

¹⁴⁹In the early eighteenth-century, Catawba women, like Cherokee and Creek women, probably occupied economic roles in which they traded corn and other food supplies to colonial traders and troops for English merchandise; see Tom Hatley, *The Dividing Paths: Cherokees and South Carolina through the Revolutionary Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 96-97; Joshua Piker, *Okfuskee: A Creek Indian Town in Colonial America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 142-144.

¹⁵⁰Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 34, 42, 195-196. In 1908, Mark R. Harrington photographed a Catawba family collecting clay with a basket; see Mark R. Harrington Collection, N02806, National Museum of American Indians, Suitland.

¹⁵¹Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 48 [hunting]; *Documents Relating to Indian Affairs, 1750-1754*, 454-457 [delegation]; "To Colonel Henry Bouquet," *The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799*, ed. by John C. Fitzpatrick, Vol. 2, 274, accessed July 19, 2013 <http://etext.virginia.edu/washington/fitzpatrick/index.html> [war party].

In addition, a Catawba law prohibited a widow from speaking to anyone outside of her immediate family for a year. Although the latter sounds punitive, this practice allows women to grieve privately in a close-knit community that did not offer privacy. Breaking these rules risked crop failure, or even worse, prevented the deceased from crossing over to the next world.¹⁵² This rule highlights women's powerful role in connection to life and death, but also their part in maintaining balance in their world.

Although women and men occupied different places in Catawba society, their roles were complementary. Catawba women, for example, helped warriors prepare for war. Women combed their husband or son's hair and styled it "very much with Bears Grease, and red Root," a practice that contrasts to the Cherokee custom of gender isolation before war. Although Catawba warriors abstained from sexual intercourse during ritual purification ceremonies, women and men still talked with and lived with one another.¹⁵³ Observing these rituals, customs passed down from their ancestors, served to ensure some stability in a world turned upside down by war and disease.

Eighteenth-century Piedmont Indians used haircuts and other ornamentation as distinctive markers of societal roles, relations, and gender.¹⁵⁴ As a young girl, Sally probably wore her hair like many Indian girls of the Carolinas — cut short at the forehead and long in the back.¹⁵⁵ Her mother and other married women wore their hair long, pulled back "like a Horses Tail" and wrapped with a string of wampum beads or a strip of leather. As trade increased with the

¹⁵²Speck, "Catawba Religious Beliefs, Mortuary Customs, and Dances."

¹⁵³Speck, *Catawba Texts*, 44-45; Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 201 [hair combing].

¹⁵⁴Adair, *Adair's History of the American Indians*, 218; John R. Swanton, "Social and Religious Beliefs and Usages of the Chickasaw Indians," *Forty-Fourth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1926-27* (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1928), 219; Christina Snyder, *Slavery in Indian Country: The Changing Face of Captivity in Early America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 37.

¹⁵⁵Swanton, *Indians of the Southeastern United States*, 498-500.

English, the women added brightly colored ribbons to their hair. Catawbas forced enslaved Indian women to cut their hair short to distinguish them from Catawba women and to signify their sexual availability.¹⁵⁶ Mourning played a part in how Catawba women wore their hair. Some women shaved off their hair when a relative died, while other women wore their hair long, disheveled, and dirty.¹⁵⁷ Whether these contrasting actions had to do with age or social status is unknown. Perhaps women of a higher social rank kept their hair to avoid others from classifying them as or comparing them to captives. On the other hand, a Catawba woman might have kept their hair because the deceased person was not of her direct lineage.

Catawba men also distinguished their status with hairstyles. Catawba hunters and warriors, who traditionally relied on the bow and arrow when hunting and going to war, typically cut or shaved their hair close to the scalp on one side of their head to prevent their hair from getting entangled in the sinew or bowstring.¹⁵⁸ Catawba male leaders wore a scalplock, like that of the 1771 sketch of Captain Redhead (Figure 4). Leaders created this hairstyle by plucking the hair from their scalp while leaving a small patch of long hair on the top of their heads.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶White male travelers identified these young women as “trading girls;” see Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 41, 194-195; Snyder, *Slavery in Indian Country*, 36-37 [captives].

¹⁵⁷Swanton, *Indians of the Southeastern United States*, 498.

¹⁵⁸Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 197. Francis Louis Michel provided a brief description of how Saponi men wore their hair, which corresponds to Lawson’s description; see “Report of the Journey of Francis Louis Michel from Berne, Switzerland, to Virginia, October 2, 1701 – December 1, 1702, Part II, trans. By William J. Hinke, *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (Apr., 1916), 132; Snyder, *Slavery in Indian Country*, 36-37 [captives]; Swanton, *Indians of the Southeastern United States*, 502-503.

¹⁵⁹1771 drawing of Captain Redhead (Catawba) in the John Brevard Kershaw Papers, Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia.



Figure 4: Captain Redhead as drawn by Joseph Kershaw, ca. 1771.
Redrawn by Brooke Bauer.

In addition to specific haircuts, warriors believed that bear grease, like that applied by women, gave them special protective powers, and more practically, kept insects away. They enhanced their look and their power by adding red pigment extracted from the puccoon plant (“taktuwia” or red root) to their hair, which signified success and strength.¹⁶⁰ We will never know whether Captain Redhead gained the name “Redhead” because he used red pigment in his hair or if the English name is a derivative of a Catawba word. Some Catawba women colored their hair with red pigment.¹⁶¹ The use of red dye in their hair was a continuation of customs practiced by their ancestors, who applied the color mixed with bear grease to prevent “lousy” hair.¹⁶² In the 1800s,

¹⁶⁰Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 201 [bear grease]; Frederick Webb Hodge, ed., *Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico, Vol. 1 A-M*, Bulletin 30 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1907), 325-326 [symbolism of color red].

¹⁶¹Calvin Jones, *Calvin Jones Journal*, Calvin Jones Papers, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 60.

¹⁶²Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 171.

Jenny Redhead, a relative of Captain Redhead, was the only Catawba that used the red dye, possibly for adornment or as a method to maintain visible lineal distinctions as they coalesced into the Catawba Nation.

Colors had significant symbolic meaning in the Catawbas' world. Catawbas' use of colors, particularly black and white, indicates their need to maintain balance during a time of conflict. Catawba men used black and white dye or paint on their faces to emphasize their masculinity, power, and gender.¹⁶³ Early eighteenth-century Piedmont Indian women, however, did not wear paint, although in 1815, a traveler noticed that several Catawba women wore "paint" on their faces, probably stain from the puccoon plant.¹⁶⁴

In addition to using hairstyles to mark their Catawba identity, Sally's people used metals, feathers, natural dyes, and tattoos to distinguish themselves. Visually proclaiming their Catawba identity, men and women wore "duksunúwiere" (ear metal) "great Bobs in their Ears," and on occasion, eagle feathers in holes in their earlobes. Catawba women valued feather ornaments, especially iridescent peacock feathers.¹⁶⁵ Catawba women and men also donned impressive necklaces made of wampum and glass beads. They cut and restyled European metals, such as copper and silver acquired from traders, into smaller pieces that they used for nose rings and bangles, or other ornamentation.¹⁶⁶ The introduction of these new metal goods fit perfectly into

¹⁶³Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 201.

¹⁶⁴Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 193 [no paint]; *Calvin Jones Papers*, 54 [paint and dye]. I have been unable to locate any information about women's cosmetics in colonial American. Therefore, I am uncertain if nineteenth-century Catawba women were mimicking their white female neighbors.

¹⁶⁵Lederer, *The Discoveries of John Lederer*, 32. Francis Louis Michel observed Virginia Indians wearing feathers. He speculated that men who wore feathers in their ears were great warriors or hunters. Michel observed Monacan Indians wearing "a narrow spangle drawn through their nose," see "Report of the Journey of Francis Louis Michel from Berne, Switzerland, to Virginia, October 2, 1701 – December 1, 1702," 132. Robert Beverley also noticed Indians wearing feathers in *The History of Virginia: In Four Parts* (Richmond: J.W. Randolph, 1855), 41.

¹⁶⁶Merrell, *The Indians' New World*, 229; Jones, *Calvin Jones Journal*, 54 [paint and dye]; Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 203 [necklaces]. Over 10,000 glass beads, predominantly white and black seed beads, were recovered from the Nassaw-Weyapee site, see Fitts, Riggs, and Davis, "Summary Report of 2007," 17-18.

long-established Catawba practices. The goods also served as new ways of establishing a recognizable Catawba identity.

Catawbas' bodily ornamentation became even more striking during times of conflict. When Catawba men went to war, they typically wore "Feathers, Wings, Rings, Copper" and wampum, goods often acquired in trade with Indians and non-Indians.¹⁶⁷ They painted "their Faces all over red, and commonly make a Circle of Black about one Eye, and another Circle of White about the other."¹⁶⁸ Many of these items they acquired from other native people, but the ritual use of the items, old and new, fit with ceremonial practices of their Piedmont Indian ancestors.¹⁶⁹

European women did not become cognizant of Catawba women's participation in trade until the latter half of the eighteenth century. Piedmont Indian women had traded with other Indians, but European travelers rarely saw or documented these transactions. Piedmont men controlled the trade with Europeans, while women participated marginally by trading food, baskets, pottery and, on occasion, processed deerskins. Piedmont men took the lead as participants in the colonial trade system because colonial traders and officials believed that women were subservient to men.¹⁷⁰ Although colonial traders ignored the influence Siouan-speaking women, they benefitted from women's demand for goods, as indicated by the types of trade items sent to the Catawba towns in 1752. A large portion of the goods included European

¹⁶⁷When Lawson traveled through North and South Carolina, he did not note tattoos of any kind on the bodies of the Native men; see, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 201-203. Other Native people in the southeast who wore ear ornaments included the Tuscarora, Powhatan, Timucua, Cherokee, Chickasaw, Alabama, Natchez, and the Chitimacha Indians; see Swanton, *Indians of the Southeastern United States*, 510-514.

¹⁶⁸Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 201-203.

¹⁶⁹Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 28, 201-203

¹⁷⁰Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 61-63; 72-76; Merrell, *The Indians' New World*, 267-268. Catawba women, however, moved to the forefront in the trade economy during the latter quarter of the eighteenth-century as the wage earners of their families, when they began bartering and selling Catawba-made pots throughout South Carolina.

fabric, thread, scissors, needles, pots, earrings, and ivory combs, items that women and men used for Catawba purposes.¹⁷¹

From the mid-1700s forward, Catawbans used clothing as a distinguishing marker of their identity. As a child, Sally probably went naked, but as she reached puberty, she donned the clothes of adult women who wrapped cloth blankets of European fabric around their waist.¹⁷² With European cloth and other sewing materials being more available, Catawba women and men chose to wear European clothing because it was economical and easy to acquire as gifts from traders or colonial leaders. By the latter half of the eighteenth century, many Catawbans adopted the clothing customs of their white neighbors, which included linen shirts, breeches, stockings, hats, and shoes. The men wore ruffled shirts and suits made of cotton.¹⁷³ Some warriors and leaders were easily recognized as Catawba because of the green coats they wore well into the late 1790s, items they acquired during the American Revolution.¹⁷⁴ Catawba women, meanwhile, began dressing in homespun English dresses or shifts that they obtained through trade.¹⁷⁵

Catawbans' mix of the colonial style of dress with customary Catawba adornments, such as rings in their ears and nose, worked to their benefit by emphasizing their Catawba identity, one distinct from whites, blacks, and other Indians. Nearly all the Catawbans wore "silver nose-rings...and some of them had little silver hearts hanging from the rings."¹⁷⁶ Six nose bangles

¹⁷¹McDowell, *DRIA, 1750-1754*, 217.

¹⁷²McDowell, *DRIA, 1750-1754*, 217.

¹⁷³Thomas Coke, *Extracts of the Journals of the Rev. Dr. Coke's Five Visits to America* (London: G. Paramore, 1793), 172.

¹⁷⁴Henrietta Liston, *Tour to the Southern States: Virginia, North & South Carolina's, Journal of Lady Henrietta (Mrs. Robert Liston), 1797*, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 25-27 [Original at the National Library of Scotland], 28.

¹⁷⁵Jones, *Calvin Jones Journal*, 54, 59. For more on colonial period dress and textiles, see Deirdre Clancy Steer, *Colonial America: Costume & Fashion Source Book* (New York: Infobase Publishing, 2009).

¹⁷⁶Coke, *Extracts of the Journals of the Reverend Thomas Coke*, 172. Other Native groups that practiced wearing nose rings were the Chickasaw, Alabama, Koasati [Coushatta], Creek, Shawnee, Cherokee, and Caddo; see

were recovered at the town where Sally lived from 1790 to 1820.¹⁷⁷ To embellish their clothing, Catawbas used silver and brass, a trade good received from other Indians, colonial officials, or from Virginia traders.¹⁷⁸ Catawba headmen, for example, customarily wore silver gorgets that they received from colonial officials to distinguish themselves in rank and status from other Indians when visiting Charleston.¹⁷⁹ Their particular blending of Catawba and European attire helped keep Catawbas visible as a distinct people.

Conclusion

As Sally grew up in the Catawba Indian town of Weyane on the Catawba River, she and other Catawba girls became familiar with their people's beliefs about the land and customs passed down from the Piedmont Indian women who were their mothers and grandmothers. Young Catawba girls mastered the use of the natural resources near their towns. They became skilled in managing the household and taking care of the young, old, and infirm. They learned to cultivate the gardens; gather firewood, water, and food; and keep the fire burning. As Catawba girls matured to women, they passed down Catawba beliefs, rituals, and history to a younger generation. For Sally and her people, who emerged as a united Catawba Nation from diverse peoples, women were central to creating a common sense of belonging.

Swanton, *Indians of the Southeastern United States*, 514-515; Fitts, et al., "Summary Report of Archaeological Investigations at Catawba Nassaw Town (38Yk434), York County, South Carolina," 20.

¹⁷⁷Theresa McReynolds Shebalin, "Domestic Activities and Household Variation at Catawba New Town, ca. 1790-1820" (PhD diss., University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, 2011), 171-186.

¹⁷⁸For transformation of trade goods into jewelry, see Gallay, *The Indian Slave Trade*, 125; George Irving Quimby, *Indian Culture and European Trade Goods: The Archeology of the Historic Period in the Western Great Lakes Region* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1970), 197-202.

¹⁷⁹Coke, *Extracts of the Journals of the Reverend Thomas Coke*, 149; Brown, *The Catawba Indians*, 240.

CHAPTER 2: CATAWBA KINSHIP, 1700 - 1820

As Piedmont Indian people who belonged to many groups coalesced into the Catawba Nation by the mid-eighteenth century, the people known as “Catawba” continued to follow the customs of their ancestors. One of the practices Catawbas held onto was the way in which they traced kin, which lessened the strain and anxiety of joining another group.¹⁸⁰ Sally’s ancestors distinguished themselves as a people bound to one another through their maternal kinship connections—blood relatives that included “čiči” (mother), “hačuné” (sisters), “barundé” (brothers), “isču” (maternal grandmother), “čičina barawá” (maternal uncles), and “?ikčina hačure” (maternal aunts). An important facet of Catawba social organization included the practice of exogamy, marrying an Indian from a different lineage and from another town. As Nassaw women married Cheraw men, Cheraw women married Weyane men, Weyane women married Suchah men, Suchah women married Noostee men, and Noostee women married Nassaw men, kinship networks grew to include people of all six towns. Kinship among Siouan-speaking people was a thread that connected them to one another and facilitated both distinct matrilineal lineages and linkages across the separate identities that placed women at the heart of being “Catawba.”

Kinship was central in creating a “Catawba” identity, but the development of the Catawba kinship system started within each town. In the early 1700s, when Piedmont Indians still distinguished themselves based on a town, which was linked to their matrilineal kinship connections in that town. Township affiliation governed behavior and decision-making.

¹⁸⁰For additional details on Catawba ethnogenesis, see Merrell, *The Indians’ New World*; and for the social organization of Southeastern Indians, see Hudson, *The Southeastern Indians*.

Members of the South Carolina House of Assembly discovered that autonomous towns ruled themselves in 1726 when Charraw (identified as Cheraw by colonists) and Waccamaw Indians committed crimes against local colonists. When Arthur Middleton, South Carolina's acting governor, asked a Catawba chief if he considered the Charraw and Waccamaw as his own people, the chief replied that the Charraws and Waccamaws "does not live along w[i]th me, And some are one way and some another."¹⁸¹ In 1726, the Charraws lived about 120 miles southeast of the Esaw Indians, near the Peedee River; the Waccamaw lived 150 miles southeast of Esaw, near the Waccamaw River. Distance was a factor in autonomy. The people within each town acted independently of one another and sometimes had to teach outsiders the difference.¹⁸²

Even as Catawba coalescence occurred, the Indians continued to recognize older kin connections, while incorporating new kin ties to create and strengthen a more unified identity. For example, kinship remained central to Catawba political organization when electing "yé mirahé" (chief) and "yę miigrá?hare" (headmen). Leadership depended upon maternal descent where succession "falls not to the king's son, but to his sister's son," a practice in line with the matrilineal descent practices among their Piedmont Indian ancestors.¹⁸³ Kinship filled a significant role in all aspects of Catawba people's life—social, political, economic, and religious. A phrase today's Catawbas use frequently, "Who are your people?" would have had special meaning for Piedmont Indians, whose world was in flux.

At the six towns along the Catawba River, Catawbas continued the custom of matrilocality from previous eras. Catawba women of a specific lineage owned the "suuk" (houses) surrounding the common ground or plaza. The household included the matron, her

¹⁸¹*South Carolina Upper House of Journals*, Sept. 13, 1727, CO 5/429, 176-177 (BMP D491).

¹⁸²For additional information on the Cheraw and Waccamaw Indians, see Patricia Barker Lerch, *Waccamaw Legacy: Contemporary Indians Fight for Survival* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2004), 22-23.

¹⁸³Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*.

husband, her young daughter(s), her un-married sons, and perhaps an orphan or captive. The husband lived with his wife but remained allied with his matrilineal relatives who lived in a separate town. Sons, similar to their fathers, remained allied to their mother's family once married. "Nehéere" (married) Catawba women of a certain lineage often constructed and headed their own households, but they remained in the same town as the women of their matrilineal system.¹⁸⁴

A Catawba or non-Catawba man typically approached a Catawba woman's parents when interested in marriage. He offered a gift of skins or meat, an exchange that showed that he understood that her family valued her productivity. Marriage ceremonies further united Catawba Indian people and brought together two different lineages during a ritual that included feasting, singing, and dancing.¹⁸⁵ Piedmont Indian people renewed their marriages annually at the Green Corn Ceremony, a gathering associated with the first harvesting of corn—any time from June to late September.

One reason for renewing marriages was that unions did not have to be permanent. Permanent separation was a common occurrence among Catawba people of the period.¹⁸⁶ Marriage did not bind Catawba men and women together for the remainder of their lives. Instead, either wife or husband was free to leave the other for, as one European viewed it, "any frivolous Excuse." According to Catawba law, if a man married a divorced wife, he had to

¹⁸⁴Hudson, *The Southeastern Indians*, 213-214.

¹⁸⁵White travelers misunderstood the marriage rites describing the marriage as a "purchase," see Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 192-193; Bartram, *Travels Through North and South Carolina*, 110. For similar examples of indigenous marriage between native women and Euro-American traders, see Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 42, 151; Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties*, 28, 116. Both authors focus on marriage *à la façon du pays* between either Hudson's Bay Company men or North West Company men and native women in the Great Lakes region.

¹⁸⁶For additional information about Southeastern Indian marriages, see Hudson, *The Southeastern Indians*, 198-202.

reimburse her former husband in goods equal to what he gave when they married.¹⁸⁷ If the couple separated, the woman kept the house, land, and “all the Children go along with the Mother, and none with the Father,” a custom that highlights matrilineality and matrilocality.¹⁸⁸

Catawbas’ historical and archaeological connections to the Cofitachequi chiefdom serve as evidence of a matrilineal kinship system practiced by early Catawba people. A number of anthropologists and ethnographers have linked Catawba Indians as descendants of the sixteenth-century Cofitachequi because of the chiefdom’s probable location near present-day Camden, S.C., which is approximately sixty miles south of the present-day Catawba Indian Nation. The accounts of Hernando de Soto’s and Juan Pardo’s expeditions through the southern interior provide valuable information for researchers concerning the practice of a matrilineal system among the Indians of Cofitachequi, and later, the Catawba Indians. The de Soto and Pardo accounts indicate that the Lady of Cofitachequi and Guatari Mico, Piedmont Indian women who lived near the Catawba-Wateree Rivers, held politically powerful positions within their communities. The accounts also show that Piedmont Indians of the region inherited their social status through a female relative. The chieftainess of Cofitachequi, for example, sent her niece (probably her sister’s daughter and of high rank) to greet de Soto. Twenty years later, the female Guatari Mico possessed power over several male chiefs, including two sons.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁷Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 186 [quote]; Adair, *History of the American Indians*, 142-145.

¹⁸⁸Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 192-193.

¹⁸⁹Hudson, *Knights of Spain, Warriors of the Sun*, 62-67, 172-175; “The Account by a Gentleman from Elvas,” transl. and ed. by James Alexander Robertson in *The De Soto Chronicles: The Expedition of Hernando de Soto to North America in 1539-1543*, ed. by Lawrence A. Clayton, Vernon James Knight, Jr., and Edward C. Moore, 2 vol. in 1 (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1993), 86-87; “Relation of the Island of Florida by Luys Hernández de Biedma,” transl. and ed. by John E. Worth in *The De Soto Chronicles*, 229-230; “Account of the Northern Conquest and Discovery of Hernando de Soto by Rodrigo Rangel,” transl. and ed. by John E. Worth in *The De Soto Chronicles*, 290 [Soto]; “Bandera Relation,” transl. by Paul E. Hoffman in *The Juan Pardo Expeditions: Exploration of the Carolinas and Tennessee, 1566-1568*, by Charles Hudson (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005), 35-42 [Pardo].

In spite of the catastrophic conditions that Indians living in the Piedmont region confronted in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, they held onto their custom of tracing lineage through the female line as evidenced in early traveler accounts. The custom of descent had changed little in the region since 1540. In 1670, Eno Indians, who lived near the Haw River in North Carolina and later merged with the Catawbas, traced their ancestry through four women: “Pash, Sepoy, Askarin, and Maraskarin.”¹⁹⁰ Thirty years later, Indians who lived in the Carolina Piedmont still practiced a matrilineal kinship system and elected leaders based on matrilineality.¹⁹¹

Between 1750 and 1840, as the Piedmont Indians began identifying collectively as Catawba, they reconsidered how they traced lineage because of the sweeping changes occurring in their world. Analysis of four factors that brought change to Catawba social organization—depopulation, Catawba-White intermarriages, continued contact with white neighbors, and Christianity—demonstrate how Catawbas strategically reorganized their social structure in the latter half of the eighteenth century. By 1790, the Catawba population declined to a mere 250, and by the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the nation included only 110 people.¹⁹² Catawbas reconsidered how they traced lineage in order to verify, preserve, and maintain their Catawbaness and to distinguish themselves from whites and blacks.

Ethnographic Evidence of a Matrilineal Kinship System

The pathways shown on the 1721 deerskin map were more than simple trade routes that connected the Piedmont Indian towns economically. We should re-think the use of these paths in terms of Indian perspective. Piedmont Indians created the footpaths that stretched from town to

¹⁹⁰Lederer, *The Discoveries of John Lederer*, 4; Mooney, *The Siouan Tribes of the East*, 59 [coalescence].

¹⁹¹Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 195.

¹⁹²Merrell, *The Indians' New World*, 97 [1790]; Mooney, *The Siouan Tribes of the East*, 73 [nineteenth century].

town, and they altered the routes that trails took at different points in time. The paths became major trade routes after the arrival of Europeans, but the paths served as social connectors between Indians in the Piedmont and other groups and facilitated the coalescence of the Catawba Nation.

Piedmont Indians sought to preserve their cultural and social distinctiveness through the intermarriages of Indians from Nassaw, Weyane, Noostie, Charraw, Weyaline, and Sucah Town. The evidence regarding intermarriage between Piedmont Indian women and European traders before the mid-1700s is sparse, which makes it difficult to know for sure how many of these unions occurred. According to historical documents, only a few women married traders between 1700 and 1750. Many such marriages may not have been sanctioned by the church or colony, and thus, were not documented. However, Piedmont Indian parents and leaders carefully debated and considered the benefits of such unions, especially with non-Indians.¹⁹³ For women, the value of these relationships extended beyond trade goods and provided a secure food supply to the woman's family.

After 1740, Sally's female relatives were less likely to marry outside of their own society, which appears contrary to other Southeast Indian intermarriage practices. In fact, the evidence does not mention any Euro-American men living among Catawba people, temporarily or permanently in the eighteenth century.¹⁹⁴ Catawbas, whose towns were located nearly on top of a major trade route and in the middle of English settlement, did not need to intermarry with colonial traders in order to obtain trade goods.¹⁹⁵ At Sally's birth in 1743, the Indian population along the Catawba River stood at approximately 1,600, but the historical record, primarily

¹⁹³The Anglican Church did not recognize marriages between Native and non-Native performed in the custom of the country; for examples, see Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties*, 4.

¹⁹⁴Merrell, *The Indians New World*, 30-31, 87. For population, see Mooney, *Siouan Indians of the East*, 73.

¹⁹⁵DuVal, "Indian Intermarriage and Métissage in Colonial Louisiana," 288.

colonial South Carolina legislative journals, mention only four other Catawba children of mixed ancestry.¹⁹⁶ Colonial record-keepers may have neglected to document Indian children born to Catawba mothers and European fathers or the low figures may have resulted from the Indians' own restrictions on marriage.

A small number of Catawba women who did marry traders acted as cultural mediators. Although these women provided their European husbands with access to trade among Catawba people, the power and the decisions about whom they traded with remained in the hands of the Indian people. Most important, women maintained control of their land and the household according to Catawba customs.¹⁹⁷ Whether a woman's status increased once married to a trader is unknown, but she gained access to his trade goods, which helped her care for her family.¹⁹⁸ These women taught their partners the Siouan language, the customs essential for living among their people, and facilitated dealings with other Indian people.

Non-Catawba spouses, if adopted by Catawba people, took on kin obligations and assimilated to Catawba culture. Catawbas expected traders to follow the Catawba custom of reciprocity, in which the two groups agree to an alliance with the exchange and redistribution of goods. Colonists recognized such gifts or presents as part of the process in developing alliances

¹⁹⁶The children include William Brown, John Evans, Jr., James Bullen, and Lewis John; see "Stephen Crell to Glen, May 2, 1751," *DRIA, 1750-1754*, 46 (Brown); "Evans to Glen, April 18, 1748," *South Carolina Council Journal*, April 27, 1748, 498 (Evans); "Letter from Governor Dobbs to the Board," *CRNC*, Vol. 5, 360 (Bullen); "Catawbas to Lyttelton, August 23, 1759," Lyttelton Papers, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

¹⁹⁷Analysis of colonial land records points to traders settling in Catawba territory. For example, in 1754, traders Robert Steele and Matthew Toole received land grants in Anson County, North Carolina. From 1748 to 1772, North Carolina granted land to settlers in Mecklenburg and Tryon Counties, formerly part of Anson County. The boundary line between North and South Carolina was not fixed until 1772; thus Steele's and Toole's land was probably located on Catawba territory; see Margaret M. Hofman, *Colony of North Carolina, 1735-1764: Abstracts of Land Patents*, Vol. 1 (Weldon: Roanoke News Company, 1982), 518, 672. It is also important to note that Toole's Fork is located in present-day York County, within the boundaries of eighteenth-century Catawba land; see "York County, South Carolina" 1910 map, Jones & Walker, Rock Hill.

¹⁹⁸Bartram, *Travels Through North and South Carolina*, 110.

between Catawbas and the colony.¹⁹⁹ A 1749 letter from the Duke of Bradford to the South Carolina Commons House indicated the English understood the rules of reciprocity. In return, Catawbas sometimes bestowed Indian names on a person, as they did with Thomas “Kanawha” Spratt.²⁰⁰ Catawbas reinforced such relationships through reciprocity. The Duke of Bradford, who understood that the security of the colony depended on the gifts, instructed the province to send presents to the Catawbas “in order to keep up a good Understanding...to the Advantage of Great Britain.”²⁰¹ British traders on the ground in Catawba territory relayed to officials that such rituals were important to the security of the colony.

Although few Catawba women married colonial traders, the relationships still brought change to Catawba life in the number of children born to Catawba mothers and European fathers, but not in how these children inherited their mother’s kinship ties. We know very little about these children except their names and that the majority of those mentioned in colonial records were male. William Brown was the son of an unnamed Catawba woman and colonial trader Thomas Brown; John Evans Junior was the child of a Catawba woman and colonial trader and interpreter John Evans. The historical record tells us slightly more about James “Jemey” Bullen, the child of a Catawba woman and unidentified white man. Jemey opposed King Hagler’s leadership in the early 1750s and later died a hero in the French and Indian War.²⁰² We know even less about female children, like Sally, born of these relationships.

¹⁹⁹Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies* (Eastford: Martino Fine Books, 2011 [1923]), 5-17.

²⁰⁰LeAnne Burnett Morse, *Images of America: Fort Mill* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2015), 8 [Kanawha].

²⁰¹Easterby, ed., “Letters from his Grace the Duke of Bradford, His Majesty’s Principal Secretary of State,” May 26, 1749, *The Journal of the Commons House of Assembly, March 28, 1749-March 19, 1750*, 203.

²⁰²Bullen’s father may have been from the Goose Creek Parish near Charletown, S.C., where a Bullen family resided, see Thomas Cooper, *The Statutes at Large of South Carolina: Acts from 1716 to 1752* (Columbia: A. S. Johnston, 1838), 474. For the death of Bullen, see “Annapolis, (in Maryland,) September 14,” October 2, 1758, *Boston-Gazette*, 1

In the case of Sally, European chroniclers identified her mother as a Catawba woman who was the daughter of Hagler. Although Europeans neglected record her mother's name, Catawbas certainly knew who she was. Because most mid-eighteenth century Catawbas were illiterate, researchers know little about Sally's mother. We know more about Sally's European father, Matthew Toole, who served as an interpreter for the Catawbas from 1749 to 1759. The record reveals little about Toole's early life, other than he married Eleanor "Nelly" Cathey in 1747 and later moved to Rowan County.²⁰³ In 1877, historian C. L. Hunter opined that Toole lived among the Cherokee Indians and had "taken to 'bed and board,' as a wife, one of...that tribe," a plausible assertion.²⁰⁴ According to a 1757 land grant, Matthew Toole acted as interpreter for the Cherokees when North Carolina Governor Arthur Dobbs and Cherokee leader Little Carpenter deeded Tennessee land to a Captain Patrick Jack.²⁰⁵ Whether Toole lived with the Cherokees or married a Cherokee woman remains ambiguous because of the paucity of evidence.

Toole, however, became close friends of King Hagler, Sally's grandfather. In 1751, Toole served as interpreter for Hagler during South Carolina's push for peace between the Catawbas and their enemy, the Iroquois. Several years later, in 1754, Catawba headmen and North Carolina officials attended a peace treaty hosted by Toole at his Rowan home. In 1759,

²⁰³Matthew Toole convinced his wife's male relative, John Cathey to move from Virginia to North Carolina in 1748, see Boyt Henderson Cathey, *Cathey Family History and Genealogy: 1700-1900* (Franklin: Genealogy Publishing Services, 1993), 57. Toole owned a huge tract of land in Rowan County near the Catawba River, where he lived with his wife Eleanor and their son John; see Herman W. Ferguson, *Genealogical Deed Abstracts: Mecklenburg County, North Carolina Books 10-14*, (Rocky Mount: Herman W. Ferguson, 1990), 41.

²⁰⁴C. L. Hunter, *Sketches of Western North Carolina, Historical and Biographical* (Raleigh: Raleigh News Steam Job Print, 1877), 83 [Cherokee interpreter].

²⁰⁵J. G. M. Ramsey, *The Annals of Tennessee to the End of the Eighteenth Century* (Charleston: John Russell, 1853), 68.

Toole rode with Catawba men when tracking Cherokee warriors who presumably raided settlements near the Catawba towns.²⁰⁶

Catawba oral history hints at a special relationship between the Catawbas and Toole. Hagler purportedly presented Toole with several hundred acres of land within Catawba territory as a gift, land that bears the name Tools Fork. Perhaps Hagler allowed Toole to camp on or use land in the southwestern edge of Catawba territory as a gesture of friendship or because of Toole's marriage to Hagler's daughter.²⁰⁷ The evidence about Tools Fork remains unclear because Toole never received a land lease, deed, or plat for the property. Sally, however, is the only female Catawba child of mixed ancestry identified in the records, likely because of her relationship to Hagler, and, later, her marriage to General New River.

Catawbas' adoption of English surnames is less a consequence of intermarriage than it was an extension of Catawba naming practices and sustained interaction with English people. Catawbas, particularly men, took different names over the course of their lives. Sally's husband, for example, took the name "New River" after a successful battle against the Shawnee Indians in West Virginia—the same conflict in which Thomas Spratt earned his Catawba name. Surrounding European settlers knew Catawbas by Christian names by the latter part of the 1700s, not because Catawbas stopped using Catawba names, but because of the necessity of doing business with Europeans and Euro-Americans, who could not pronounce Catawba names like "Nopkehe" (King Hagler), "Hixayoura" (Ayles/Ears), "Pickahassakehe" (Sugar Jemey),

²⁰⁶Easterby, ed., *SCJCHA*, March 28, 1749-March 19, 1750, 57 [interpreter]; "Treaty between North Carolina and King Hagler and the Catawba Indians, August 29, 1754," *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, Vol. 5, 141-144b; McDowell, ed., "Saml. Wyly to Governor Lyttelton, May 5, 1759," *Documents Relating to Indian Affairs, 1754-1765* (Columbia: SCDAH, 1992, 1970), 485.

²⁰⁷McDowell, ed., *Documents Relating to Indian Affairs, 1754-1765*, 428.

“ChuckChuckhe” (New Comer), and “Touksecay” (Red Tick/Redhead).²⁰⁸ Similarly, “Sarii” with its trilled “r” became Sally in English. Catawbas continued using their Catawba names when among their people, as Jemey Bullen did, whom Catawbas knew as “Spanau.”²⁰⁹

During Sally’s life, at least twenty surnames were of English origin (Brown, Bullen, Canty, and Rooker) and linked to European traders who did business with Catawbas. Whether the Catawba surnames of Joe, Stevens, George, and Harris originated through intermarriage is unknown. Perhaps the names did stem from intermarriage, or Catawbas adopted the English names of settlers they befriended and admired. Historical records indicate that prior to the 1750s, Catawba men like Yanabe Yalengway and Willmannantanghkee, still used their Catawba names.²¹⁰ A Revolutionary payroll of 1780 shows a majority of Catawba men (total 41) used Anglicized first and last names.²¹¹

Sally’s people recognized children born to Catawba women as full members of Catawba society because, like their ancestors, eighteenth-century Catawbas were matrilineal and matrilocal. If English fathers were involved in their lives, the bicultural and bilingual knowledge of the Catawba children benefited the Nation.²¹² Many Catawba children of mixed ancestry moved in and out of Euro-American society, and as a result, local non-Indians recorded more information about them. William Brown, for example, received 361 acres of land, two slaves,

²⁰⁸Merrell, *The Indians’ New World*, 88, 126, 235; Board of Trade, *Journals of His Majesty’s Council in South Carolina Sent to England*, May 5, 1760, (CO5/474), 117 [Touksecay].

²⁰⁹Merrell, *The Indians’ New World*, 139.

²¹⁰Thomas J. Blumer, *Catawba Nation: Treasures in History* (Charleston: The History Press, 2007), 33 [Yanabe Yalengway]. For Willmannantanghkee, see E. B. O’Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, (Albany: Weed, Parsons and Company, Printers, 1855), 5: 489-491.

²¹¹For more on Catawbas adopting English names, see Theresa M. Hicks, ed., *South Carolina Indians, Indian Traders, and Other Ethnic Connections Beginning in 1670* (Spartanburg, The Reprint Company, 1998), 105; Watson, *Catawba Indian Genealogy*, 87 [paylist].

²¹²Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 192. For similar fluidity among Cherokees, see Theda Perdue, *Mixed Blood Indians: Racial Construction in the Early South* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2003).

and cattle upon his English father's death in 1745. Three years later, in 1748, a "Northern" Indian war party abducted William. He survived and later returned to his people.²¹³ James Bullen and John Evans, Jr. became important warriors for the Nation. Bullen, who befriended Colonel George Washington during the French and Indian War, obtained a commission from South Carolina's Governor Glen, and named himself "Prince of Whales."²¹⁴ And of course, in the late 1700s and early 1800s, Sally New River left an enduring mark in Euro-American documents as a landholding Catawba woman.

Sally New River

According to Euro-American legend, Sally left her people after the smallpox epidemic of 1759. When discussing Sally's early life, one historian writing about Catawbias referred to the oral tradition of a local white family.²¹⁵ Orphaned after the loss of her mother and many of her relatives, Sally reportedly went to live with local settler Thomas "Kanawha" Spratt and his family, while surviving Catawbias moved south to Pine Tree Hill (Camden).²¹⁶ Spratt taught Sally to read and write English while she lived with them. She allegedly remained with the Spratt family until age 18, when she returned to her people, riding on horseback flanked by other Catawba women. Reminiscent of Lady Guinevere in Arthurian Legend, the story tells that Sally "demanded her rights of royalty. Seated on a jet-black pony, with six of the most attractive maidens of her people as attendants, she rode with grace and dignity of mein to the principal town." By "rights of royalty," the chronicler, Maurice A. Moore, meant that Sally expected to

²¹³Watson, *Catawba Indian Genealogy*, 19; Brown, *The Catawba Indians*, 168. The "Northern" Indians could have been Seneca, Shawnee, Delaware, or Iroquois.

²¹⁴Merrell, *The Indians' New World*, 123, 139-140.

²¹⁵Moore, *Reminiscences of York*, 10.

²¹⁶Thomas "Kanawha" Spratt may have been an acquaintance of Sally's father, Matthew Toole; see Merrell, *The Indians' New World*, 228, 277, and 285. This account also gave Sally's year of birth as 1758, which is incorrect if she recalled the construction of a fort in 1757; see Spratt, *Thomas Dryden Spratt's Recollections*, 62;

receive the title of queen as a descendant of King Hagler.²¹⁷ In the story, Sally's Catawba relatives welcomed her home, she became a respected figure in the Catawba community, and her white neighbors referred to her as "queen" of her people.²¹⁸ However, it is doubtful that Sally "demanded" anything of her people. She was only a young woman, and Catawbas did not have "queens" in the English tradition. Catawbas relied heavily on one another for survival, particularly after the 1759 smallpox epidemic. They made decisions that affected the Nation based on consensus, as a collective group. One person or leader did not have the power or authority to issue demands or ultimatums.

The legend of Sally living with the Spratt family is a debatable topic, one that will remain unresolved because of the paucity of sources. An 1871 account written by Spratt's grandson, Thomas D. Spratt, who was in his sixties and two generations removed from the actual event, contradicted Moore's narrative. Thomas D. Spratt stressed that Sally was an adult (age undocumented) when "Kanawha" Spratt settled on Catawba land in 1761, two years after the smallpox epidemic.²¹⁹ In addition, the Spratt account tells that Sally learned to read and write English while she stayed with the family. We know from later accounts that an older Sally spoke English, which was common in the 1780s.²²⁰ Perhaps Sally was literate in English but documentary evidence fails to validate this fact. In 1811, Sally only made her mark on a land lease document; she did not sign her name in English.²²¹

²¹⁷Moore, *Reminiscences of York*, 9-10.

²¹⁸"Letter to Lyman C. Draper from Thomas D. Spratt, January 12, 1871," Draper MSS, Thomas Sumter Papers, 15VV98; Maurice A. Moore, *Reminiscences of York*, Elmer Oris Parker ed. (Greenville: A Press, Inc., 1981[reprint]), 10.

²¹⁹"T. D. Spratt to Lyman Draper," January 12, 1871, Draper Manuscripts, Thomas Sumter Papers, 15VV98-103.

²²⁰Smyth, *A Tour in the United States of America*, 185.

²²¹"Samuel Elliott Land Lease with Catawba Indian Nation Headmen," 8 June 1811, The White Homestead Archives, South Carolina, Fort Mill.

Sally knew the Spratt family, and she may have stayed with them for a short time, but it is unlikely that she lived with the family long-term after the smallpox epidemic. Where precisely Sally lived prior to the 1759 smallpox epidemic is unknown, but perhaps she followed the Catawba matrilineal system and lived in Weyane Town, the village in which her mother and grandmother resided. At Weyane, Sally lived with her mother in a house located near that of her grandmother, King Hagler's wife. These two women and other women of Sally's lineage cared for her and instructed her in Catawba ways. If Sally did live with the Spratt family, she stayed for a short time, only long enough for her female relatives to recover from the illness.

According to the 1871 letter, Sally's mother died during the smallpox epidemic of 1759, an unproven but probable fact. Sally likely joined her mother's Catawba family when they moved to Pine Tree Hill. Two years later, she relocated with them when they settled north along Old Town Branch and Twelvemile Creek.²²² At Old Town, a Catawba settlement located seven miles south of their old towns, Catawbans coalesced again. As Sally matured, she would marry and set up her own house at Old Town. In 1790 to 1791, Sally moved her household from Old Town to a new Catawba settlement known as New Town, which European visitors described as "a little village" of 6-8 log houses belonging to four families.²²³ Visitors approaching New Town from south to north, reached Sally's home first because her dwelling and the home of Captain Ayres stood closest to the Camden-Charlestown wagon road.²²⁴

²²²Davis, Jr. and Riggs, "An Introduction to the Catawba Project," 8.

²²³Watson, *Men and Times of the Revolution*, 294 [log houses]; Jones, *Calvin Jones Journal*, 55 [6-8 houses]; Mills, *Statistics of South Carolina*, 112 [village].

²²⁴Davis, Jr. and Riggs, "An Introduction to the Catawba Project," 28-36 [position of Sally's house]; William E. Meyer, "Indian Trails of the Southeast," in *Forty-Second Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, 1924-1925*, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1928), 772.

Sally's kinship ties helped her become "a person of great respect and authority among the tribe."²²⁵ She enjoyed a status of prestige among Catawba people primarily because of her mother and grandmother, whom she inherited property, rank, and knowledge of Catawba ways of being. Sally's ties to her grandfather King Hagler were more important to surrounding Europeans, who focused on political leadership. Sally married Catawba warrior and future leader General New River sometime between 1760 and 1796. Although we do not know whether her marriage to General New River altered her standing among Catawbas, the union did make her more visible to Euro-Americans.²²⁶ When Europeans and Euro-Americans visited the Catawba towns, they mentioned in their accounts that Sally was an "industrious and respectable," "remarkable personage," of grace and kindness of heart.²²⁷ As Sally aged, Catawba people regarded her respectfully as a beloved woman who passed on knowledge about Catawba customs.

Although much remains unknown concerning Sally's and the General's lineage, he belonged to a different Catawba lineage and from a different town than Sally because of the Catawbas' practice of exogamy, a practice that may have continued until the turn of the nineteenth century. In the 1750s, Catawba people belonging to certain lineages still allied to specific towns, and Sally's marriage to the General served to bind two distinct lineages and towns through kinship. The advantages of such marriages created bonds of reciprocity and

²²⁵Letter from Joseph F. White to Lyman Draper, December 13, 1870," Draper MSS, Thomas Sumter Papers, 15VV96. A handful of accounts mention Sally, but the accounts do not provide a description her appearance.

²²⁶Elkanah Watson, *Men and Times of the Revolution*, Winslow C. Watson, ed. (New York: Dana and Company, 1856), 295.

²²⁷Jones, *Calvin Jones Journal*, 55 [industrious]; Mills, *Statistics of South Carolina*, 113 [remarkable]; Watson, *Men and Times of the Revolution*, 295 [grace and kindness].

widened Catawbas' kinship network. When Sally and the General married, they followed Catawba matrilineal custom and lived in a house near her maternal relatives.²²⁸

We know more about General New River's life as a chief, diplomat, and warrior than we do of Sally's life. Sometime between 1754 and 1765 General New River gained the name of "New River" as the result of a successful battle near the New River in Virginia, where he killed a Shawnee chief. The victorious General New River refused to go by any other name among Catawbas and non-Catawbas. Because of the prestige General New River gained after killing the Shawnee, "he would have felt insulted at the idea of such a change."²²⁹ Little evidence remains regarding the General's birth date, but going by the date of the fight and the 1759 epidemic, New River was in his twenties or early thirties when the couple married, and Sally was close to age nineteen. In 1786, a missionary identified New River as General Scott, which led one researcher to believe "Scott" was a surname he went by before the battle.²³⁰ However, Judy Canty Martin, a Western Catawba, argued in her work on Catawbas that Sally's mother passed the Scott surname to her daughter. Martin opined that Sally's mother married William "Billy" Scott first, and they had several children. A few years later, Sally's mother had a child by Toole—Sarii/Sally, who was given her mother's Catawba surname because, after all, she was Catawba.²³¹ We may never know whether Scott was Sally's or the General's surname, and it would not have been illogical for patrilineal-minded missionaries to confuse Sally's surname with her husband's.

²²⁸Hudson, *The Southeastern Indians*, 196-197.

²²⁹"Letter from Joseph F. White to Lyman C. Draper, Dec. 13, 1870," Draper MSS, Thomas Sumter Papers, 15VV90 [quote], 96, 98, 100; Brown, *The Catawba Indians*, 276.

²³⁰Watson, *Men and Times of Revolution*, 294.

²³¹I have contacted Mrs. Martin about the information regarding Sally's mother, but I did not receive a response. Judy Canty Martin, *My Father's People: A Complete Genealogy of the Catawba Nation* (Salt Lake City: Family History Library, 2002), 2.

Sally's courtship by General New River was similar to that of other Southeastern Indians. According to the Southeastern Indian marriage ritual, New River's mother would have approached Sally's mother or maternal aunt to discuss the possibility of marriage. Sally's family discussed the matter and debated the advantages and disadvantages of such a union, finally encouraging, but never forcing her to consent to the marriage. Sally, who had the final choice, accepted New River's marriage proposal after allowing him to steal a spoonful of "kúspa" or boiled corn meal soup that she left outside a nearby corncrib. After this ritual of acceptance, General New River collected gifts to give to Sally's family, presents that likely included skins, meat, and European trade goods for her female relatives. Their marriage ceremony adhered to the custom of reciprocity. New River providing meat to members of her lineage, an act that aided in proving his manhood and capability to care for Sally. In return, Sally demonstrated her ability to provide sustenance for him by presenting him with vegetables she had grown, harvested, and cooked. With the marriage ritual complete, General New River moved into a house that belonged to Sally.²³²

The combination of Sally's prestigious matrilineal descent and her marriage to a prominent and respected Catawba warrior added to her power within Catawba society.²³³ Several non-Indians mentioned Sally in their journals.²³⁴ In fact, a description of a "general meeting" held by the Catawbans in the late 1700s reveals Sally's remarkable authority. Tempers flared during the meeting and two women began fighting over public issues. Men present at the meeting were unable to calm the uproar. Afraid to step between the fighting women, someone

²³²Ethnohistorical evidence does not describe Catawba marriage customs, but the ritual would have been similar to that practiced by other Southeastern Indians, see Hudson, *The Southeastern Indians*, 197-199 [marriage]; Davis and Riggs, "An Introduction to the Catawba Project," 1-41 [New Town].

²³³Brown, *The Catawba Indians*, 278 [quote].

²³⁴Watson, *Men and Times of Revolution*, 296; Mills, *Statistics of South Carolina*, 113.

sent for Sally, who either stepped away from the meeting or did not attend. When Sally arrived, she forced the two women to part and “calmed the excited tumult immediately,” an act that illustrates her influence and authority.²³⁵

As Sally grew older, her prestige and power increased. In 1796, Catawba headmen transferred a large tract of land to the Catawba women. The document named fifty-year old Sally New River “with other women of the Nation” as land owners.²³⁶ Catawbas not only recognized Sally’s rank, they honored her as an elder, a status that enhanced her authority because Catawba distinctiveness was due in large part to elders’ knowledge of Catawba history, stories, customs, and ceremonies.²³⁷ Sally’s marriage to General New River, whose signature appears first on the deed, facilitated her ability to influence the land acquisition, but it was her position as a prominent Catawba woman that led other Catawbas to trust her with remaining precious resources.²³⁸

Conclusion

Disease and war reduced many of the Piedmont Indian communities to a few inhabitants, depopulation that resulted in dramatic transformation in the ways these diverse people identified. Many of the refugees from these towns joined with the Esaw Indians, who lived along the Catawba River, and became the politically unified Catawba Nation. Coalescence lessened the stress for Piedmont Indians of diverse towns because they shared similar practices, customs that included tracing their lineage through women. The Catawbas’ incorporation of other indigenous people served two purposes: it bolstered demographics, it expanded kin networks, and it helped

²³⁵“Thomas D Spratt to Lyman C. Draper, January 12, 1871,” Draper Manuscripts, Sumter Papers, 15VV100.

²³⁶1796 Deed, Lancaster County Courthouse, Deed Book G.

²³⁷Speck, “Catawba Religious Beliefs, Mortuary Customs, and Dances,” 21-57; Merrell, *The Indians’ New World*, 259-263.

²³⁸Lancaster County, Deed Book G, 166, Lancaster County Courthouse, SC.

to create a tribal identity. Within the Nation, matrilineal kinship ties governed all aspects of Catawba life and reinforced what it meant to be Catawba.

CHAPTER 3: INDIFFERENT TO CHRISTIANITY, 1716-1822

As Sally matured, her people had sustained contact with white settlers, who began infiltrating Catawba territory in the early 1750s. Scots-Irish, Scots, and German settlers migrated into the Carolina Piedmont from the north and from coastal South Carolina. Evangelical missionaries followed the settlers and soon began proselytizing and attempting to alter Catawba customs to mirror those of Christian Europeans and Euro-Americans. The missionaries believed that men should farm, own the land, and head the household.²³⁹ Colonial officials agreed with missionaries that educating and Christianizing the Catawbas boosted the safety of the Carolina colony by making Catawbas loyal, hardworking, and sober inhabitants. In the French and Indian War and, later, in the American Revolution, officials hoped such qualities would make Catawbas both better neighbors and trustworthy allies.²⁴⁰ Although European and Euro-American missionaries sought to alter Catawba beliefs and practices, Catawbas exhibited little interest in Christianity.

Sally's people met missionaries who challenged Catawba beliefs, social relationships, and customs with their patriarchal practices. In European societies, men occupied roles of political leadership, controlled property, and held authority over women and children. Missionaries and colonial officials thought extending a Christian English education to the

²³⁹Samuel S. Hill, Charles H. Lippy, and Charles Reagan Wilson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Religion in the South* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2005), 356; Thomas S. Kidd, *The Great Awakening: The Roots of Evangelical Christianity in Colonial America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 253-266.

²⁴⁰Kidd, *Indian Great Awakening*, 9, 37.

Catawbas would alter Catawba social structure from matrilineal to patrilineal and patriarchal.²⁴¹

Catawbas, however, were unwilling to give up their way of life in exchange for what the missionaries believed was best.

In the 1700s and early 1800s, Catawba gender roles were of an autonomous but reciprocal nature, a factor that they believed created a harmonious society. Although Catawba women and men's worlds were distinct, the social, economic, and political contributions of women and men were equally important to the survival of Catawba people. A person's labor and responsibilities were linked to their sex.²⁴² Sally's proto-Catawba female ancestors cultivated the crops, cooked for large families, and made baskets and mats, while men hunted, went to war, and managed diplomatic relations with other Indian groups.²⁴³ Post-1760, Catawba women were still responsible for cultivating the crops, cooking for their families, making baskets, but also manufacturing and selling pottery. As the trade economy grew, women began to sew clothing from European-made textiles, but they did not use a spinning wheel to make their own cloth.²⁴⁴ Sally's male relatives still provided for their families by hunting and fishing when they were not away at war. A few Catawba men, like William Brown, owned slaves and farmed land.²⁴⁵ North Carolina physician and newspaper editor Calvin Jones, who visited the Catawba towns in 1815,

²⁴¹Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, (London: Zed Books, 2012), 57; Kent G. Lightfoot, *Indians, Missionaries, and Merchants: The Legacy of Colonial Encounters on the California Frontiers* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 20-21.

²⁴²For more about gender complementarity in the Southeast, see Theda Perdue and Michael D. Green, *The Columbia Guide to American Indians of the Southeast* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 10-11; Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 17-24; Klein and Ackerman, eds., *Women and Power in Native North America*, 12-14.

²⁴³Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 195 [women], 42, 54, 177 [men].

²⁴⁴Smyth, *A Tour in the United States of America*, 193-194; Waston, *Men and Times of the Revolution*, 295; Jones, *Calvin Jones Journal*, 55, 60 [make clothes, but do not spin].

²⁴⁵Watson, *Catawba Indian Genealogy*, 19 [Brown].

observed that Catawba Colonel Ayres “works like a negro,” a statement that suggested the Colonel worked in the fields.²⁴⁶

Catawba Education

Despite missionaries’ and colonial officials’ assumption that Catawbas were uneducated, Catawba parents provided their children with an education that focused on not only important skills but also the spiritual and physical worlds, Catawba history, and the ethics of right and wrong. Catawba mothers typically raised their children from birth through age four, when women of the same matrilineage supervised female children, while the eldest man of the mother’s lineage taught and disciplined male children.²⁴⁷ Older female relatives educated young Catawba girls in planting, cooking, and harvesting vegetables. They taught them where to collect water and firewood and instructed them in the rituals of preparing feasts and ceremonies. Older Catawba girls learned to make pottery and baskets from their mothers, aunts, and grandmothers. They learned where to find and how to collect herbs for traditional medicines. Meanwhile, maternal uncles instructed their nephews (their sisters’ sons) in hunting and fishing. Uncles taught young boys how to aim and shoot the bow and arrow, and later, they instructed teenage boys to use a gun. Maternal uncles taught nephews where to find the best hunting ground and how to catch fish in a weir or by using a fish basket. If young children misbehaved, mothers typically disciplined with ridicule, shame, and rewards, not with corporal punishment. As children matured, mothers disciplined daughters, and maternal uncles disciplined nephews.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁶Smyth, *A Tour in the United States of America*, 193; Jones, *Calvin Jones Journal*, 55, 57 [quote].

²⁴⁷Hudson, *The Southeastern Indians*, 323-324.

²⁴⁸Margaret Connell Szasz, *Indian Education in the American Colonies, 1607-1783* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007 [1988]), 8-21.

The education that Catawba parents and relatives provided their children proved important in the day-to-day existence and endurance of their people.

As part of Catawba children's training, Catawba grandparents recited oral stories to their children, which provided them with rules of proper behavior. Catawba oral tradition served an important role in teaching Catawba children about the world.²⁴⁹ The story of the "Yehasuri" or Little Wild Indians, who inhabited the spirit world of the Catawbas, taught young Catawbas proper behavior. Also known by Catawbas as the Little Indians, the two-foot tall mischievous Indians liked to tease all Catawbas, but particularly children. Catawba women swept their children's footsteps away from the front doors of dwellings to prevent the Little Indians from kidnapping the children. The Yehasuri tale probably came about from decades of Indian enemies taking Catawba women and children during the eighteenth century. Today, Catawba parents still tell their children about the Little Indians to persuade children to be vigilant of their surroundings.

In addition to teaching Catawba children the importance of respecting and helping one another, Catawbas used stories to educate and spread joy and humor to others. Many of the stories told of how some animals gained certain characteristics, such as how the chipmunk got its stripes. When Sally was older, Catawbas used storytelling to relate how she had tricked an Irishman. Sally, who was known for her sense of humor, learned that the Irish feared rattlesnakes. One winter when the snow stood at 2 – 3 feet on the ground, Sally met an Irishman who had recently arrived in the region. He asked Sally how he should defend himself against rattlesnakes. Sally happily told him how to act if attacked by one or more of them, explaining that he must get a long stick and "whoop & sing as loud as he could, the snakes on looking out of their holes and seeing the long pole would draw back their heads." Catawbas told this story

²⁴⁹Charles M. Hudson, *The Catawba Nation* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2007), 121.

many times and had many laughs about the man carrying a staff to scare away rattlesnakes during a snowstorm!²⁵⁰

English Education

The first pressure from colonists for Piedmont Indians to receive an English education came in May 1716, during the Yamasee War. The “King of the Saraw Indians,” empowered by the “Catabaw” chief, initiated peace negotiations with Virginia Governor Alexander Spotswood in an effort to restore trade.²⁵¹ Spotswood promised to resume trade with the people he called Catawba when leaders brought “two of ye Children of each Town, being sons of their great men” as hostages to Fort Christanna, where they received an English education.²⁵² The Saraw headman did not concede to Spotswood’s proposal because he had no authority to conclude such an agreement without the consensus of Catawba people, particularly the approval of Catawba women. One year later, after careful deliberation, Catawba headmen complied and delivered eleven Catawba children to Spotswood in Virginia because Catawba people desperately needed arms and ammunition supplied by Virginia. The children attended an Indian school at Fort Christanna where English schoolmasters taught them to read English and instructed them in the basic tenets of Christianity. Spotswood, who supervised Fort Christanna and the school, believed providing Indians with a Christian education would ensure the security of Virginia. Since 1711, he had taken North Carolina tributary Indian children hostage when negotiating peace, a practice he extended to the Catawbans in 1716. These tributary Indians included the

²⁵⁰“Letter to Draper from J. F. White, Dec. 14, 1870 – Jan. 6, 1871,” Draper MSS, Thomas Sumter Papers, 15VV92.

²⁵¹The King of the Saraw was a leader of the Charra/Cheraw Indians. Alexander Spotswood used the term “Catabaw” to refer to Indians living south of Williamsburg, see H. R. McIlwaine, ed., *Executive Journals of the Council of Colonial Virginia* (Richmond: Davis Bottom, Superintendent of Public Printing, 1928), 3: 406.

²⁵²Alexander Spotswood, *The Official Letters of Alexander Spotswood, Lieutenant-Governor of the Colony of Virginia, 1710-1722* (Richmond: The Society, 1882), 2: 147, 251, 258.

thinly populated groups of the Pamunkey, Chickahominy, Nansemond, Nottoway, Meherrin, Saponi, Tutelo, Occaneechi, and Stenkenock Indians who were under the authority of the governor. The record reveals nothing more about the eleven Catawba children or their Christian education, except that it did not last long. The school at Christanna closed the next year due to a lack of funding, at which time the Catawba children presumably returned home.²⁵³

After that short-lived attempt, the Catawbas saw little of missionaries for the next few decades. Catawbas encountered missionaries near their towns in South Carolina in the early 1750s, when Moravians built their settlement in Wachovia, North Carolina. In 1758, the Moravian brethren at Wachovia reported that they provided large parties of Catawba Indians passing near their settlement with provisions and lodging.²⁵⁴ The brethren quickly became involved in the trade system and traveled south frequently to the “Pine Tree Store,” in present-day Camden, South Carolina, where they exchanged skins, pottery, and other domestic goods for flour and corn. The Catawbas, who relocated their towns near the store in 1760, probably met Moravian traders as they traveled along the Indian Path into Camden. Catawba people had further contact with the Moravians in 1781 when several hundred Catawba men, women, and children fled their towns for Virginia during the American Revolution. On their way north, they camped near the Moravian towns.²⁵⁵

²⁵³Spotswood, *Official Letters of Alexander Spotswood* (Richmond: The Society, 1882), 1: 121-123, 2: 282; Mary C. Beaudry, “Colonizing the Virginia Frontier: Fort Christanna and Governor Spotswood’s Indian Policy,” in *Comparative Studies in the Archaeology of Colonialism*, Stephen L. Dyson, ed. (Oxford: B.A.R. International Series 233, 1985), 2-13. For more on the Virginia tributary Indians, see Martha W. McCartney, “Cockacoeske, Queen of Pamunkey: Diplomat and Suzeraine,” in *Powhatan’s Mantle: Indians in the Colonial Southeast*, Gregory A. Waselkov, Peter H. Wood, M. Thomas Hatley, eds., Rev. Exp. ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 244-245.

²⁵⁴“Early History of the Moravians in North Carolina,” *The Colonial Records of North Carolina*, 5: 1144-1163.

²⁵⁵Adelaide L. Fries, ed., *Records of the Moravians of North Carolina*, (Raleigh: State Department of Archives and History, 1968), 1: 285, 307, 332 [Pine Tree Store]; *Records of the Moravians*, “June 13, 1780” (Raleigh: State Department of Archives and History, 1968), 4: 1695; William Feltman, *The Journal of Lieutenant William Feltman, of the First Pennsylvania Regiment, 1781-1782* (Philadelphia: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Henry Carey Baird, 1853), 31.

Catawbas interacted briefly with Moravians, a group who worked to convert other American Indians, but we have little evidence substantiating Moravian efforts to alter Catawbas spiritual beliefs.²⁵⁶ Catawba people wanted Moravian trade goods, not their religion. Two tenets of Moravian faith included the refusal to bear arms and the refusal to serve in any military capacity, doctrines that would have further endangered the lives of Catawba people who had to defend themselves militarily against enemies.²⁵⁷ Indeed, Catawba men must have thought these principles peculiar given the violence in the region.

Although Catawbas had little interest in most English colonists' teachings, having a few who literate in the English language was vital, particularly when it came to treaties and other land deals. In 1763, for example, Catawba Indian Colonel Ayres acted as interpreter in negotiating a treaty with the English at the Southern Congress of Augusta. Records from the treaty indicate that Ayres spoke English.²⁵⁸ Although Ayres' age in 1763 is undocumented, he may have been one of the eleven children who attended school at Fort Christanna in 1717.

Catawbas petitioned for instruction in English in 1757. Catawba leaders had an interpreter, "Mr. Brown," write an appeal from them to North Carolina Governor Arthur Dobbs. Because Mr. Brown wrote the letter and presumably substituted English for Catawba language, it is difficult to determine whether Catawbas wanted their children to learn to read and write English, or whether the plea came directly from Brown. In the letter, Mr. Brown asked Dobbs to send a teacher to instruct their children to "fear and love God," a phrase that would have

²⁵⁶Blumer, *Catawba Indian Pottery*, 115-116.

²⁵⁷Brian W. Thomas, "Inclusion and Exclusion in the Moravian Settlement in North Carolina, 1770-1790," *Historical Archaeology*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (1994), 15, 17.

²⁵⁸"Minutes of the Southern Congress at Augusta, Georgia," *The State Records of North Carolina*, Walter Clark., ed. (Winston: M. J. & J. C. Stewart, Printers to the State, 1895), 11: 179, 189.

appealed to Dobbs who wanted trustworthy allies for North Carolina.²⁵⁹ In a letter dated the same month, Catawba leaders expressed their concern about protecting their people from enemy raiders and the need of a fortress. Perhaps they used the request to learn to read and write English as a negotiation tool to receive much needed fortification. Although North Carolina supplied money and labor to begin a fort near the Catawba towns, Dobbs did not send a teacher from North Carolina to the Catawba Nation for seven years.²⁶⁰

Catawba leaders continued to express a desire for a few children to have an English education, yet Catawbas opposed giving up their spiritual beliefs in exchange for Christianity. In Virginia in 1757, the Society for Managing the Schools and Missions among the Indians decided to send two missionaries south into Indian country.²⁶¹ A year later, in 1758, commissioners of the Presbytery in New Hanover, Virginia, appointed the Reverend William Richardson to serve as missionary to the “Cherokees or any other Indian Nation that would allow [him] to preach to them.” Richardson left Virginia in October 1758, shortly after his appointment, and arrived near the Catawba Indian towns in South Carolina on November 8, 1758. When Richardson arrived in their towns, the Catawbas rebuffed the Reverend’s attempts to education them about Christianity. At Cheraw Town, he talked with Saponi Indian Captain Hany, who lived among the Catawbas. When Hany learned that Richardson desired to share the Gospel with Catawba people, he

²⁵⁹“Catawbas to Dobbs, Oct. 5, 1757,” enclosed in “Arthur Dobbs to William H. Lyttelton, Oct. 24, 1757,” Lyttelton Papers. Mr. Brown was probably Francis Brown, one of two commissioners appointed by the North Carolina General Assembly to report on the conditions of the western settlements, see “Minutes of the Lower House of the North Carolina General Assembly,” May 16, 1757 – May 28, 1757, *The Colonial Records of North Carolina*, 5: 849.

²⁶⁰“Arthur Dobbs to William H. Lyttelton,” Oct. 24, 1757, Lyttelton Papers.

²⁶¹The Society sent Reverend John Martin to the Cherokees in 1757. The following year, the Society employed Reverend William Richardson as a missionary among the Indians, see Benjamin J. Hillman, ed., *Executive Journals of the Council of Colonial Virginia* (Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1966), 6: 75 [Martin], 110 [Richardson].

declared, “old Indian make no Sabbath & young Indian make no Sabbath,” a statement that corroborated Catawba resistance to Christianity.²⁶²

The following day King Hagler and his son-in-law One Waters met Richardson at Weyane Town. Richardson wanted to teach Hagler and One Waters “of the Maker of all things.” One Waters rejected Richardson’s message. In so many words, he told the Reverend that he remained true to Catawba ways and declared, “He should die like the Dogs & there would be no more of him.” When Richardson tried to explain to One Waters that his body would die, but his soul would not, the Indian dismissed the Reverend. According to Richardson, Hagler talked only “a little English” and seemed more concerned with securing corn for his people because of the scarcity of food.²⁶³

Catawbas at the next Catawba town also rebuffed Richardson. Catawba leader Captain Thomas listened doubtfully to Richardson’s entreaty for the construction of a school. Unconvinced about the reverend’s motives, Thomas told Richardson, “Sunday Men had been here & talked so but they went away and never returned.”²⁶⁴ The reactions of Hany, Hagler, One Waters, and Thomas tell us that the teachings of Christianity did not rank high as a priority among most Catawbas, nor did they put trust in the missionaries. Just as importantly, Catawbas did not want to change their social or economic ways. Instead, other issues took precedence, which included providing food and security for their people under the distressing circumstances that the Indians faced each day: disease, war, drought, famine, and encroaching settlers. Catawbas only wanted to learn to read and write English to avoid being misled during diplomatic

²⁶²William Richardson, “An Account of My Proceedings,” transcribed copy, Nancy Crockett Papers, Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia.

²⁶³Richardson, “An Account of My Proceedings,” Nancy Crockett Papers.

²⁶⁴Richardson, “An Account of My Proceedings,” Nancy Crockett Papers.

negotiations, not abandon their long established customs or beliefs.²⁶⁵ Furthermore, Richardson was not willing to be the teacher that Catawbas wanted, which is why they rejected him and kept asking for a one from Governor Dobbs.

The Catawbas' 1757 request for a teacher was answered eight years later, in 1765. Governor Dobbs had petitioned repeatedly to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel to send a schoolmaster to teach the Catawbas.²⁶⁶ He hoped giving Catawbas a Christian education would put an end to the conflict in the area, an assumption similar to his Virginia predecessors.²⁶⁷ In March 1765, the Society finally appointed John Barnett as a missionary among the Catawbas, but the Catawbas may never have seen or received any lessons from him. Two months later, the Society transferred him to New Bern, North Carolina.²⁶⁸ Three years later, in 1768, Catawba leaders continued to send petitions to colonial leaders "to have their children trained up in English schools."²⁶⁹

As Catawba population declined in the 1750s, violence in the region hardened Catawba views toward Christianity. The European population grew and land encroachment escalated, and consequently, violence between Catawbas and local whites increased. While we do not know exactly what Catawbas thought about Christians, their perspectives may have been similar to the

²⁶⁵"Arthur Dobbs to the Reverend Doctor Daniel Burton, March 29, 1764," British Records, Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Letters, Ser. B, Vol 5-6 (1761-1782), State Archives of North Carolina, Raleigh, 185.

²⁶⁶The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, founded in 1701, supported efforts devoted to the conversion of American Indians. "Letter from Arthur Dobbs to the Board of Trade of Great Britain, March 29, 1764," *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, 6: 1026.

²⁶⁷*Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Annual Reports and Sermons, 1739-1769*, March 15, 1765, British Records, State Archives of North Carolina (hereafter cited as SPG Annual Reports), Raleigh, 47, 81; and "Letter from Arthur Dobbs to Daniel Burton, March 29, 1764" in *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, 6: 1041.

²⁶⁸Szasz, *Indian Education in the American Colonies, 1607-1783*, 76; *SPG Journals, 1763-1771*, May 17, 1765, British Records, State Archives of North Carolina, Raleigh, 342, 344, 367.

²⁶⁹Elam Potter, "An Account of Several Nations of Southern Indians, In a Letter from Rev. Elam Potter to Rev. Dr. Stiles, A.D. 1768," in *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society* (Boston: Munroe, Francis and Parker, 1809), 10: 120.

Mohegan Indians who told a missionary “they could not see that men were ever the better for being Christians” because Englishmen who professed to be Christians cheated, abused, and wronged the Indians.²⁷⁰

In the 1760s, Catawbas also found themselves in the center of a war known as the Regulator Movement, a conflict in which some South Carolinians sought to make the backcountry safe for planters and end a perceived state of lawlessness. South Carolina planters and yeoman acted as “Regulators” who enforced social order in the region and fought, at times brutally, to suppress threatening groups, Indian and non-Indian, who relied on hunting for subsistence. Regulators viewed hunters as a threat to society, as vagrants who did not have a visible means of livelihood, such as farming or a craft. These “strolling” hunters, one observer noted, resembled “little more than white Indians,” a clue that Regulators would not tolerate Catawba hunters either.²⁷¹

As Catawbas watched their white neighbors during the conflict and became victims of violence themselves, they observed attitudes and actions that failed to line up with Christian teaching—a factor that pushed them further away from converting to Christianity. Charles Woodmason, an Anglican minister and leader in the South Carolina Regulator movement, visited the Waxhaw area near the Catawba towns in 1767, where he attempted to preach to a mixed audience of Catawbas and whites.²⁷² Catawbas witnessed a difference between the gospel as

²⁷⁰ Linford D. Fischer, *The Indian Great Awakening: Religion and the Shaping of Native Cultures in Early America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 42.

²⁷¹ Rachel N. Klein, *Unification of a Slave State: The Rise of the Planter Class in the South Carolina Backcountry, 1760-1808* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 48-51. The Regulator Movement of South and North Carolina were two distinct movements. South Carolina regulators focused on law and order and gaining more access to colonial courts, while North Carolina regulators protested political corruption, taxations, and the imprisonment of debtors; see Steven Laurence Danver, ed., *Revolts, Protests, Demonstrations, and Rebellions in American History: An Encyclopediea* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, LLC, 2011), 1: 169.

²⁷² Moore, *World of Toil and Strife*, 35.

preached and practiced during Woodmason's sermon when a group of white "lawless Ruffians" disrupted the service shouting at the minister that they "wanted no D—d Black Gown Sons of Bitches among them." When a local magistrate attended another revival to keep the peace, a group of Catawba Indian warriors accompanied him for protection. The Catawbas, Woodmason noted, "behaved more quiet and decent than the lawless Crew," referring to the Presbyterians.²⁷³ The Catawbas, who customarily remained quiet when another person spoke, viewed disruption like the one witnessed at Woodmason's sermon as shockingly disrespectful—a factor that may have started a fight between the Catawbas and the "Ruffians."²⁷⁴ If the settlers' abusive behavior demonstrated Christian behavior, Catawbas must have wondered how these men's religion would help them.

That same year, in 1767, Catawbas welcomed Presbyterian missionary Elam Potter into their towns, despite the Waxhaw Presbyterians' ill-mannered behavior. Catawbas, he claimed, "devoutly" attended worship among the English settlers, and they desired "to have their children trained up in English schools."²⁷⁵ Although Catawbas showed some sort of devotion during Christian worship, we should not interpret this action to mean they renounced their own long-established sacred customs. Catawba spiritual beliefs and practices at the time of Potter's visit included their recognition of one supernatural being, "wa'riwe" (one who never dies, the Master of Life), a supreme being distinct from the Christian god. They believed in an afterlife into the southwest and practiced the ritual of burying their possessions with them. "Nuṭi" and "nuṭi wičáwa," the sun and moon, occupied an important and gendered place in Catawba cosmology.

²⁷³Charles Woodmason, *The Carolina Backcountry on the Eve of the Revolution: The Journal and other Writings of Charles Woodmason, Anglican Itinerant* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1953), 3, 17, 20.

²⁷⁴Woodmason, *The Carolina Backcountry on the Eve of the Revolution*, 20; Moore, *World of Toil and Strife*, 35.

²⁷⁵Potter, "Account of Several Nations of Southern Indians," 120.

The sun, which manifested as female, was necessary for crop growth, just as Catawba women were responsible for their crops.²⁷⁶

What does Catawba reverence at Christian churches tell us? Catawbas affiliated on-and-off with the churches and missionaries as it suited them.²⁷⁷ Certain engaging features of missionary sermons attracted Catawbas to hear and learn about the Gospel. The vibrant singing and impromptu preaching of the revivals resembled Catawba religious practices of singing, dancing, drumming, and lively oration. Despite Catawbas' interest, it does not appear they converted to Christianity, a transformation that the European Christianity demanded be total—a complete replacement of older beliefs and practices for Christian ones. Catawbas did participate in the Christian events but in an inclusivist way. They adopted practices and beliefs they wanted, while rejecting others. Their religious engagement served as a testing ground, in which they showed respect, while sampling Christian practices. However, Catawbas never renounced completely their own beliefs for Christian ideology or Euro-American customs.²⁷⁸

Although Catawbas attended revivals and sermons, their interest in providing their children with the ability to read and write English was foremost in their minds. When Elkanah Watson traveled through the Catawba towns in the late 1760s, he noted that a young John Nettles was the Catawbas' "most promising" educated and "civilized" Indian.²⁷⁹ The evidence does not tell us why Nettles was sent to the Brafferton School at William and Mary College in Williamsburg, Virginia, but perhaps his parents sent him at the persuasion of Reverend Elam

²⁷⁶Potter, "Account of Several Nations of Southern Indians," 363.

²⁷⁷For a comprehensive study of how early American Indians affiliated and de-affiliated with Christianity, see Linford D. Fisher, *The Indian Great Awakening: Religion and the Shaping of Native Cultures in Early America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

²⁷⁸Daniel K. Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 84-86.

²⁷⁹Watson, *Men and Times of the Revolution*, 295.

Potter.²⁸⁰ Prior to leaving his home for Brafferton, Nettles had received a Catawba education. Within several years, Nettles completed his English education in “reading, writing, and... arithmetic” with high honors and returned home shortly after 1771.²⁸¹

Nettles, however, grew homesick at Brafferton. One night, according to legend, school officials found Nettles inebriated on the streets near the school. After he sobered up, the professors explained the purpose of his education—to return home and teach other Catawbas. A humiliated Nettles listened patiently before he responded. He called their attention to a window and pointed to a hog in the street, saying

Take that hog and wash him clean, and as the weather is warm it might be very agreeable; but let him go, and he will lie down and wallow in the first mud-hole he comes to, for he is still a hog.²⁸²

Nettles was trying to explain to the professors and trustees the best way he knew that regardless of where he went, what he wore, or how he spoke, he would always be a Catawba Indian first. Fifteen years later, in 1786, a local white resident described Nettles as “sensible and well-informed” but still “a perfect Indian in his appearance and habits.”²⁸³ The observer neglected to explain his definition of “a perfect Indian” or describe Nettles’ appearance, but perhaps he wore his hair long or cut close to the scalp with a single lock at the back of his head.²⁸⁴ One local resident observed Nettles’ preference for English clothing, attire that made him *look* English to some eyewitnesses. He still identified as Catawba Indian and chose to follow other Catawba

²⁸⁰Timothy E. Morgan, *Williamsburg: A City that History Made* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2004), 35.

²⁸¹James H. Merrell, “The Brafferton Experiment: The Life and Times of a Catawba Indian Named John Nettles Illustrate the Failures and Successes of William and Mary’s Grand Educational Experiment with America’s Native Sons,” *William and Mary Quarterly* (Summer 1984), 8; and Morgan, *Williamsburg*, 35.

²⁸²Hutchison, “Catawba Indians,” August 30, 1849, *Palmetto State Banner*, 1.

²⁸³Watson, *Men and Times of the Revolution*, 295.

²⁸⁴Watson, *Men and Times of the Revolution*, 295.

customs, such as speaking Catawba, because he appeared “to have lost his education almost entirely.”²⁸⁵ He lived in a Catawba village on the west side of the Catawba River and married a Catawba woman.²⁸⁶

Nettles’ English education served him well among his people, which was the purpose of sending him to Virginia. He fought alongside other Catawba leaders in the American Revolution, where he acted as interpreter between Catawbas and English officials, and he eventually rose to the rank of Major Nettles. Although Catawba leaders spoke some English, they often called on Nettles as interpreter when non-Indian visitors entered the towns because Catawbas insisted on speaking Catawba within their towns and homes. In 1786, when Elkanah Watson visited one of the Catawba towns, General New River “dispatched a runner across the Catawba river, for an interpreter.” Within an hour, New River’s cabin filled with warriors, a group that included Nettles who acted as mediator for the two men.²⁸⁷ Nettles’ ability to speak English allowed other Catawbas to speak in their native language, even when they could speak English, which helped reinforce Catawbas as distinct people.²⁸⁸ The account also reveals that Nettles dressed as his male relatives did, at least on this occasion, probably wearing buckskins, a scalp lock, and tattoos. Nettles’ ability to read and write, rare skills among Catawbas, was especially important when negotiating land leases during the late 1700s. Nettles was present when many of the lease contracts were signed, and he was the only Catawba to sign his name in English on the land leases.²⁸⁹

²⁸⁵Hutchison, “Catawba Indians,” 1.

²⁸⁶Merrell, *The Indians’ New World*, 241.

²⁸⁷Watson, *Men and Times of the Revolution*, 295.

²⁸⁸Smyth, *A Tour in the United States of America*, 185.

²⁸⁹Watson, *Men and Times of the Revolution*, 295; “Through Different Eyes: Biographies of Eighteenth-Century Residents,” Department of Education Outreach, Colonial Williamsburg, http://www.wyckoffps.org/155820513114935277/lib/155820513114935277/00Through_Different_Eyes_Bios_08.p

At home, Catawbas spoke Catawba. Non-Indian accounts from 1758 to 1815 provide mixed evidence for Catawbas' use of the English language even when non-Catawbas were present, an indication that they choose when or with whom to communicate in English. When the Reverend William Richardson visited the Catawba towns in 1758, he noted that Captain Hany spoke English, while King Hagler spoke a little English, but Richardson did not mention if he communicated with them via an interpreter.²⁹⁰ In the 1780s, visitors gave contradictory reports about Catawba ability to speaking English.²⁹¹ Toward the latter part of the eighteenth century and in the early nineteenth century, some eyewitnesses reported that Catawbas spoke no English, while others recorded that all or most Catawbas spoke English.²⁹² Such accounts tell us that Sally and her relatives made deliberate choices about adopting Euro-American customs and languages, as well as when to show the adoption of such practices to outsiders.

Still, Catawba defensive needs often required befriending whites and missionaries capable of providing them with firearms. In March of 1791, Methodist bishops Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury visited the Catawba towns. Catawbas listened via an interpreter, probably Nettles, to Coke's proposal to preach. Although indifferent to Coke's plan, Catawbas hoped the missionaries could supply them with money for guns and ammunition and allowed him to preach.²⁹³

[df](#) [accessed December 26, 2012], 136-138; *Superintendents of the Catawba Nation, Plat and Lease Book, 1810-1825*; and "Samuel Elliott Land Lease with Catawba Indian Nation Headmen," June 8, 1811, White Homestead Archives, Fort Mill, SC.

²⁹⁰Richardson, "An Account of My Proceedings."

²⁹¹Potter, "An Account of Several Nations of Southern Indians," 120 [no mention of English]; Smyth, *A Tour in the United States*, 190-192 [all spoke English]; Watson, *Men and Times of the Revolution*, 295.

²⁹²Smyth, *A Tour in the United States of America*, 185 [all spoke English, 1784]; Watson, *Men and Times of the Revolution*, 294 [no English, 1786]; Coke, *Extracts of the Journals of Rev. Thomas Coke*, 173 [all spoke English, 1789]; Liston, *Tour to the Southern States*, 27 ["little bad English, 1797"]; Jones, Calvin Jones Papers, 59 [most speak English, 1815].

²⁹³Coke, *Extracts of the Journals*, 229.

While Catawbas watched Coke prepare to give a sermon, headmen received an appeal from Asbury that cooled their interest in the bishops' visit. Asbury questioned them about a school and "asked for one of their children; but the father would not give consent, nor would the child come." As with Woodmason and Richardson, a number of Catawbas attended the service held in "a rude little tent in one of their fields," probably a brush arbor. However, when pressed to place a child in the care of Asbury, the headmen refused. A Catawba education was enough, and Catawbas did not need or want to send their children away to become more like Euro-American children. They still had Nettles, who served as interpreter for his people until the early 1800s.²⁹⁴

When Catawbas met Coke in the 1790s, South Carolina's plantation system had spread into Catawba territory, and the non-Indian population in the area exploded. Catawbas had become the new minority in a growing race conscious society, a factor that transformed the lives of Sally and other Catawbas who confronted overwhelming demographics of white settlers and African slaves living near their homes. Catawba people resisted being categorized as white or black, and Catawba men, who had hunted runaway black slaves since the mid-1750s, understood the racial attitudes of their white neighbors regarding the practice of owning black slaves. As the backcountry became more settled by farmers and planters of large estates, Catawba men saw slaves being used daily as workers in the fields, a domain of Catawba women, and tended to view black male slaves as inferior and emasculated.²⁹⁵

Although Catawbas owned a small number of slaves in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, they never completely embraced the institution, partly because of the

²⁹⁴Coke, *Extracts of the Journals*, 229; and Francis Asbury, *The Journal of the Rev. Francis Asbury: From January 1, 1787, to December 31, 1800*, Vol. 2 (New York: Lane & Scott, 1852), 49-50, 112.

²⁹⁵Martha M. Bentley, "The Slaveholding Catawbas," *The South Carolina Historical Magazine*, Vol. 92, No. 2 (Apr., 1991), 89-96.

chronic poverty in their society. Sixty-nine year old Sally, who owned a slave as late as 1815, declared to a non-Indian visitor that her people would “never own another.”²⁹⁶ The slave to whom Sally referred may have been of little use and burdened her with an additional mouth to feed. The evidence fails to tell us why Catawbas refused to own another slave, but perhaps Sally’s opposition to owning slaves developed from Catawbas relationship with the Irish Quakers at Camden, a group averse to the institution of slavery.²⁹⁷ By 1801, when the Presbyterian population outnumbered the Quaker’s living at the Camden settlement, the slave population stood at 2,530, which makes it unlikely that Quaker beliefs about slavery had an influence on Sally.²⁹⁸

By 1793, Catawbas began developing relationships with Baptists. Historian Louise Pettus argued that Catawbas permitted the Reverend John Rooker to build the Sugar Creek Baptist Church (later Flint Hill Baptist) on their land.²⁹⁹ Whether the Catawbas actually “permitted” Rooker to do so is unclear because he constructed the church on two acres of land leased by William Pettus from the Catawbas, who may have been unaware of the church until too late.³⁰⁰

By 1793, the Catawbas allowed Rooker to construct a school on the east side of Sugar Creek in Lancaster County, a school that thrived for a few years when Catawba children learned to write English. In 1802, the Charleston Baptist Association appointed Rooker as a missionary

²⁹⁶Jones, Calvin Jones Papers, 54, 58 [quote].

²⁹⁷Mitchell Snay, *Gospel of Disunion: Religion Separatism in the Antebellum South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 21.

²⁹⁸Kirkland and Kennedy, *Historic Camden*, 1: 83, 411 [1801 slave count].

²⁹⁹Louise Pettus, “History of Flint Hill Baptist Church,” *York Observer*, May 3, 1992 [October 27, 1985].

³⁰⁰Louise Pettus, *Leasing Away a Nation*, 68, 70, 81, 87-88. William Pettus was an original member of the church and probably wanted a church near his farm, see Addie S. Vance, *Church Records of Flint Hill Baptist Church, 1792-1836*, WPA Statewide Historical Project No. 465-33-3-14, 1938, 4.

and superintendent of the school because, as they pointed out, the region was destitute of preachers. Rooker reported that Catawbas gave the school a “favourable reception” and “attended very seriously” his preaching, unaware that Catawba custom was to remain silent and respectful while someone spoke. The Association received samples of Catawba children’s writing and handwritten letters from the chiefs “requesting a continuance of the mission and school.”³⁰¹

Catawbas continued to maintain a resilient cultural boundary that included the use of the Catawba language, nose bangles, hairstyles, and other practices, such as kinship, that set them apart from others.³⁰² Robert Mursh, a Pamunkey Indian and Baptist minister from King William’s County, Virginia, joined Rooker in 1806. Mursh worked at the school, teaching and preaching to the Catawba children.³⁰³ However, the two missionaries declared that Catawba children “forget all they had learned,” and Rooker closed the school shortly after Mursh’s arrival. The problem, from Rooker’s perspective, was that Catawba children followed the ways of their elders. They continued to receive a more enduring and essential Catawba education first, knowledge and customs Rooker’s school failed to remove.³⁰⁴

Catawba people had a long history of accepting other Indians into their society to bolster their population, and they welcomed the Murshes to live among them. Catawbas invited Mursh and his Pamunkey family to live among them, and soon several of Mursh’s daughters and granddaughters married Catawba men and lived with their spouses on Catawba land. The

³⁰¹I have been unable to locate a roll of Catawba students or the writings and letters sent to the Association, see David Benedict, *A General History of the Baptist Denomination in America* (Boston: Manning and Loring, 1813), 2: 146; Pettus, “History of Flint Hill Baptist Church,” *York Observer*, May 3, 1992 [October 27, 1985].

³⁰²Coke, *Extracts of the Journals*, 229; Asbury, *The Journal of the Rev. Francis Asbury*, 49-50, 112.

³⁰³Vance, *Church Records of Flint Hill Baptist Church, 1792-1836*, 29, 38-39.

³⁰⁴Moore, *Reminiscences of York*, 11.

productive and reproductive labors of the Mursh women was important to the economic and social reinforcement of Catawba society. Adopting Pamunkey women augmented Catawba population becoming “Catawba.” Once Catawbas adopted the Pamunkey woman, the Catawba husband lived with her, and thus, the Catawba matrilineal practice continued.

The relationship between Catawbas and Pamunkey Indians went back to 1717, at least, when Catawba leaders delivered their children to Governor Spotswood in Virginia. Then, in the 1760s, Nettles attended Brafferton with Mursh.³⁰⁵ In the 1780s, Catawbas fled their homes on the eve of a British attack, heading north into Virginia. Some scholars suggest that Catawbas took refuge with the Pamunkeys for a year, but little evidence remains to support this idea.³⁰⁶ In the early 1800s, Catawbas probably considered welcoming Pamunkeys to live with them acceptable because of their prolonged relationship and because of Catawbas history of similar incorporation of other Indians.

Much has been made of Catawba opposition to the Mursh Pamunkey family. James H. Merrell posited that Catawbas did not accept the Pamunkeys, pointing to their “sullen disposition,” with a specific focus on the Mursh family.³⁰⁷ The Eurocentric description of Pamunkeys probably originated with Euro-Americans, who began describing them as a “sullen close people” in the 1680s.³⁰⁸ Catawbas contradicted the negative portrayal of Pamunkeys by inviting the Mursh family to live among them. Once adopted, Catawbas recognized the women and their children as Catawba, not Pamunkey. The children of the Catawba-Pamunkey

³⁰⁵“Brafferton School Student List,” *Native Heritage Project*, <http://nativeheritageproject.com/2012/05/01/brafferton-school-student-list/> [accessed June 6, 2014].

³⁰⁶Brown, *Catawba Indians*, 270; Merrell, *The Indians’ New World*, 352 n78.

³⁰⁷Quote cited in Merrell, *The Indians’ New World*, 264, 369 n137.

³⁰⁸John Clayton worked as a rector at Jamestown from 1684-1686; see *The Reverend John Clayton, a Parson with a Scientific Mind: His Scientific Writing and Other Related Papers*, eds. Edmund Berkeley and Dorothy Smith Berkeley, Vol. 6 (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1965), 22.

intermarriages served as agents of tribal survival by taking Catawba surnames and identifying as Catawba. Today, many Catawbas are descendants of these unions, including the Georges, Harrises, and Browns.³⁰⁹

Presbyterian missionaries kept trying to convert Catawbas to Christianity. The commission of the Presbytery appointed Reverend William Cummins Davis in 1803 to act as a missionary and superintend a school for the Catawba Indians. Soon, Catawbas began learning to read from a “Mr. Foster,” whom Davis hired. The Synod advised several of the Presbyteries in the region to pay particular attention to the Catawbas because the missionaries had the “promising prospect of teaching the Catawba Indians to read” and instructing them on the gospel. Two years later, in 1805, Catawbas had another new school that opened soon after Rooker closed the Baptist school. Catawba attendance soon waned because they received little instruction or preaching from the missionaries.³¹⁰

Catawbas’ disinterest in the Presbyterian school was not dissimilar to their indifference to Christianity of previous decades. Their lack of interest was likely a result of racial marginalization or simply a choice to detach themselves from the church school at that time. By 1822, when some Catawbas attended the church, the building had two-wings with shed rooms attached to the rear of the building. In these shed rooms, which were divided from the main body of the church and the white parishioners by rows of posts, Catawba Indians sat in the rear

³⁰⁹Watson, *Catawba Indian Genealogy*, 21, 23, 36, 70-72 [Catawba surnames].

³¹⁰George Howe, *History of the Presbyterian Church in S.C.*, (Columbia: W. J. Duffie, 1883), 2: 184-185, 673; William Henry Foote, *Sketches of North Carolina: Historical and Biographical, Illustrative of the Principles of a Portion of Her Early Settlers* (New York: Robert Carter, 1846), 455. In 1805, the Mecklenburg Presbytery of North Carolina organized the Six Mile Presbyterian Church in Lancaster County of South Carolina. While the evidence does not indicate where the new Presbyterian school was located, it could have been housed in the church, see “Six Mile Presbyterian Church (Lancaster, S.C.),” Inventory of S.C. Church Archives, South Caroliniana Archives, Digital Collections, University of South Carolina, Columbia, <http://digital.tcl.sc.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/hrs/id/865/rec/2> [accessed March 25, 2013].

section on one side, while slaves and free blacks sat on the opposite side.³¹¹ Whether Catawbas recognized that white parishioners separated them from the main church body, while at the same time consigning them to the same status as slaves and free blacks, is unclear according to the documentary record. Those Catawbas that attended Six Mile Presbyterian Church probably recognized the marginalization on some level. During the next thirty years, Catawbas received few, if any missionary visitors, primarily because South Carolina officials were more interested in dispossessing Catawbas of their land.

Conclusion

Catawba people of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries made strategic choices about which facets of Euro-American culture to adopt and reject in an effort to maintain their Catawba customs and identity. There were several explanations for their indifference to Christianity, one of which included the disrespectful behaviors of local Christians. Catawbas had needs that required immediate attention, such as providing for and protecting their families. Most important, Catawba children needed to receive a Catawba education, which meant learning about their history, understanding who their people were, and knowing where they came from. Although Catawbas discerned the need for an English education for some of their children, they refused to convert to Christianity on Euro-American terms. They attended schools and church revivals but rejected changing their social structure to mirror the patriarchal system of Euro-Americans.

³¹¹“Six Mile Presbyterian Church (Lancaster, S.C.),” Inventory of S.C. Church Archives, South Caroliniana Archives, Digital Collections, University of South Carolina, Columbia.

CHAPTER 4: “STAY AT HOME”

In the spring of 1757, a young Sally sat on an elevated platform near the fields guarding the newly planted seedlings from hungry animals. In the distance, she saw a group of men from the North Carolina militia as they dug a well and a trench that would surround the walls of a future fort.³¹² Catawba leaders had petitioned the governor of North Carolina in May 1756 for such a fortress for the protection of “our old men women and children when we turn out to fight” the French.³¹³ To a small nation whose people lived in constant danger of captivity and death, the fort was symbolic of the extensive turmoil and danger in the Piedmont region during Sally’s lifetime. The unprecedented violence, chaos, and death that occurred in Catawba territory during the 1750s and 1760s reveals several moments of crises in Catawba survival that coincided with Sally’s transition from childhood to womanhood and shows how Catawba women adapted to blend old and new ways as a means to preserve a Catawba way of life.

Although Sally’s people had confronted similar crises in the past, the types of violent disruption and the number of Catawba enemies in the region intensified considerably in the 1750s and 1760s. Catawba women watched their male kin leave home to participate in the conflicts, mourned the loss of relatives killed or captured during battle, and witnessed the destruction of their homes and fields. Sally and her female relatives faced increased threats of captivity, scalping, death, and on rare occasion, sexual assault because they were more often left without adult male protection. Epidemic disease heightened women’s worries for their lives and

³¹²“T. D. Spratt to Draper,” January 12, 1871, Draper MSS, Thomas Sumter Papers, 15VV100-101.

³¹³“Report by Peter Henley concerning his conference with King Hagler and the Catawba Nation,” May 26, 1756 – May 28, 1756, *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, 5: 581.

those of their children and friends. As the number of white settlers encroaching on Catawba territory increased, Catawba women anxious over the loss of their land called on their leaders to ask allies, including colonial officials, for assistance in protecting their homeland. For Catawba women, the second half of the eighteenth century was a period of constant vigilance against pathogens, environmental change, and enemy Indians and non-Indians, and each of these factors influenced Catawba women's lives.

Crises in Catawba Territory

During the mid to late 1700s, Catawba women experienced a tremendous amount of instability in their world caused by warfare, enemy raids, disease, and severe environmental changes, factors that kept their lives in constant chaos. Some of the violent disorder that Catawba women and their families confronted came from northern Indians, including Mohawk, Seneca, Shawnee, Delaware, and Cherokee warriors, who had conducted raids against the Catawbas since at least the late 1600s.³¹⁴ The French and Indian War (1754-1763), disease, the Anglo-Cherokee War (1758-1761), and settler violence added to the disruption in the lives of Catawba women, whose focus centered on the safety and survival of their families and communities.

When disease hit Catawba towns, the burden of care rested upon Catawba women. Epidemic diseases of the 1750s exacerbated the extreme crises that Sally's people confronted—malnourishment, warfare, slave raiding, and European settlement. The cyclical epidemics that hit Sally's home at Weyane and the surrounding Catawba towns resulted in high mortality rates, consolidation of towns and lineages, and a decline in fertility. Instead of collapsing under the

³¹⁴Merrell, *The Indians' New World*, 41-42.

seemingly unsurmountable illnesses shattering their world, Catawba women adapted to the alarming and disturbing changes brought on by epidemic disease.

In addition to diseases, food shortages, and settler encroachment, Iroquois hostilities occurring in the region disrupted and transformed the lives of Catawba women. The history of the enmity between the Catawbas and the Indians of the Iroquois Confederacy and its allies dated back to the 1670s, long before Sally's birth. The Catawba-Iroquois conflict had persisted for "time immemorial," with each conducting raids against the other. However, the Beaver Wars, fought in the mid-1600s between the Iroquois Confederacy and Algonquian Indians armed by the French, and epidemic disease left the Iroquois people weakened because of the considerable loss of lives and villages. Seeking peace and stability, leaders of the Iroquois negotiated separate peace treaties with the French and British, commonly known as the Grand Settlement of 1701, which established neutrality among the Iroquois, French, British, and the Indians inhabiting the region west of Detroit.³¹⁵ Although Catawbas never lacked Indian enemies, events in the 1750s and 1760s intensified the warfare and raiding in Catawba country, especially as Iroquoian motivations for raiding shifted south over the course of the 1700s.

The Iroquois Confederacy of the Five Nations of the Onondagas, Mohawks, Senecas, Cayugas, and Oneidas practiced mourning war rituals similar to Catawbas by taking war captives and often adopting them to replace deceased family members. After 1701, warriors belonging to the Iroquois Confederacy shifted its warfare south in search of captives, including Piedmont Indian women and children. In response to Iroquois attacks, proto-Catawba warriors traveled

³¹⁵Daniel K. Richter, "War and Culture: The Iroquois Experience," *The William & Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 40, No. 4 (Oct., 1983), 528-559; James H. Merrell, "'Their Very Bones Shall Fight': The Catawba-Iroquois Wars" in *Beyond the Covenant Chain: The Iroquois and Their Neighbors in Indian North America, 1600-1800*, ed. by Daniel K. Richter and James H. Merrell (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003 [1987]), 116.

north seeking revenge for relatives killed or captured during raids.³¹⁶ “Mourning wars” or “crying blood,” a process in which each side engaged in battle “to get the scalp of the murderer, or enemy, to satisfy the supposed craving ghosts of their deceased relations,” resulted in cyclical violence that continued for many years.³¹⁷

Piedmont Indian men often went to war and took captives at the behest of female relatives of the deceased.³¹⁸ Internal social demands of kinship obligated the warriors to restore declining populations and ensure social continuity. Taking captives also served as a way to deal with the loss of loved ones.³¹⁹ In the early 1700s, Piedmont Indians and their enemies typically took women and children captive because they tended to adapt more easily to a new society and rarely ran away. Piedmont Indian women determined which prisoner would take the place of a deceased family member, whom they would torture, and whom they would sell. Women influenced the adoption process by choosing to adopt captives into Catawba society and kinship networks, which served as a way to replace warriors killed in battle or relatives who died from disease.

The Tuscarora War of 1711-1713 further fueled the Catawba-Iroquois conflict and endangered Piedmont Indian women and children. The war occurred at a time when Piedmont Indians, whom the Iroquois referred to collectively as “Flatheads,” were still transforming into the Catawba Nation.³²⁰ In January 1712, Piedmont Indian men presented a united military front

³¹⁶Richter, “War and Culture,” 554-559.

³¹⁷Adair, *History of the American Indians*, 151.

³¹⁸Adair, *History of the American Indians*, 158-159.

³¹⁹For details on Iroquois war culture, see Richter, “War and Culture,” 528-559; Daniel K. Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: Published for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Virginia, by the University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 236.

³²⁰For “Flatheads,” see *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, E. B. O’Callaghan, ed. (Albany: Weed, Parsons and Company, Printers, 1855), 5: 444.

with 196 warriors joining Colonel John Barnwell of South Carolina when his troops attacked the Tuscarora towns of Narhantes and Kenta. The Piedmont Indian warriors needed little persuasion to join Barnwell's expedition because many of the Tuscaroras had aligned themselves politically with the Iroquois, who reciprocated the alliance.³²¹ Most of the Piedmont Indian fighters returned to their homes, with captives and plunder, after the initial attack on Narhantes. Many of the warriors joined a second expedition that defeated the Tuscaroras in March 1713.³²²

The defeat of the Tuscarora Indians increased the dangers that Piedmont Indian people faced in the southern region between 1714 and 1717. In 1714, a faction of Tuscaroras fled north and joined the Iroquois Confederacy, becoming the sixth nation and strengthening the confederacy's demographics. In 1717, the Piedmont Indians, whom Virginia's Governor Alexander Spotswood referred to as Catawba, turned their children over to the governor. That evening as the Catawbas slept outside Fort Christanna, Iroquois fighters attacked the small group, killing five, wounding two, and capturing six, including Catawba leader Willmannantanghkee, who later escaped.³²³ Iroquois leaders, who acknowledged the attack, justified the incident because Catawbas "are a false & treacherous people" who have "no faith nor honour in them...they are our antient enemys."³²⁴ The retaliatory raids generated generations of violence between the two groups.³²⁵

³²¹Gallay, *Indian Slave Trade*, 268.

³²²E. Lawrence Lee, *Indian Wars in North Carolina, 1663-1763* (Raleigh: North Carolina Department of Archives and History, 1997), 27-37.

³²³Willmannantanghkee was the only Catawba identified in the correspondence, see *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, 5: 489-491.

³²⁴*Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, 5: 444 [second quote], 491 [first quote].

³²⁵Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 239.

The constant state of conflict and danger that Sally and other Piedmont Indian women lived in reinforced Catawba coalescence because it was safer for women of the different towns to specialize on specific tasks. The threat of violence made it difficult for women to travel from their towns to gather berries, nuts and herbs and to harvest corn. Therefore, Nassaw women did most of the farming and shelling of corn, while women at Charraw Town gathered hickory nuts, peaches, and grapes. Charraw people ate corn, but the archaeological evidence shows that they did not process it in their towns. Either Charraw women processed corn in another area or Nassaw women sent processed, shelled corn to the Charraw community.³²⁶ Although it remains unclear whether Charraw women joined other Piedmont Indian women in work groups at other towns, either sharing tasks or dividing responsibilities served to bond the women together. Rather than nurture division between the six Piedmont Indian towns, the crisis strengthened community bonds and kinship ties, which in turn bolstered their coalescence into the Catawba Nation.

In 1751, the crisis in Catawba territory escalated. By this time, various Siouan-speaking Indians living in the Piedmont region had united as the Catawba Nation. I imagine that Catawbas asked leading headmen of their respective towns to try to bring harmony and peace back to their lives. In June 1751, several Catawba leaders traveled by boat from Charlestown to Albany, New York, where they met with Iroquois leaders to try to end the bloodshed. King Hagler, a leading headman who represented the Catawbas, announced to the Iroquois that “all my Towns...desired me...to make a peace.” After several days of speeches and ceremonies, during which Catawba men carried a standard of turkey feathers and sang songs of friendship,

³²⁶Mary Elizabeth Fitts, “Defending and Provisioning the Catawba Nation: An Archaeology of the Mid-Eighteenth-Century Community at Nation Ford” (PhD diss., University of North Carolina, 2015), 361-401.

King Hagler and the delegation came to a temporary truce with the Iroquois.³²⁷ Finalized peace occurred only with a mutual exchange of prisoners, which proved problematic when the delegation returned home at the end of August 1751.

Back home, Catawba women joined the men in deliberating about the peace treaty. While the evidence for this specific meeting is lacking, it would be reasonable to expect that the women and men of each town discussed the issue, particularly the return of prisoners, who were under the women's control. Returning adopted captives was tricky because they were now considered kin who occupied an integral role in the kinship network and were important to social continuity. The decision to return captives to the Iroquois rested primarily with the women and was not something the all-male delegation could promise. In addition, Catawbas may have sold some of the captives, and some might have died.³²⁸ Although reluctant, the women might have agreed to return the prisoners because they wanted a safe environment in which to raise their families.

Catawbas met in town councils where they weighed the advantages and disadvantages of the treaty conditions and discussed their concerns about future raids. Women and men contemplated their options carefully until they arrived at a consensus, deciding to return their captives. In November 1751, Sally New River's father and interpreter Matthew Toole sent Governor James Glen a message. The Catawbas, he informed the governor, declined to travel north during the cold months, a possible delaying tactic on the part of Catawbas who had to prepare adopted captives for separation from their Catawba families. Prolonging the exchange of

³²⁷“Conference between Governor Clinton and the Indians,” July 6-10, 1751, *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, ed. E. B. O’Callaghan (Albany: Weed, Parsons and Company, Printers, 1855), 6: 717-726 [quote, 723].

³²⁸Merrell, “Their Very Bones Shall Fight,” 129; Merrell, *The Indians’ New World*, 140-141.

prisoners created doubt in the minds of the Iroquois leaders.³²⁹ At the same time, Catawba women's anxieties returned because Iroquois began raiding in Catawba territory again. Iroquois raiders had killed a Catawba man and woman since Catawba leaders returned from Albany in the summer. Through an interpreter, Hagler swore Catawbas remained true to their word and maintain peace, unlike their Iroquois adversaries, while cautioning Governor James Glen "to let them [Iroquois] know that it was in their Power to take and kill all the Enemy."³³⁰

Catawba leaders, who also filled the roles of warrior and hunter, chose to stay close to the Catawba towns. Rather than travel north to negotiate what they perceived as a hollow peace treaty, the men remained at home where they protected their wives and children from enemy Indian raiding parties.³³¹ War with the Cherokees served as additional inducement for Catawba men to stay near their towns to protect their wives and children. Much of the animosity between the Catawbas and Cherokees centered on each group's claim to rich hunting grounds situated between the Saluda and Broad Rivers in the Piedmont region of the Carolinas. Danger increased in Catawba territory as bands of Cherokee warriors traveled near the Broad River, a waterway that lay on the western border of Catawba territory. In 1750, when Catawbas expressed alarm at Iroquois incursions into white settlements located near the Catawba towns, they also complained to Governor Glen that Cherokee warriors made similar raids upon Catawba villages.³³² Catawba

³²⁹Speech of William Bull, Jun. Esq. Commissioner of South Carolina, at the treaty held by Governor George Clinton, at Albany, with the Six Nations, on the 8th of July, 1751," in *A View of South Carolina as Respects Her Natural and Civil Concerns*, by John Drayton (Charleston: W. P. Young, 1802), 239-245; McDowell, ed., *DRIA, May 21, 1750-August 7, 1754*, 90, 167.

³³⁰Governor Glen to Six Nations, Nov. 12, 1751, *DRIA, 1750-1754*, 167-168.

³³¹"Letter from William Bull, Esq. to Governor Glen," June 7, 1751; "Governor Glen to the Emperor and Head men of the Cherokees," August 26, 1751; "Mathew Tool to Governor Glen," n.d., in *DRIA, 1750- 1754*, 35 [Albany], 90 [return], 167-168 [raids].

³³²*Great Britain Secretary of State, South Carolina Correspondence and other Papers* (CO5/385-386): 1744-1776, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia; Daniel J. Tortora, *Carolina in Crisis: Cherokees, Colonists, and Slaves in the American Southeast, 1756-1763* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 22.

belligerence toward the Cherokees heightened when the latter allowed Iroquois warriors passage through their Lower Towns to attack Catawba and Lower Creek towns. Reports from surveyor John Fairchild appeared to confirm a Cherokee-Iroquois alliance in spring of 1751. He alleged that the Cherokees prepared for a visit from the “Northern Indians,” a vague description of Indians from the North who could have been Shawnee, Delaware, or Iroquois.³³³ As raiding continued in Catawba territory, vengeance served as motivation for the continuation of the Catawba-Cherokee wars, similar to the Catawba-Iroquois conflict.

Fighting came to a temporary lull during early fall of 1752 when Catawba leaders talked of peace with the Cherokees.³³⁴ In October, one month before a Mohawk delegation visited the Catawba towns, Catawbas welcomed and talked with the Cherokees in the Catawba towns. Catawba women acted as diplomatic hosts during these peace talks. They cooked food and prepared lodging for their guests. Sally witnessed the declarations of friendship between Catawba and Cherokee leaders and watched her female relatives prepare the feast that accompanied such talks, as she did during the Mohawk visit.³³⁵ She heard Hagler, her grandfather, declare that the path between the Catawbas and Cherokees, “formerly crooked and bloody will then be streight and even, and in Place of War, brotherly Love shall take Place.”³³⁶ Despite claims of brotherly love, the Catawba-Cherokee truce evaporated by 1759.³³⁷

³³³“John Fairchild to Governor Glen,” March 25, 1751; “William Bull to Governor Glen,” June 15, 1751, *DRIA, 1750-1754*, 11, 35.

³³⁴“King and Head Men of the Catawbas to Governor Glen, Oct 28, 1752,” *DRIA, 1750-1754*, 357 [talks]. I have been unable to locate any evidence of communications between the Mohawks and Cherokees.

³³⁵Matthew Toole mentioned a feast held between the Catawbas and Cherokees in a letter to Governor Glen; see *DRIA, 1750-1754*, 358.

³³⁶“Catawba King and others to Governor Glen Nov 21, 1752,” *DRIA, 1750-1754*, 361.

³³⁷“Charles-Town, March 23,” *South Carolina Gazette*, March 24, 1759, 1.

Shortly after Catawbas hosted the Cherokees, a Catawba delegation, remaining true to their promise of peace, made a trip north to return the Iroquois captives. Some of the captives may have wanted to reunite with their Iroquois families. We know that three unidentified Iroquois made the trip to Charlestown with the Catawba men, intent on returning to their homeland. Of the three captives, Catawba leaders returned only one captive to the Iroquois. One captive died before the trip north and the other refused to travel by ship.³³⁸

In South Carolina, Catawba women waited for the delegation to return, hopefully with relatives taken by the Iroquois. Catawba men returned to their Nation in South Carolina in November 1752, after concluding peace negotiations with the Mohawks. Whether the delegation returned with Catawba captives remains unknown, but the Catawba-Mohawk diplomatic mission was a friendly one. A Catawba runner arrived in the Catawba towns a few days prior to the arrival of their leaders to announce they were returning escorted by a dozen Mohawks.³³⁹ Aware that they would have important visitors, Catawba women spent the days before the Mohawks' arrival preparing an elaborate feast and celebration—gathering food, collecting firewood, cooking, and making wampum belts. They cooked peas, beans, corn, and squash, and roasted acorns, which they pulsed to thicken stew and to make bread. Other celebratory foods included barbequed peaches, turkey, venison, and peach bread.³⁴⁰

Young Catawba girls like Sally participated in the ceremonies to some degree. They collected firewood and water, and they helped their mother's cook large quantities of food.

³³⁸South Carolina accounts fail to indicate if the prisoners were female or whether Iroquois returned Catawba captives. Nor do the sources indicate what happened to the captive who refused to board the ship, see *DRIA, 1750-1754*, 213-214; Terry W. Lipscomb and R. Nicholas Olsberg, ed., *The Journal of the Commons House of Assembly, November 14, 1751-October 7, 1752* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1977), 346.

³³⁹The evidence fails to indicate whether Iroquois captives [Catawbas] accompanied the group. I have been unable to locate any additional evidence about the Mohawk visitors except that the delegation included "Capt. Plans, Capt. Jo, Crear Isack," see *DRIA, 1750-1754*, 363.

³⁴⁰Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 17-18, 45.

Whether Sally and other Catawba children witnessed the exchange of belts of white wampum (strings of shells) between Catawba leaders and the Mohawk delegation remains unknown, but one can assume that she had some knowledge of the meeting.³⁴¹ Catawba children spent most of their days in the town among their families learning Catawba beliefs and customs, and thus, they would have been exposed on some level to the ceremony surrounding the visit. Whether Sally saw the diplomatic exchanges of wampum that signified peace and friendship is something we will never know. However, it is likely that she heard the headmen sing a song of peace in the town plaza followed by an eloquent speech of friendship given by one of the Catawba headmen. Leading headmen of each tribe smoked a calumet or a four-stemmed bowl pipe, made by a Catawba woman, to confirm their friendship.³⁴² Later, when the festivities incorporated singing, dancing, and drumming, Sally and other Catawba children stood to the outside of the dance area, not joining because they were too young. One of the older Catawba men led the dance around a fire built in the plaza yard. As they started the Catawba “ibare upáćire” (Round dance) or the “ibare wisagwaye” (Horse dance), her female relatives shook turtle-shell rattles as they stood behind the men. Meanwhile, men beat the drum and shook gourd rattles.³⁴³

Despite such rituals, peace between the Catawbas and people of the Iroquois Confederacy remained tenuous. By the summer of 1753, Catawbas suspected that Iroquois raiders had ventured near their towns and captured fourteen Catawbas. In August 1753, after the kidnappings, two Catawba women accompanied a delegation of Catawba warriors to Charlestown. The presence of women accompanying such parties indicated that the group came

³⁴¹*DRIA, 1750-1754*, 363; W. M. Beauchamp, “Wampum Used in Council and as Currency,” *The American Antiquarian and Oriental Journal*, Vol. 20 (Jan. – Nov., 1898), 1-13.

³⁴²Drayton, *A View of South Carolina*, 241-242.

³⁴³Speck, “Catawba Religious Beliefs, Mortuary Customs, and Dances,” 39, 46-48; Speck, *Catawba Texts*, 62-63.

in peace.³⁴⁴ The Indians informed Governor James Glen that peace with the Iroquois had failed, “for the Northern Indians have already broke it.”³⁴⁵ Although the women with the delegation probably did not voice their concern directly to the governor, they traveled with the warriors to convey their uneasiness about the renewed hostility. Glen, who was preoccupied with outbreak of war in the Ohio Valley and French threats toward Carolina, hoped the Catawbas were wrong and peace negotiations had not been in vain. In December 1754, Indian Commissioner William Bull confirmed the Catawbas’ disquiet, conveying to Governor Glen that fifty Iroquois warriors had set out to attack the Catawba Nation. Catawba “apprehensions seem[ed] to have been well founded,” Glen wrote to King Hagler. The Iroquois had not honored the truce, perhaps because Catawbas returned only one captive. The captive exchange of 1751 had failed.³⁴⁶

Beyond the wars with the Cherokee and the Iroquois Confederacy, Catawba women experienced more disruption in their lives with the coming of the French and Indian War (1754-1763). British and French troops fought the most decisive battles of the war in North America over control of trade and land located between the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers in the Ohio Valley.³⁴⁷ Before and during the war, Catawbas played a pivotal role in the protection of the Carolina frontier, acting as a military buffer against French incursions into the colony even

³⁴⁴“Letter from Robert Stiell to James Glen, July 23, 1753,” *DRIA, 1750-1754*, 454-457. For details on Indian women accompanying peace delegations, see Juliana Barr, “From Captives to Slaves: Commodifying Indian Women in the Borderlands,” *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 92, No. 1 (Jun., 2005), 25.

³⁴⁵“Letter from Robert Stiell to James Glen, July 23, 1753,” *DRIA, 1750-1754*, 454-457, 499.

³⁴⁶“Governor Glen to the Catabaw Headmen, Charles Town, December 18, 1754,” *DRIA, 1754-1765*, 27. Catawbas failure to return Iroquois captives would result in a renewal of warfare, see Drayton, *A View of South Carolina*, 244.

³⁴⁷The French and Indian War, a term recognized by Americans, obscures the fact that American Indians from the North and South fought on both sides of the conflict and that it was a global conflict known by several names. Europeans recognize the confrontations occurring at the time as the Seven Years’ War or the Great War for Empire because of the battles that took place in Europe. Canadians of French descent identify the struggle as the War of Conquest. For a comprehensive history on the French and Indian War, see Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years’ War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000). Additional works include William M. Fowler Jr., *Empires at War: The French and Indian War and the Struggle for North America* (New York: Walker & Company, 2004); and Walter R. Borneman, *The French and Indian War: Deciding the Fate of North America* (New York: Harper Collins Publisher, 2006).

though British colonial officials and colonists feared a Catawba-French alliance, which could destroy the Carolinas. Before the war began, Catawba leaders assured the British that “they would have no Connection with any other but the English, and would stand and fall with them.”³⁴⁸ However, when war broke out, Catawba men had to decide what to do—protect their wives, mothers, sisters, and children or defend the British. For Catawbas, the answer was obvious: ensure the safety of their families.

When colonial officials asked for help in the war, Catawba men and women gathered in each of the six towns to debate the advantages and disadvantages of such alliances for their people. After each town reached a consensus, leading headmen met at Weyane, the home of King Hagler, to discuss matters of concern to the Nation. While we know little about eighteenth-century Catawbas meeting in council, women had some influence in decision-making. The chief acted as an “arbitrator” and conveyed decisions to their allies with, as Conrad Weiser explained, “the Consent of his Brothers, cousins or wives.”³⁴⁹ Catawbas (men and women) decided collectively about issues that affected the Nation and Catawba people, matters like war, peace, and land.³⁵⁰

Following the Catawba custom of consensus, the headmen reiterated the Nation’s loyalty to the English in a July 1753 letter sent to Virginia’s Lieutenant Governor Robert Dinwiddie. While claiming to be willing to go against the French and “kill or take all we come across,” Catawba fighters remained in their towns. Despite the need to put their world in order through retaliation, King Hagler informed Dinwiddie that Catawbas were in a “Low Condition” and

³⁴⁸“Governor Glen to the Committee on Indian Affairs, n.d.,” *DRIA, 1750-1754*, 53.

³⁴⁹Letter from “Conrad Weiser to Sect. Peters, 1745,” *Pennsylvania Archives: Selected and Arranged Original Documents in the Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth, Conformably to Acts of the General Assembly, February 15, 1851, & March 1, 1852*, ed. by Samuel Hazard (Philadelphia: Joseph Severns & Co., 1852), 1: 671.

³⁵⁰Merrell, *The Indians’ New World*, 142.

unable to assist the British.³⁵¹ The same month, trader Robert Stiell wrote to South Carolina's governor confirming that the Catawbas were in such "perishable" conditions that the men were unable to hunt. The combination of illness and malnutrition increased Catawba mortality with, as Hagler and Stiell pointed out, many dying each day.³⁵²

Since the smallpox epidemic of 1738, cyclical sickness had taken a brutal toll on Catawba people. In April 1753, a Catawba leader Yanabe Yatengway (Young Warrior) and nineteen headmen died from dysentery.³⁵³ Catawba men, who "could not hunt, for the Enemy, and were obliged to give away what Cloathing they had for Corn," refused to leave their people without adequate provisions.³⁵⁴ In 1753, Catawba people, like much of South Carolina, suffered from the previous year's drought, and a recent hurricane added to the scarcity of corn throughout the province.³⁵⁵ By spring of that same year, the Catawbas had emptied their corncribs. Sally and her people "lived entirely upon Blackberries, which brought a Flux on them that has cut off a great many of them, and are still dying of it dayly."³⁵⁶ In the summer of 1753, Hagler and several Catawba men sent a letter to Virginia Governor Robert Dinwiddie confirming that Catawbas suffered from a severe illness in addition to fourteen of their people killed by "French

³⁵¹"The King, Headmen and Warriors of the Catawbaws—to their Loving Broth^r the Governor of Virginia," July 26, 1753, *Calendar of Virginia State Papers*, ed. William P. Palmer (Richmond: R. F. Walker, Superintendent of Public Printing, 1875), 1: 248-249.

³⁵²"Letter from Robert Stiell to James Glen, July 23, 1753," *DRIA, 1750-1754*, 454.

³⁵³Lipscomb, ed., *The Journal of the Commons House of Assembly, November 21, 1752 – September 6, 1754*, 215.

³⁵⁴"Letter from Robert Stiell to James Glen, July 23, 1753," *DRIA, 1750-1754*, 454.

³⁵⁵Jonathan Mercantini, "The Great Carolina Hurricane of 1752," *The South Carolina Historical Magazine*, Vol. 103, No. 4 (Oct., 2002), 357.

³⁵⁶"Letter from Robert Stiell to James Glen, July 23, 1753," *DRIA, 1750-1754*, 454. For an ordinance allowing for the importation of corn, see Thomas Cooper, ed., *The Statutes at Large of South Carolina* (Columbia: A. S. Johnston, 1838), 4: 1.

Indians.”³⁵⁷ Catawba women cared for their families through the “perishable” conditions and struggled to find adequate food supplies in a hostile environment, while small parties of Catawba warriors traveled north to join the British against the French.

Catawba men remained reluctant to leave their women and children unprotected and hungry. Attentive to the concerns of Catawba women, Hagler and other Catawba headmen pitted the two officials against one another in an effort to obtain more guns, ammunition, provisions, and trade goods—all necessary to Catawba survival.³⁵⁸ Hagler sent Dinwiddie’s missives to Glen, whom they depended upon for provisions, and at times, security. During the spring of 1754, Governor Glen, considerate of South Carolina security, advised the headmen “to stay at Home and defend yourselves, your Women, and Children, and hunt briskley to cloath them.” If Catawba men participated in the conflict in the Ohio Valley, other nations may attack their towns, “burn them, and sweep all away.” Fear of the French attacking the backcountry motivated Glen’s warning—he wanted to keep Catawba fighters close for the security of South Carolina. Aware of the Catawba men’s worries, he played on the warriors’ anxiety that centered on the safety of their women and children and the endurance of the Nation. For the time being, the men remained in South Carolina and focused on the crisis in Catawba territory attempting to add to the food supply by hunting to feed and clothe their families.³⁵⁹

As the Iroquois continued raiding Catawba towns, Catawba women became primary targets of these raids. Sally and her relatives traveled by foot with heightened awareness of their surroundings and prepared for enemy incursions. In the spring of 1755, a Catawba woman taken

³⁵⁷Palmer, *Calendar of Virginia State Papers*, 1: 248-249.

³⁵⁸Robert Dinwiddie, *The Official Records of Robert Dinwiddie, Lieutenant-Governor of the Colony of Virginia, 1751-1758* (Richmond: Virginia Historical Society, 1883), 1: 98 [hereafter cited as *Dinwiddie Papers*]; “Governor Glen to Lieutenant Governor Dinwiddie, March 13, 1754,” *DRIA, 1750-1754*, 478.

³⁵⁹“Governor Glen to the Catawba King and Head Men, May 9, 1754,” *DRIA, 1750-1754*, 499.

captive by Mohawk Indians escaped and returned home to warn her people: “they intend to cut off every Soul of the Catawbaws for Revenge...they knew where the Catawbaws fetched their Water and Wood and they would utterly destroy them.”³⁶⁰ For Catawbaws, the woman’s account indicated a direct threat to the safety of their women and children, those responsible for collecting water and wood, often far from their towns without protection. Catawba men rarely collected water and wood, thus Catawbaws understood the Mohawks’ warning to “utterly destroy them” as a threat against their women, which in turn was a threat to their existence.

“Surrounded and beset by Enemies,” Sally and other Catawba women and children learned defensive skills, much like the Chickasaw women that Edmond Atkin encountered in the 1750s.³⁶¹ While the evidence regarding Catawba women learning how to load and shoot a gun and how to wield a knife is negligible, such a measure was practical given the violence in the region. War had been the occupation of men, but now Catawba women became embroiled in fighting too.³⁶²

In this hazardous environment, Catawba women must have reminded their leaders of the dangers in near their homes, and consequently, the men stayed home despite Dinwiddie’s appeals. In July 1755, Dinwiddie, frustrated at the absence of Catawba fighters, accused South Carolina Governor James Glen of encouraging Catawbaws to meet with him in the Piedmont backcountry rather than join the British militia in the Ohio Country.³⁶³ Rather than view Catawbaws’ refusal to join the conflict from a colonial official’s perspective, we should consider

³⁶⁰“Catawbaw Indians to Governor Glen, (ca. Spring, 1755),” *DRIA, 1754-1765*, 48-49.

³⁶¹Edmond Atkin, *The Appalachian Indian Frontier: The Edmond Atkin Report and Plan of 1755*, Wilbur R. Jacobs, ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, Bison Book, 1967), 68.

³⁶²For similar circumstances among the Cherokee, see Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 86-87.

³⁶³Robert Dinwiddie, *The Official Records of Robert Dinwiddie, Lieutenant-Governor of the Colony of Virginia, 1751-1758* (Richmond: Virginia Historical Society, 1884), 2: 27-28.

how Catawbas perceived of the war – why should they go to battle so far away from their home, when their wives and children faced capture and death at the hands of their Indian enemies.

Catawbas, well aware of global politics of the war, must have viewed the conflict in the North as a war that had nothing to do with them. The conflict was a race for Indian land far away from Catawba territory and the chaos that their women and children confronted.

In early spring of 1756, the Catawbas did welcome two commissioners sent by Governor Dinwiddie on a mission to Nassaw Town, in an effort to induce Catawba men to become more active in the conflict.³⁶⁴ Whether young Sally witnessed the meeting is something we will never know. However, it is unlikely Sally was present because the meeting took place in Nassaw Town, not at her home of Weyane Town. Women of Nassaw prepared for the ceremonial performances (feasting, singing, and dancing), and they saw rhetoric of friendship that occurred with the commissioner's business. The Virginia commissioners arrived at Nassaw to "brighten the Chain, and strengthen the Friendship" with the Catawbas and warn Sally's people against the French, men who desired to claim all the land they invaded. King Hagler reprimanded the commissioners, reminding them of his meeting with Dinwiddie in 1755 and his subsequent refusal of Catawba assistance. Hagler confidently informed the Virginia visitors "Our Warriors delight in War, and our young Men are equally pleased that they have an Opportunity of going to Battle."³⁶⁵ The speeches of both sides complete, Catawba leaders and the Virginia commissioners finalized their talks with the calumet ceremony, a ritual in which both sides smoked a pipe to establish the alliance of friendship and peace.³⁶⁶ One can imagine that as the

³⁶⁴ "A Treaty: Between Virginia and the Catawbas and Cherokees, 1756," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 13, No. 3 (Jan., 1906), 225-264 [hereafter cited as "A Treaty"].

³⁶⁵ Dinwiddie instructed the commissioners, Peter Randolph and William Byrd, to accomplish several objectives while treating with the Catawbas, see *A Treaty*, 233-238, 241.

³⁶⁶ Raymond Fogelson and William C. Sturtevant, *Handbook of North American Indians*, Southeast (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2004), 14: 510.

day turned into night, the atmosphere changed from lengthy speeches, smoking, and exchanges of wampum to a celebratory setting of dancing, singing, and eating that lasted throughout the night. Following Catawba custom, an elder Catawba man sang in tempo with the beats of a deerskin drum played by a few Catawba men, while another group of men entered the dance arena. Later in the evening, the women joined in them. The ceremony of rhetoric and smoking, exchanges of wampum, and feasting was central to diplomacy and friendship obligations.³⁶⁷

The negotiations between Catawbas and Virginia had little effect initially on the situation near the Catawba towns or Catawba men's participation in the war. Catawba leaders continued confronting violence near their towns and complained to colonial officials about the lack of firearms. Catawba men used the rhetoric of war to declare their courage and "delight in war," but they refused to leave their women and children undefended, and they refused to go against the French without adequate arms and ammunition. In January 1755, South Carolina sent 500 gunflints and several barrels of powder and bullets to the warriors of the Catawba towns. By October of the same year, the Catawbas had depleted the January supply. Hagler complained about their lack of weaponry, telling their interpreter John Evans, "White People spoke much and performed but little, for they now had no Ammunition."³⁶⁸ During the 1756 treaty negotiations with the Virginia commissioners, Catawbas received a smaller supply of powder and bullets.³⁶⁹ In July 1756, North Carolina Governor Arthur Dobbs once again sent wampum to the Catawbas along with a shipment of "One Hundred weight of Gun powder and four Hundred weight of

³⁶⁷For Catawba oral history, see Speck, *Catawba Texts*, 28. King Hagler, Chupahaw, Penchee-Uraw, Hixa-Uraw, Tannasee, Yeaputkee, and Touksecay made their marks on the treaty; see "A Treaty," 241-244.

³⁶⁸"Ammunition Delivered to the Catawbaws, January 21, 1755," *DRIA, 1754-1765*, 34-35; "Hagler, King of the Catawbaws, to Governor Glen, October 21, 1755," *DRIA, 1754-1765*, 85-86 [quote].

³⁶⁹"A Treaty," 231.

Lead” and the promise of a fort for security.³⁷⁰ The substantial amount of firearms shipped to Nassaw reveals Catawbas’ need for self-defensive measures and the colony’s desire to protect the backcountry. Catawba warriors and hunters used a large portion of the weaponry and ammunition to defend themselves against enemy raiders and for hunting game.

In 1756, with the acquisition of firearms and ammunition from Virginia, Catawba fighters, bound to the alliance and the custom of reciprocity, reluctantly agreed to leave their women and children to join the French and Indian War in the Ohio River Valley. The warriors traveled to Winchester, Virginia, arriving in late October of 1756, where they participated in the conflict. In December 1756, a party of Shawnee and Delaware Indians attacked a scouting party of eight Catawbas and five white men near Fort Duquesne. Two Catawba warriors died in the skirmish, one of which was the son of King Hagler and uncle to Sally.³⁷¹ After the fight, the men returned home with the remains of their deceased relatives.³⁷² Back home in the Catawba towns, cries of mourning from the women filled the air. Grief stricken families, particularly Catawba women, demanded vengeance for the deaths of their relatives. Sally’s close female relatives

³⁷⁰“Letter of Arthur Dobbs to Hugh Waddell, [Alexander Osburne], and Colonel Alexander, July 18, 1756,” *CRNC*, Vol. 5, 605. The amount divided among the Catawbas and Cherokees was probably the 150 small arms, 10 pounds of gunpowder, and six pounds of bullets that Dinwiddie mentioned in letters to Richard Pearis and Captain Woodson on December 15, 1755, see *Dinwiddie Papers*, 296-297. During their limited time excavating the site, the Research Laboratories of Archaeology recovered 70 gun parts, 23 gunflints, and 45 lead balls, see Mary Beth Fitts, Brett H. Riggs, and R. P. Stephen Davis, Jr., “Summary Report of 2007 Archaeological Investigations at Catawba Nassaw Town (YK434), York County, South Carolina,” Research Report No. 7, Research Laboratories of Archaeology, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (December 2007), 5, 17, 18.

³⁷¹*George Washington Papers at the Library of Congress, 1741-1799: Series 4. General Correspondence. 1697-1799*, “George Washington, December 1756, Speech to Catawba Indians; incomplete,” Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, accessed July 18, 2013, <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gwhtml/gwhome.html> [Winchester]; “Philadelphia, January 6,” *Pennsylvania Gazette*, January 6, 1757, 3; “Extract of a Letter from Lancaster, April 11,” *New-York Mercury*, April 25, 1757, 2 [son]. King Hagler buried another son in 1755, see “Hagler, King of the Catawbas, to Governor Glen, October 21, 1755,” *DRIA*, 1754-1765, 85. The shooters were unidentified; see “To Colonel Henry Bouquet, Camp at Fort Cumberland, August 24, 1758,” *The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799*, John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., Vol. 2, University of Virginia Library, accessed July 15, 2013, <http://etext.virginia.edu/washington/fitzpatrick/>.

³⁷²“Governor Dinwiddie to Colonel Washington, December 27, 1756,” *Dinwiddie Papers*, 2: 572-574; “Governor Dinwiddie to Henry Fox, Esq, January 4, 1757,” *Dinwiddie Papers*, 2: 577.

feared that without retaliation their deceased kin would “find no rest, and at night haunt the houses of the tribe.”³⁷³

The decision to extract vengeance for the Catawba men’s deaths lay in the hands of Catawba women. Following Catawba custom, women told their male relatives to seek revenge under the terms of Catawba retaliation and kinship.³⁷⁴ Pressed by female relatives to strike back at their enemy, the equally enraged Catawba warriors traveled back to Fort Duquesne to even the score against the Shawnee and Delaware. In February 1757, a local colonist sighted seventeen Catawba warriors as they passed through the Yadkin River Valley of North Carolina on their way north, aiming to go to war against the French.³⁷⁵ Several months later, in early April, Hagler traveled with 125 Catawba warriors toward Fort Cumberland, swearing he would have revenge on the Shawnee and Delaware for the loss of his son at Fort Duquesne.³⁷⁶

Although many of the Catawba warriors traveled north to extract vengeance, Catawba women must have felt conflicted about the men’s departure. On one hand, they were probably averse to dedicating large war parties for British efforts in the North. Doing so would leave the towns, women, and children exposed to attack.³⁷⁷ However, they felt obliged to honor the custom of vengeance, which eased their grief and restored balance to their communities. And, this fight would be against their Shawnee and Delaware enemies, not against the French. In the end, a large contingent of Catawba warriors left their towns and families to seek revenge.

³⁷³Adair, *History of the American Indians*, 155-159.

³⁷⁴For details on retaliation, see Adair, *History of the American Indians*, 408.

³⁷⁵“Charles-Town, in South-Carolina, March 3,” *Pennsylvania Gazette*, April 7, 1757, 2.

³⁷⁶“Extract of a Letter from Lancaster, April 11,” *New-York Mercury*, April 25, 1757, 2.

³⁷⁷For a warrior count, see John Evans 1756 “Rough sketch-map of the towns of the Catawba nation, North Carolina and South Carolina, USA,” in *The Papers of the Maule Family, Earls of Dalhousie, National Records of Scotland*.

Catawba women who traveled into enemy territory with scouting parties confronted life-threatening conditions. Catawba women occasionally traveled with their Catawba husbands on hunting expeditions or with small war parties beyond Catawba boundaries, where they spent a large portion of their time either in camp or in hunting small game, cooking, and processing skins. In 1758, two Catawba women traveled with a small party of Catawba warriors near Winchester, Virginia when “3 Cuttawba men and 2 Squaws...were fir’d upon by about 10 or 12 of the Enemy...and wounded one of the Squaws.”³⁷⁸ While the account provides little description of the women who accompanied the small party of warriors, they probably were sufficiently armed and capable of defending themselves in the event of attack. However, the two to one odds and being in unfamiliar territory proved fatal for the group.

In addition to attack, capture, or death, Catawba women confronted sexual assault when traveling beyond their territorial boundaries. Catawba men did not use rape as a tool of war.³⁷⁹ To the contrary, Catawba warriors prepared for war by abstaining from sex hoping to reach a state of purity that would ensure their safety and success in battle. Upon returning from battle, men confined themselves to a specific council house where they went through a ritual cleansing before coming into contact with other people, particularly women. Blood, the most dangerous and powerful bodily substance, threatened the careful balance between purity and pollution that Catawbas sought to maintain in their world. Warriors’ abstinence from sex and ritual cleansing after battle ensured a sense of spiritual balance.³⁸⁰

³⁷⁸“To Colonel Henry Bouquet,” *The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799*, ed. by John C. Fitzpatrick, 2: 274, accessed July 19, 2013 <http://etext.virginia.edu/washington/fitzpatrick/index.html>.

³⁷⁹Adair, *History of the American Indian*, 164.

³⁸⁰Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 35.

In 1759, renewed violence in the backcountry left Catawba women exposed once again to the enmity of the Cherokee. In February 1759, Cherokees killed a Catawba woman visiting their towns in reprisal for Catawbas' alleged murder of a Cherokee woman.³⁸¹ Two months later, the *South Carolina Gazette* reported that either Cherokee or Shawnee warriors had killed and scalped at least 16 European settlers along the Broad and Catawba Rivers, well within Catawba territory.³⁸² In June, Hagler told Governor William Lyttelton that seven of his people had been "Carried of [sic] by the french Indians." He told Lyttelton firmly, "I am not sure whether the Cherokees had any hand in the takeing of my pople but I will soon know... You must not trust the Cherokees they are great Rogues."³⁸³ According to a report in the *South Carolina Gazette* the same month, Cherokees captured a group of eight Catawbas near the South Fork of the Catawba River. One Catawba man escaped, breaking two of his fingers to disengage himself from the binding, and told a local settler "Cherokee's...had committed this Outrage."³⁸⁴ Mistrustful of Cherokees, Catawba leaders appealed to Lyttelton for a fort to protect their women and children.³⁸⁵ In spite of the murder of the Catawba woman and abduction of eight men, Catawba warriors stayed home temporarily to guard against Cherokee raids.³⁸⁶

³⁸¹"Letter from William Lyttelton to the Board of Trade, Charles Town April 14, 1759," *Great Britain Board of Trade, Original South Carolina Correspondence from the Governors and Others* (CO5/276-377) Vols. L thru M, 1757-1764, [microfilm], 81; "Charles-Town, March 23," *South Carolina Gazette*, March 24, 1759, 1.

³⁸²"Charles-Town, May 12," *South Carolina Gazette*, May 12, 1759, 1; "Saml. Wyly to Governor Lyttelton, Mt. Pleasant May 5, 1759," *DRIA, 1754-1765*, 485-486.

³⁸³"Letter from Catawbas, Headmen to William H. Lyttelton, June 11, 1759," Lyttelton Papers.

³⁸⁴"Charles-Town, June 9," *South Carolina Gazette*, June 9, 1759, 4 [eight Catawbas].

³⁸⁵"Letter from Catawbas, Headmen to William H. Lyttelton, June 11, 1759," Lyttelton Papers.

³⁸⁶"Charles-Town, March 23," *South Carolina Gazette*, March 24, 1759, 1 [Catawba woman]; "Samuel Wyly to Governor Lyttelton, May 5, 1759," *DRIA, 1754-1765*, 485.

Disease

In 1759, Catawba women witnessed the smallpox virus or *Variola major* silently invade their towns.³⁸⁷ In October, a Catawba war party returning home from the Virginia front transmitted smallpox to other Catawbas living in the six towns that made up the Catawba Nation. King Hagler, Sally's grandfather, wrote to Governor Lyttelton, "at present we have got a Bad Disorder amongst us which was brought in by our warriors in their return from Virginia... which has carried off several of our best wariers and there is several more sick."³⁸⁸ The epidemic spread among Catawba people who lived in compact villages constructed to protect them against enemy attacks. The crowded dwellings, in which members of immediate and extended family lineages often resided in the same house, resulted in the rapid spread of the disease. In such an environment, Catawbas succumbed to the virus.³⁸⁹

Catawba women worked alongside Catawba spiritual healers fighting the illness and trying to cure relatives. In an attempt to cure the illness, Catawba healers used everything in their extensive medicine bag, curatives passed down through generations of Catawba people. Many of the medicinal practices included blowing medicine, scratching the affected parts of the body, applying infusions externally, going to water for purification, and singing and dancing for the sick person. Catawba women used every herbal remedy they knew from ballroot for sores to pennyroyal for colds, and broom grass and pipsissewa used to cure skin diseases.³⁹⁰ Yet these

³⁸⁷Maurice A. Moore, "Reminiscences of York: By a Septuagenarian," *Yorkville Enquirer* (S.C.), January 6, 13, 20, 1870.

³⁸⁸"Catawbas, Headmen to William H. Lyttelton," October 1759, Lyttelton Papers.

³⁸⁹For consequences of overcrowding, see Paul Kelton, *Epidemics and Enslavement: Biological Catastrophe in the Native Southeast, 1492-1715* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 36-39.

³⁹⁰Frank G. Speck, "Catawba Herbals and Curative Practices," *The Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. 57, No. 223, Franz Boas Memorial Number (Jan. – Mar., 1944), 37-50.

practices failed, and all Catawbas, anxious about the inability to cure their people, searched for a treatment.

Sally and other young Catawba girls watched and assisted their Catawba mothers, who nursed relatives as the virus attacked its victims, each unaware that he or she carried the disease during the first twelve to fourteen days. Sally looked on as her relatives began experiencing flu-like symptoms—a headache, back and abdominal pain, chills, fever, and malaise. Sally watched as the elderly, the young, and those with no immunity became infected.³⁹¹ Sally probably heard adult relatives whisper stories about a similar sickness among her people, the 1738 smallpox epidemic that hit all of South Carolina. However, she had never experienced widespread sickness and must have wondered why her people were going through such extreme suffering.

Hagler’s October report of “several more sick” was an understatement. When symptoms finally started, nearly half of the already malnourished Catawba people became sick, leaving few Catawbas well enough to take care of duties necessary for survival, particularly tasks that women did. A handful of Catawbas, primarily women previously exposed to the disease, spent the majority of their time caring for the sick, with little time left to care for the crops.³⁹² Women struggled to provide their relatives stricken with the disease, the young and old, with nourishment that helped in their recovery. Historian Paul Kelton, who focused on colonial epidemics among the Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, and Chickasaws, posited that Southeastern Indian groups responded creatively to devastating epidemics of the period in ways that saved many people. Despite the deaths, Southeastern Indians did not abandon their religion.³⁹³ Catawbas responded in similar ways but still experienced high mortalities losing nearly sixty

³⁹¹Kelton, *Epidemics and Enslavement*, 36-39.

³⁹²Kelton, *Epidemics and Enslavement*, 36-39.

³⁹³Paul Kelton, “Avoiding the Smallpox Spirits: Colonial Epidemics and Southeastern Indian Survival,” *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (Winter, 2004), 45-71.

percent of their people to the disease.³⁹⁴ Even so, Catawba women did not give up on sick family members. They provided for the ill and comforted them, while healthy men stayed outside of the home building a ritual fire, actions that saved some people.

Catawba spiritual leaders incorporated the catastrophic disease into their oral history. They explained the havoc of the disease as a consequence of “yehurenčé,” or evil spirits that entered the body causing the illness.³⁹⁵ Catawbas believed that “nasurε” or witches worked for malevolent spirits to spread disease and other misfortunes. According to Catawba oral history, many of these witches came in the form of screech owls.³⁹⁶ Catawba healers and religious leaders practiced “w̄itε?pu^hhade” blowing medicine, a method where Catawba healers used a cane tube to blow medicine into a clay pot to make the evil spirits disappear.³⁹⁷

Catawba women grasped the medicinal failure of long established herbal treatments. They tried an alternative curative that consisted of using corn, a vital food source necessary for nourishment, if they could only keep it on their stomachs. The women boiled shucked ears of corn and placed the steaming cobs, not stones, around the patient until he or she began to sweat. Healthy Catawbas followed this practice by taking victims to the river, where they plunged sick relatives into the wintery cold river waters.³⁹⁸ The procedure of going to water was common among Catawba Indians. However, the practice often increased mortality rates because river water harbored free-living bacteria, often resulting in the additional illness of dysentery.³⁹⁹

³⁹⁴Merrell, *The Indians' New World*, 195. Theresa McReynolds argues that population loss during the smallpox epidemic of 1759 reduced Catawba population by two-thirds to three-fourths, “Catawba Population Dynamics,” 16.

³⁹⁵Speck, “Catawba Religious Beliefs,” 43-44.

³⁹⁶Matthews, “Catawba Texts,” 18.

³⁹⁷Speck, “Catawba Herbs and Curative Practices,” 38. For religious counsel among Cherokees, see Kelton, “Avoiding the Smallpox Spirits,” 55.

³⁹⁸Moore, *Reminiscences of York*, 9.

³⁹⁹Kelton, *Epidemics and Enslavement*, 18-19.

From October 1759 through January 1760, sickness and death among Catawbas was staggering, with “twenty-five a day...taken out of the river dead.”⁴⁰⁰

“Ye hiskākunire,” known as Catawba healers and religious leaders, gained curative experience from previous epidemics and continued to rely on herbal treatments and rituals as remedies. They gave advice on how to avoid diseases, particularly relocating to temporary settlements far away from the infected town.⁴⁰¹ Catawba healers and religious leaders encouraged healthy Catawbas “to run far away during the night that the sickness might not be able to catch them.”⁴⁰²

Catawbas used quarantine methods to ensure some people had a chance of recovery, a practice Hagler mentioned in a letter to the governor of South Carolina. Attempting to quarantine Catawbas, Hagler told Governor Lyttelton, “We are at present determined to keep our people to geather as much as possable to prevent the Disorder from spredding amongst ye white people,” whom the weakened Catawbas wanted to avoid antagonizing.⁴⁰³

Flight was a common response to the disease, but it had catastrophic consequences that risked the unchecked spread of the epidemic and left the sick alone with no one to care for them. The evidence does not indicate that Catawbas abandoned the sick, but some Catawbas did leave their towns because temporary removal of well people saved lives.⁴⁰⁴ Other Catawbas left their homes because they feared that the malevolent spirits remained in the towns. In November 1759, Samuel Wyly wrote to Governor William Lyttelton apologizing for the appearance of a

⁴⁰⁰The account failed to indicate the number of days this occur; see Moore, *Reminiscences of York*, 2.

⁴⁰¹Kelton, “Avoiding the Smallpox Spirits,” 55.

⁴⁰²G. Hubert Matthews and Red Thunder Cloud, “Catawba Texts,” *International Journal of American Linguistics*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (July, 1967), 19.

⁴⁰³“Catawbas, Headmen to William H. Lyttelton, October 1759,” Lyttelton Papers.

⁴⁰⁴Kelton, “Avoiding the Smallpox Spirits,” 48-49.

Catawba, Captain Ayres, at a British camp. A contrite Wyly wrote that he had done all in his power to prevent such an incident by instructing the Catawbas to avoid the white settlements. Ayres, however, claimed that he “fled for fear of ye Distemper.”⁴⁰⁵ White settlers feared that fleeing Catawbas carried the disease with them, even if appearing healthy, and spread the virus among the white settlements.⁴⁰⁶

Many families among the Catawbas were “down” with the illness. By January of 1760, a mere three months, the Catawba population dropped from 1,000 people to less than 300, a number no doubt exacerbated by slave raids, famine, other diseases, and warriors killed in battle—a demographic decline that hit Catawba women hard.⁴⁰⁷ As the givers of life, they understood the danger the loss posed to the survival of Catawba people, and they adapted in ways that previously would have been unthinkable.

The immense loss of life forced Catawba women to adapt in other ways. Prior to the 1759 smallpox epidemic, women had very little to do with burials. As givers of life, women separated themselves from anything related to death in an effort to maintain balance in their world. However, by January of 1760 and because of the vast numbers of deaths, women became more involved in burial ceremonies, particularly the task of digging graves called “yá suuk” (corpse house).⁴⁰⁸ Many Catawbas drowned themselves in the river, a rumor that encourages the persistent belief that Catawbas buried the dead in the river.⁴⁰⁹ However, in 1762, Catawba men

⁴⁰⁵“From Samuel Wyly, November 5, 1759,” Lyttelton Papers.

⁴⁰⁶Merrell, *The Indians’ New World*, 194.

⁴⁰⁷I agree with the population count in Theresa E. McReynolds, “Catawba Population Dynamics during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries,” *North Carolina Archaeology*, Vol. 53 (Oct., 2004), 43-44. Using ethnographic records, McReynolds based the estimated population on Catawba warrior count, which account for 30 – 40 percent of the population. Using this value, Catawba population in 1759 prior to the epidemic stood between 750 – 1,000 people. In 1760, the population declined to 150 - 300.

⁴⁰⁸Speck, “Catawba Religious Beliefs,” 42.

⁴⁰⁹The RLA located only eight graves at the Nassaw town site, see Fitts, Riggs, and Davis, “Summary Report of 2007,” 22. In June 2015, a residential development company located additional graves near the Nassaw Town site,

chased North Carolina land surveyors out of Catawba burial grounds located near the North and South Carolina boundary.⁴¹⁰

Whether Sally contracted the 1759 virus remains uncertain. One non-Catawba resident who lived near the Indians insisted her survival left her the only remaining Catawba of royal blood, meaning he traced her lineage to former leaders of the Nation.⁴¹¹ White inhabitants living near the Nation recollected that a 60-year old Sally “had no vestige remaining of the high beauty it was said she possessed in her youth”— suggesting that, as a young woman, Sally had no lingering pockmarks or scars left by the illness.⁴¹²

In early 1760, Catawba women moved with their surviving relatives to a temporary settlement further south along the Catawba River and within protective distance of the Irish-Quaker settlement at Pine Tree Hill (Camden), an area occupied by Wateree Indians in the distant past. Though wanting to return “to their Country, if they can get a Fort built for the Security of their Women and Children,” Catawba women and their relatives insisted on remaining near Pine Tree Hill because of continued Cherokee hostilities and the proximity to their agent Joseph Kershaw, who owned a store at the settlement.⁴¹³

see “Grave Discovery Means Some Changes for 1,000-Home Fort Mill Division,” *Fort Mill Times*, June 11, 2015, <http://www.heraldonline.com/news/local/community/fort-mill-times/article23769097.html> [accessed June 14, 2015]. The graves discovered in 2015 are likely not associated with Nassaw because the pit shapes suggest coffin graves, which were not common among Catawbas in the mid-1700s. I have often heard some of the older Catawbas share oral history about the 1759 epidemic and claim that many of those who died from the virus were buried in the river.

⁴¹⁰Boone to Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantations, Oct. 9, 1762, *British Public Records Office-South Carolina*, 29: 245-246; Marks, “Grave Discovery Means Some Changes for 1,000-Home Fort Mill Subdivision.”

⁴¹¹Thomas D. Spratt, *Thomas Dryden Spratt's Recollections of His Family*, (1875), York County Library, Rock Hill, South Carolina, 62.

⁴¹²Maurice A. Moore was born in 1795. If a ten-year-old Moore saw Sally, she would have been close to 60 years old; see Moore, *Reminiscences of York*, 10. Americans began inoculating themselves during the American Revolution, see Elizabeth A. Fenn, *Pox Americana: The Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1775-1782* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2001).

⁴¹³“Charles-Town, May 3,” *South Carolina Gazette*, May 3, 1760, 3 [quote]. Quakers from Ireland originally settled Camden in 1750, see Mills, *Statistics of South Carolina*, 586. Cherokees and Creeks established temporary

After regrouping near Camden, Catawbas began to take stock of what had happened to their people. Catawba women who survived the smallpox epidemic picked up the pieces of their lives, as their ancestors had done countless times, and build temporary homes near the fork of Big and Little Pine Tree Creek.⁴¹⁴ At their temporary settlement, the women prepared smaller fields or kitchen gardens and located new clay deposits from which they collected clay for pottery, while hoping to return to live on their land.⁴¹⁵ Although men assisted with the heavy labor of clearing land and digging clay, women continued to do a majority of the work at home while men hunted or engaged in war.⁴¹⁶ Most important, Catawba women began rebuilding their families and recombining their towns once again. They also continued to pay close attention to the security of their families.

As King Hagler had said in 1756, “the loss of one Woman may be the loss of many lives because one Woman may be the mother of many children.”⁴¹⁷ In other words, Catawba women were the heart of the Catawbas and vital to the Nation’s survival. The reorganization of Catawba society was a primary concern of Catawba people, but Catawba women worried about the safety of their temporary settlement. Their uneasiness must have pushed them to appeal again to Catawba leaders to pressure colonial officials for protection. In 1760, South Carolina approved monetary support and fortification for the Nation. In February, the South Carolina General

settlements away from their towns when sickness hit their people, see Kelton, “Avoiding the Smallpox Spirits,” 48-49.

⁴¹⁴“A map of North & South Carolina: accurately copied from the old maps of James Cook published in 1771, and of Henry Mouzon in 1775,” (1837), North Carolina Maps, Digital Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, Accessed October 9, 2013, <http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/ncmaps/id/191>. For more about Southeastern Indians establishing temporary settlements, see Kelton, “Avoiding the Smallpox Spirits,” 48-49.

⁴¹⁵Blumer, *Catawba Indian Pottery*, 92.

⁴¹⁶“Richard Richardson to Governor Lyttelton, February 26, 1760,” *DRIA, 1754-1765*, 501-502.

⁴¹⁷“Charles-Town, April 19,” *South Carolina Gazette*, April 19, 1760, 2; “Report by Peter Henley concerning his conference with King Hagler and the Catawba Nation – Henley, Peter, May 26, 1756 – May 28, 1756,” *CRNC*, 5: 581.

Assembly approved a reward of £25 for every Cherokee scalp brought to Charlestown, funds Catawbas needed to purchase clothing and food.⁴¹⁸ Catawba spiritual leaders may have encouraged raiding the Cherokees as their enemy. They possibly used the recent smallpox epidemic as motivation, blaming the Cherokees or the Iroquois for using witchcraft to spread the virus. Two months later, in April 1760, a party of Cherokees murdered a Catawba woman and child. While these factors served as motivation to go to war, the receipt of £250 sterling from South Carolina for the support of the Catawba women and children encouraged Catawba warriors to leave their towns and join the British conflict against the Cherokee. An additional incentive came a few months later when the South Carolina Assembly added £1700 to this amount for the construction of a fort near Pine Tree Hill.⁴¹⁹ The financial support provided Catawba women with enough currency to purchase food, clothing, and other necessary items, while the construction of a fort promised them a place of safe refuge when their fathers, husbands, and brothers went to war. Catawba women, children, and elders, vigilant of enemy attack, stayed near Pine Tree Hill and waited for South Carolina to begin construction of the fort—a fortification later built, but never staffed, near Twelve Mile Creek in Lancaster County, South Carolina.⁴²⁰

“Perish for Want”

In the 1750s and 1760s, Catawbas confronted environmental and settler problems, issues that exacerbated the crises occurring in Catawba territory. Catawba women watched as wave after wave of white settlers took rich land on which they grew crops, gathered food provisions,

⁴¹⁸“Charles-Town, February 23,” *South Carolina Gazette*, February 23, 1760, 2. For an account of Catawba warriors receiving a reward for Cherokee scalps, see “Charles-Town, August 9,” *South Carolina Gazette*, August 9, 1760, 3; “Charles-Town, Oct 30,” *South Carolina Gazette*, October 30, 1760, 3.

⁴¹⁹*South Carolina Public Records, B.P.R.O.*, XXVIII, 330-331 [sterling]; *JCHA*, XXXIII, Part 1, 155 [assembly] cited in Douglas Summers Brown, *The Catawba Indians*, 212.

⁴²⁰Brown, *The Catawba Indians*, 242.

and built homes. Scottish, Scots-Irish, and German families migrated into Catawba territory, building their homes at the Catawba towns' very doorstep.⁴²¹ As the women watched the European population grow in Catawba territory, they grew anxious about the loss of land and natural resources to.⁴²² Catawba women found it harder to gather food and collect firewood because of white settlement on Catawba land. Catawba men, who previously had expansive territory in which to hunt, confronted settler hostility when attempting to hunt in territory they considered their own.

The land situation was dire because their families were starving, and, consequently, Catawba-settler violence rose. Catawba warriors and hunters began “going into the Settlements, robbing and stealing where ever they get an Oppertunity.”⁴²³ Hearing of the charges, Hagler informed South Carolina Governor James Glen that he could not control the actions of frustrated young warriors who attacked local farms. Hagler stressed that Catawba-settler tensions emerged because of hunger. He reminded Glen that the British settlements surrounded their towns, “their being settled so near us our Horses are stole from us, and when any of our People dye or are killed by their Enemy, there is Nothing left to pay their Debts.”⁴²⁴

Before the incursion of European settlers in the 1750s and 1760s, Sally learned how to cultivate large fields that provided enough food for Catawba families. Catawba women began planting seeds of corn, beans, and squash in April. Women and children kept watch over and weeded the fields until late summer. Sally, age eight in 1754, participated in the chore of

⁴²¹“Letter from Matthew Rowan to the Board of Trade of Great Britain,” June 30, 1754, *CRNC*, 5: 123-124; “Report by Peter Henley Concerning His Conference with King Hagler and the Catawba Nation,” May 26, 1756 – May 28, 1756, *CRNC*, 5: 579-584. Catawba complaints about encroachment continued in the 1760s, see *South Carolina Gazette*, May 22, 1762 and December 11, 1762.

⁴²²Carl Bridenbaugh, *Myths and Realities: Societies of the Colonial South* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1981), 127-130.

⁴²³“Letter from Robert Stiell to James Glen, July 23, 1753,” *DRIA, 1750-1754*, 371, 454.

⁴²⁴“Catawba King and others to Governor Glen, November 21, 1752,” *DRIA, 1750-1754*, 361.

watching over the fields from the top of a platform built specifically for the task. In August and September, she watched as women harvested the corn along with other crops. Sally helped her mother as she placed ears of corn out to dry in the sun on mats made of river cane. Then, the women stored the grain in corncribs to use during the winter months.

The increasing population of settlers on Catawba land reduced the size of Catawba fields, while droughts and floods destroyed several seasons of crops. Catawba men began to take food and other items from settler homes, considering the pilfered goods an equal exchange for the use of their land. Because of the loss of once plentiful natural resources, Catawbans traveled further away from the security of their towns in search of food. By January 1759, Hagler informed South Carolina Governor William Lyttelton that “the dry Weather had intirely destroyed our Crop” and he feared “our Wives and Children will perish for Want.”⁴²⁵

The Nation hoped for aid from the colonial government. In 1755, a severe drought hit the entire Piedmont region. It devastated crops and resulted in a serious shortage of food in the colony.⁴²⁶ In November, Governor James Glen petitioned the Assembly for funds to purchase corn for the Catawbans. “A bad Crop was not so great a Calamity to them in former Times,” Glen wrote, “For then they had a wide Range to hunt in; and Venison, Bear and Buffalo, in some sort, supplied the want of Grain, and other Provisions.” Circumstances for Catawbans were grim. The “thickness” of white settlements on Catawba land drove away the game and “deprives them [Catawbans] of the means of subsisting on such Emergencies.”⁴²⁷ Meanwhile, Governor Arthur Dobbs of North Carolina wrote that the Catawbans, “Are in great want of corn at this time and

⁴²⁵Merrell, *The Indians' New World*, 137 [security]; “King Heiglar to Governor Lyttleton, Pine-tree Hill, January 3, 1759,” *DRIA, 1754-1765*, 482 [quote].

⁴²⁶Moore, *A World of Toil and Strife*, 50.

⁴²⁷Lipscomb, ed., *The Journal of the Commons House of Assembly, November 20, 1755-July 6, 1757*, 7; *DRIA, 1754-1765*, 89, 92.

subsist by begging from the neighbouring Planters and thereby obliged to Quit their families and oppress the Planters who are themselves scarce of Corn yet Dare not Deny them.”⁴²⁸ South and North Carolina acknowledged the grim situation in which Catawbas found themselves. Each colony sent supplies of corn to the Catawbas. Compassion, however, did not motivate these colonies to send assistance. Instead, the governors recognized the need to maintain friendly relations with the Nation as the war in the Ohio Valley escalated.

During this time of shortage and illness, apprehensions about the survival of Catawba people must have consumed the thoughts of Catawba women. One can imagine that the women held their own council and discussed their anxiety and fear of the ever-encroaching British settlers, hostilities, and lack of food. After discussing these problems, the women would have taken their concerns back to the headmen of their respective towns. No record of a woman’s council or their discussions with leaders remains, but perhaps Catawba women invoked motherhood in their appeals for safety and protection of Catawba people. Responding to their people’s apprehension, Catawba leaders communicated the critical situation to Glen’s successor, South Carolina Governor William Henry Lyttelton. In 1757, Hagler complained that the “people of North Carolina who call themselves your brothers have parceled out our Lands Even to our very towns,” territory upon which Catawba women and men acquired food for sustenance.⁴²⁹

Settler encroachment and famine led to severe malnutrition, which, in conjunction with disease, jeopardized the very fabric of Catawba life. Sally and other Catawbas struggled to survive in a world in which hunters were unable to kill enough game to provide for their people and women tried to make ends meet with the scarce amount of food they gathered. In 1755,

⁴²⁸“Minutes of the North Carolina Governor's Council,” March 12, 1756 – March 19, 1756, *CRNC*, 5: 655 [quote]; *SCJCHA, 1755-1757*, 395.

⁴²⁹“Catawbas, Headmen to William H. Lyttelton, June 16, 1757,” Lyttelton Papers.

Hagler complained “All the rest [of the men] and most of their Women and Children, were forced to go to a great distance to Hunt for Food the White People having taken their Lands from them.”⁴³⁰ Despite Hagler’s complaints to colonial leaders, settlers continued to come. White settlement and the lack of food only worsened the chaotic world that Catawba women confronted.

Conclusion

Catawba women reshaped their lives during the crises of the 1750s and 1760s. Although the violence of the period worked to strengthen Catawba coalescence, epidemics and violence resulted in the loss of elders, and with them, much of their oral tradition—stories told differently by the surviving Catawbas. Those who lived through the epidemics and wars of the period moved on with their lives while pulling from memory pieces of Catawba customs and reconstructing a Catawba identity. Safeguarding Catawba practices, women continued to occupy a central role, socially and economic, through their matrilineal kinship network and their connection to the land. As the white settler population increased during this time, the ways that women responded to the changes proved vital to the survival of Catawbas as a distinct people.

War disrupted lives of Catawba women. When Catawba men went to war, their absence diverted essential labor away from the home environment, specifically in providing meat from hunting to supplement their diet. Catawba women were responsible for the crops and gathering other food, but as enemy raids increased in Catawba territory, the women feared leaving the security of their towns for the fields or when collecting firewood and water. The reduction of economic production caused an increase in dependency upon their colonial allies for trade goods, food, and firearms.

⁴³⁰*South Carolina Council Journal*, November 6, 1755; *Records of the States of the United States of America, South Carolina*, E.1p, 7/2, 439-440, cited in Merrell, *The Indians’ New World*, 137.

CHAPTER 5: TRADING POTS, 1760-1820

Early one morning in late April 1800, Sally New River and several of her female relatives gathered near *ĩpi?* (the fire) in the common area of New Town. *Nũti* (the sun) had not risen high enough to warm the air or knock the dew off the leaves, but the Catawba women expected a *yawikehe?* (warm day)—a perfect day to *ĩtu dáhe?* (dig clay). The women began preparing *wasáp* (baskets) full of food for their noon meal. The baskets, once emptied of food, were ideal for transporting clay back to their homes. As the group of women walked through the town, they called out to several young men to come along and help dig clay. The small group of Catawbas walked down a sloping hill toward the Catawba River to an *iintu?yasu* (clay hole), where they dug clay for the first time since the previous fall. The first part of the day, they dug *iintú waamisu* (a butter-colored pipe clay) that they later stored in their baskets. After *duwe yánduh* (they have eaten) lunch, they moved to another area near the river, where they dug a smaller amount of gritty, bluish-colored “pan” clay and stored in a separate basket. When the group completed their work, they *nunenane?we* (covered up) the hole and returned to the town, where the women began processing and mixing the clays. The women added a small quantity of pan clay to the pipe clay to use when *káčehe?* (to make) large *ituskre* (pots). Over the next few days, Sally and other Catawba women of New Town stayed busy making pots, wares they *tu^hs igdáre* (traded, literally “go trading pots”) for food, cloth, and cash.⁴³¹

We have no direct evidence of any particular clay-digging or pottery-making days, because the normal days of Catawba women’s lives did not make it into the documentary

⁴³¹For Catawba oral history of making pottery, see “How the Catawba Make Pots and Pipes,” in Speck, *Catawba Texts*, 70-72.

records; however, we know there were days like these. Late eighteenth-century Catawba women made a lot of pottery, and they made it as a collective group, while passing skills and knowledge to younger Catawba women. Historic Catawba Indian sites in the Piedmont region of South Carolina reveal the continuity of potting practices that date back to the fourteenth century. The Research Laboratories of Archaeology at the University of North Carolina spent the last 30 years conducting archaeological fieldwork on several protohistoric and historic Catawba Indian sites, including the site where Sally New River lived at the turn of the nineteenth century. At these sites, Catawba women continued using diverse designs and patterns on their pots. In fact, archaeologists have managed to piece together sherds of a milk pan found at the site of Sally's home, a pot she may have used for storage or when cooking and eating meals. Despite the availability of pottery made by other Indians and Europeans, Catawba women continued using Catawba-made pots in household activities, and many non-Catawbas preferred these pots as well.⁴³² They spent a large part of their days from April to October making large pots and bowls (Figure 5). Large pots with rounded bases and narrow necks held foods such as acorns, stews, and pigeon oil. These pots nestled in a hot bed of coals and sat upright in a burrow of rocks. Beyond cooking implements, Catawba-speaking people also used large pots with deerskin tied around the top rim to make drums, a musical instrument used during feasts and ceremonies.⁴³³

⁴³²Fitts, Riggs, and Davis, "Summary Report of 2007," 21; Fitts, "Mapping Catawba Coalescence," 26.

⁴³³Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 28, 36-39, 170.

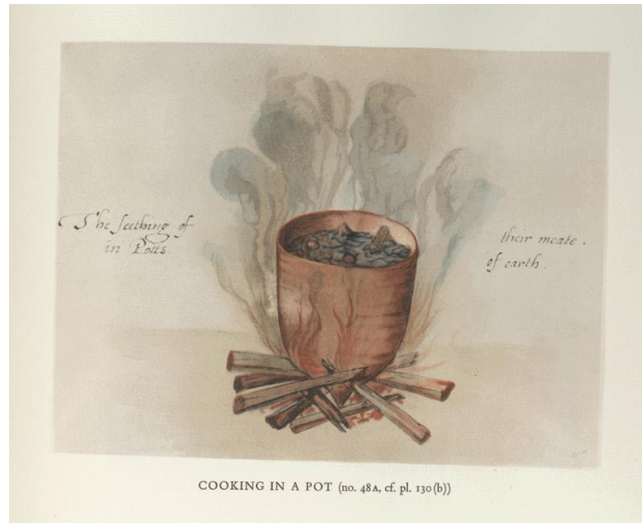


Figure 5: Catawba women’s use of pots is reminiscent of John White’s mid-sixteenth century watercolor drawing entitled “Cooking in a Pot,” in which coastal Virginia Indians simmered “their meate in Potts of earth.” Courtesy of Virtual Jamestown, *A Drawing by John White Plate 43*, [original at the British Museum].

By blending historical accounts and archaeological evidence, as Catawba women mixed their clay, a more inclusive story of Sally and other Catawba women’s lives provides us with a more informed narrative of Catawba history that moves beyond accounts of Catawba men as leaders, warriors, and diplomats. Using the two types of sources facilitates scholars’ understanding of the continuity of Catawba potting traditions, even as Catawba women adapted to new economies of the Carolina backcountry and confronted predictions of cultural collapse.⁴³⁴ Their role as potters not only provided income but also kept Catawbans visible as a distinct people and reinforced Catawba life ways through kinship, connection to a homeland, and shared practices.

Making of Pots

Making pots took great patience and skill. A small group of Catawba women and men belonging to the same lineage dug the clay together at a clay hole that their family and ancestors had visited for many years. Catawba men dug the clay, the most laborious part of the process, as

⁴³⁴For cultural collapse in the 1800s, see Drayton, *A View of South-Carolina*, 94; Charles Fraser, *Reminiscences of Charleston, Lately Published in the Charleston Courier, and Now Revised and Enlarged by the Author* (Charleston: John Russell, Harper & Calvo Printers, 1854), 16-17.

an elder Catawba woman looked on and watched for any impurities in the clay, such as a profusion of rock, sand, or roots. When making smaller items, such as pipes or effigies, women required a precise type of clay—a wax-like, butter-colored material called pipe clay—while they used a mixture of blue pan clay and pipe clay to make larger pieces.⁴³⁵

Other Catawba women sometimes joined in clay-digging excursions, trips that turned into a community event full of laughter, jokes, singing, and gossip.⁴³⁶ Catawbas passed down the location of clay holes from one generation to the next, a custom Catawbas still practice today. Digging clay was never a quick job because the men had to dig at least 5-6 feet, sometimes deeper, to find clay clear of large particles of sand and grit—deposits that Catawba women call “trash.” Once the women secured an adequate amount of clay in a sack or basket, the men backfilled the hole to prevent erosion and protect the clay hole.⁴³⁷ When they returned to the town with their treasure, they allowed the clumps of clay to air dry, and then pounded them with a large wood mallet made from the remains of a cut tree. On occasion, a husband or brother might help with this step, pulverizing clumps of clay into a powdery substance that made it easier to remove rocks, roots, and other gritty objects.

Eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Catawba women made pottery cooperatively. Most of the preparation work and manufacture of pots took place in a common area of the town. Women gathered and talked about their lives and families while preparing clay and making pots. Sally’s group included any older relatives and adult-age nieces of her lineage. In this setting, women helped one another with their pottery skills. They shared ideas about how to improve their pottery—what did or did not work.

⁴³⁵Speck, *Catawba Texts*, 71-72.

⁴³⁶Speck, *Catawba Texts*, 71-72.

⁴³⁷Many Catawba elders call freshly dug clay “butter” or “gold” because of its buttery gold tone.

Working cooperatively also facilitated in teaching the younger generation to be potters. Children rarely made pottery because Catawba women considered clay a valuable resource that they should conserve. Young female children, however, watched as their mothers, aunts, and grandmothers made various types and sizes of pots. Young girls watched as their female relatives' fingers gently pinched and formed the clay into beautifully symmetrical pots. They memorized the long-established steps of building each piece until they learned to mold the clay.⁴³⁸

When Catawba girls reached their teenage years, they apprenticed with an older, skilled woman of their lineage. They worked in the clay alongside the experienced potter and practiced forming different types of pots, bowls, and cups. The apprentice practice continues today. In fact, I learned to make a number of pots from my grandmother. Once the veteran teacher approved of the girl's final product, they burned the pots. However, if the young girl's pot failed to meet her teacher's requirements, she had to start the entire process over. The Catawba girl's apprenticeship was important to her place in Catawba society. Instruction in making pottery served as a rite of passage from childhood to early womanhood. When the girl married, she made pottery for use in her household and as a commodity to support her family. The process of working collectively and apprenticing ensured that younger Catawbas could harvest knowledge and skills about pottery making from experienced female relatives.

Before young girls made pots, however, they learned to clean the clay—a tedious, time-consuming step. Women removed any remaining trash by hand or with a tightly woven reed

⁴³⁸My grandmother, Evelyn George, when asked how long she had been making pottery, often explained that her mother never allowed her to work in clay as a young child. She learned by watching her mother and grandmother and began making pots in her late teens, shortly before she married.

sieve, a step that cleaned the clay and made it ready for use.⁴³⁹ After clearing the clay of extraneous matter, Catawba women used their hands to mix the clay with water, forming a thick paste. The ratio of clay and water depended on the standards of the potter and the degree of pliability she desired. Catawba women then divided the wet clay into smaller balls used in the manufacture of jars, bowls, or cups. They wrapped and stored any unused wet clay in a bundle of cloth obtained through trade.⁴⁴⁰

Catawba women made various shapes of pottery but they referred to each as ituskre (pots). The Catawba language does not have an equivalent for the English words “jar” and “cup.” Instead, Catawbas called cups itus teruwa? or little pot, while they called larger, round bowls itus petę, which means flat pot as opposed to the tall jar-like pots women made. “Pot” or “pottery” remains the preferred term among today’s Catawbas. I learned this fact quickly a few years ago when talking to a group of older Catawba women about pottery. After using the term “vessel” in the conversation, one of the women corrected my error asserting that Catawbas’ made “pots,” not “vessels” or “ceramics.” For Catawbas, the terms pot and pottery aids in maintaining a distinctiveness of their pottery through language that reinforces Catawba identity.

Building pots took several hours to days of Catawba women’s time, depending on her skill and the type of pot she made. Sally and other women completed all of the pot-shaping steps by hand, a pottery-making method known as “handthrown.” They shaped and sized their pots based on domestic preference and need. Toward the latter half of the eighteenth century, Catawba women began making new styles of pots according to market demands in South

⁴³⁹Catawba women later began using wire mesh screen to separate the trash from the clay. For a photograph of a Catawba family digging clay, see Mark R. Harrington, Mark R. Harrington Photograph Collection, 1899-1947, “Catawba,” Smithsonian Institution National Museum of the American Indian Archives, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁴⁰Vladimir J. Fewkes, “Catawba Pottery-Making, with Notes on Pamunkey Pottery-Making, Cherokee Pottery-Making, and Coiling,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. 88, No. 2 (Jul. 7, 1944), 73-75.

Carolina. Before this shift occurred, Sally and other women used the bottom half of a dried gourd shell to aid in forming the bottom of bowls and jars. After this step, Catawba women removed the supple clay base from the gourd shell. To attain symmetry, a Catawba woman slapped the exterior of the partially built base while rotating the upturned section on one hand. When satisfied with the pot's proportions, she began increasing the height of the base by adding coils of clay to the top edge. The number of coils added depended on the desired height of the pot. The potter worked the coils together using a mussel shell to blend and smooth each roll into its neighbor in order to eliminate any air pockets in the clay. With the shell, she pushed outward and upward to make a seamless bond and build the walls of the pot until she formed the rim or lip of the jar.⁴⁴¹

Several more steps remained before women finished their pots. Catawba women smoothed out finger impressions by washing the pot with a wet corncob or a damp piece of linen. They set their pots aside to dry slightly after *ʔyamsu intu napapat̃are* (she is washing clay), at least until the clay lost its pliability. Women spent several hours scraping the damp pots with a piece of split cane or a knife, a method that removed excess clay, smoothed out any unintended dents left by fingers, and leveled the rim.

After scraping the pots, Catawba women who lived at the 1750s Nassaw and Weyapee towns decorated the exterior of pots with plain burnishing (rubbing), multiline incising, cord-mark, cob-marked, or circular-stamp embellishments. When cord-marking pots, Sally and other women pushed a small wooden paddle wrapped with corded rope onto the exterior surface of

⁴⁴¹Catawba women have passed these techniques down to the next generation for hundreds of years. Ethnographic observations of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries reflects practices that were common in the eighteenth- and early-nineteenth centuries. Pottery sherds found at earlier Catawba sites (ca. 1760-1820) are remarkably similar to those found on much later sites on the reservation. And, similar pot forms are represented, except for those made in the twentieth century for the arts and craft market, see Fewkes, "Catawba Pottery-Making," 77-81; M. R. Harrington, "Catawba Potters and Their Work," *American Anthropologist*, New Series, Vol. 10, No. 3 (Jul. – Sept., 1908), 399-407. I recently learned to make a pot using the coil method from an aunt who followed the steps described.

pots. When embellishing pots with corncobs, they pressed a clean, dried corncob onto the surface. Stamped designs took a little more time because women had to score a small wooden paddle with precise markings, and then press the paddle onto the exterior surface. Incising also took time and patience because they had to engrave lines, circles, and other designs symmetrically on the pot (Figures 6 and 7). They dedicated just as much attention to the pots' rim, which they folded and notched with rich and accurate detail using a knife or small reed.⁴⁴²



Figure 6: Examples of pottery rim strips from Nassaw and Weyapee sites: (a and f) plain jars; (b) complicated stamped jar; (c) cordmarked jar; and (d) simple stamped jar. Photo courtesy of the Research Laboratories of Archaeology, UNC.



Figure 7: Examples of incised sherds from bowls recovered from the Nassaw and Weyapee sites. Photo courtesy of the Research Laboratories of Archaeology, UNC.

⁴⁴² Fitts, Riggs, and Davis, "Summary Report of 2007," 21-23; Riggs, "Temporal Trends," 35.

The designs or motifs Nassaw and Weyapee women used on their pots probably corresponded with specific lineages living within these towns. In the 1750s, Catawbas built these two towns right next to each other. Women of a certain lineage who lived in the northern section of the twin towns used stamped and incised embellishments on their pots, while women of another lineage who lived to the south cord-marked the exterior surface of their pots. Catawba women living at the center of the towns burnished their pots but also used incising, stamped, and cord-marked treatments.⁴⁴³ The different styles of exterior surface treatments in the two towns are a significant indicator of Catawba coalescence. Although the evidence does not tell us which Piedmont Indian groups merged with the Indians at Nassaw Town, the women who once belonged to these other groups brought their pottery-making skills and knowledge with them.

Catawba women made plain pots by rubbing the interior and exterior surfaces of their wares with a smooth stone collected from the river. When they finished scraping a pot, they rubbed the damp pot with a polishing stone that fit comfortably in their hands. Some Catawba women received heirloom “rubbing stones” that had been passed down from mother to daughter, as my grandmother did with my mother. Rubbing pots took time. Women held the small pots in their hands while rubbing the exterior of the damp pot to bring about a glossy glaze on the surface. Pots with attachments like handles often took more time and patience to rub because the women had to polish the corners where the attachments joined the pot. When unable to reach the crevices with the rubbing stone, women used small deer antlers to polish the bends to a glossy finish.⁴⁴⁴

⁴⁴³Fitts, Riggs, and Davis, “Summary Report of 2007,” 21-23; Riggs, “Temporal Trends,” 35.

⁴⁴⁴Fewkes, “Catawba Pottery-Making,” 86-88.

The making of the pot was nearly complete, but the final steps proved most crucial. After building, washing, scraping, and rubbing, Catawba women left their finished products in the sun to dry. The drying process went quickly on warm, sunny, or windy days, while the humidity from rainy, overcast days resulted in a much slower drying time, extending the process by one to two days. Today, Catawba women refer to dry pots as “green” because of the greenish tone of the pot but also as an indication that it was an unfinished product. The drying period revealed whether the potter added handles, pipe stems, or legs correctly. If a Catawba woman connected the handle, legs, or pipe stem imperfectly to the main pot, a fine hairline crack revealed itself while drying. If that happened, the potter “melted” the pot down with water and remade the pot from scratch.

Once the pots dried, the women built a fire outdoors and allowed their pots to heat slowly—a process Catawbas call *himuhę?* or burning pots. The burning process took five to eight hours. However, they never burned pots during or immediately after a rain, nor did they burn pots during strong winds or in cold weather. Such weather brought extreme risk of cracking or breaking.⁴⁴⁵ During Sally’s time, women burned their pots outside of their houses in fire pits. They fueled the fire with oak or dried corncobs, while placing their pots around, not in, the fire, turning them occasionally to heat. As the fire died down to a nice bed of red-hot coals, the women pushed their pots gently into the coal bed to finish cooking. Women gradually placed their pots upside down in the hot ashes of the dwindling fire, smudging the interior. The black smudge or layer of carbon served to waterproof pots and obscure imperfections. Women used available natural resources such as dried corncobs, large pieces of tree bark, or wood chips to

⁴⁴⁵Catawbas continue to avoid specific weather conditions when burning pots, even today. In addition, they refuse to burn on Sundays because they believe doing so will cause their pots to break. When Catawbas started practicing this taboo is unclear, but perhaps they adopted it sometime after the Mormon missionaries arrived in their towns in 1883.

smother the pots. Smoke from the burning corncobs or wood facilitated in adding the black tones to the pots. They only used oak or bits of cedar, never pine because sap from burning pinewood seeped on and damaged their wares. Adding tree bark or wood chips turned the pots a variety of unpredictable earthy colors, including gray, buff, red, or black. After covering the pots with corncobs or wood, the women left their pottery in the fading fire for three to five hours or until cool enough to handle.⁴⁴⁶

Catawba women removed their pots from the cooled ashes of the fire uncertain of the color the pots had taken. Sally and other women looked forward to this phase of pottery making, excited to see how their pots had turned out. The actual tone or tones pottery took on during the burning stage always heightened their anticipation. After burning, pottery might come out completely black or mottled colors of black, gray, buff, or red—potters never knew until they removed their wares from the ashes. When the pots cooled enough to handle, they inspected each for hairline cracks, flaws that made the pots more likely to break later and impracticable for cooking or holding water. After the inspection, they washed the pots once more to remove any ash or soot remains, and thus, made the pottery ready for use in cooking. After 1762, Sally and other women increased their pottery manufacture and traveled by foot throughout South Carolina bartering their pots.

Catawba Women Go Trading Pots

In the late 1750s and early 1760s, as the population in the region grew, the economic prosperity of the area expanded so quickly that many settlers in the backcountry lived “comfortably in respect to every article necessary for the support of Life & many who were the

⁴⁴⁶Fitts, Riggs, and Davis, “Summary Report of 2007,” 17; Fewkes, “Catawba Pottery-Making,” 80-81, 90-93; Riggs, “Temporal Trends,” 35 [20 cob-filled pits at Nassaw and Weyapee].

other day very indigent are growing Rich.”⁴⁴⁷ Population growth and economic development were especially evident at the backcountry Irish Quaker settlement of Pine Tree Hill, known today as Camden, near which Catawbas moved after the 1759 smallpox epidemic.⁴⁴⁸

At Camden, where a busy inland trading center emerged, Catawba women increased their participation in the growing market economy. By 1768, the Irish Quaker settlement had a gristmill, a tannery, a Quaker meetinghouse, a bakery, a brewery and distillery, a brickyard, two mercantile stores, an Anglican church, and several houses.⁴⁴⁹ Camden proved significant to Catawba women’s participation in the trade system, particularly the stores, which served as a link to global markets. Although Catawbas moved their towns again further north near Lancaster by 1763, Catawba women traveled to Camden where they traded Catawba-made items (moccasins, baskets, mats, and pottery) for a variety of goods, including corn, salt, sugar, linen, broadcloth, thread, buttons, thimbles, kettles, glassware, glass beads, flints, and various iron tools.⁴⁵⁰ The abundant quantity of the seven latter commercially manufactured items recovered from the late eighteenth-century Catawba towns reveal the involvement of Catawba women, and Catawbas generally, in the market economy at Camden.⁴⁵¹ In addition, country stores established along roadways to Charlestown fostered commercial activity in the backcountry but also introduced Catawba potters to potential customers.⁴⁵²

⁴⁴⁷Henry Laurens, *The Papers of Henry Laurens, Volume Seven: Aug. 1, 1769-Oct. 9, 1771*, ed. George C. Rogers, Jr., David R. Chesnut, and Peggy J. Clark (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press for the South Carolina Historical Society, 1979), 179.

⁴⁴⁸“Charles-Town, May 3,” *South Carolina Gazette*, May 3, 1760, 3.

⁴⁴⁹Thomas J. Kirkland and Robert M. Kennedy, *Historic Camden* (Columbia: The State Company, 1905), 1: 10-12, 73-81; Edgar, *South Carolina: A History*, 163.

⁴⁵⁰Klein, *Unification of a Slave State*, 30-31 [Kershaw’s store].

⁴⁵¹R. P. Stephen Davis, Jr., ed., *North Carolina Archaeology*, Vol. 53 (Oct., 2004), 1-121.

⁴⁵²Edgar, *South Carolina: A History*, 163 [country stores]; Kenneth E. Lewis, *Camden: Historical Archaeology in the South Carolina Backcountry* (Belmont: Thomson Wadsworth, 2006), 19-24.

Catawba commerce benefited from backcountry settlers' difficulties in acquiring European-made goods. Although by the 1760s, colonists had turned old Indian paths into broader roadways that stretched to South Carolina's coast, the trip from Charlestown to Camden still took traders and merchants, traveling with a wagon full of goods, over two weeks because of thick forests and broad rivers to cross.⁴⁵³ Many of the dry roads were "comfortable for driving, riding, and walking," but wet and muddy roads made travel grueling.⁴⁵⁴ In addition to the unpleasant road conditions, the South Carolina Commons House in 1769 protested British revenue policies by signing non-importation and non-consumption agreements and forced their fellow colonists to boycott British goods.⁴⁵⁵ The boycotts closed off the trade that bad roads had already made difficult, all of which worked to the economic benefit of Catawba women who recognized the increasing demand for cooking and storage ware.

As Sally and other Catawba women potters stepped into the new market economy, they modified their pots to mirror the English-ware and began selling their wares at affordable prices, an undertaking that many disgruntled, anti-British Carolinians may have viewed as patriotic simply because Catawba pottery was not British. When considering the stylistic shift of Catawba pottery, what other external circumstances existed in the backcountry that influenced Catawba women's decision to alter their pottery? At the encouragement of Henry Laurens in 1761, North Carolina Moravians, well known for their earthenware, traveled from their Bethabara settlement (near present-day Winston-Salem) to Charlestown to trade.⁴⁵⁶ Moravian

⁴⁵³The General Assembly began passing acts for road improvements in the backcountry as early as 1753, see Thomas Cooper, ed., *The Statutes at Large of South Carolina* (Columbia: A.S. Johnston, 1838), 4: 4.

⁴⁵⁴Quote in Edgar, *South Carolina: A History*, 164.

⁴⁵⁵Edgar, *South Carolina: A History*, 208-218.

⁴⁵⁶Adelaide L. Fries, ed., *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton Printing Co., 1922), 1: 234-235.

traders took the Great Trading Path south toward Camden where the trail veered southeast and became the Camden-Charleston Path. By this time, colonists within 60 miles of the Moravian towns purchased Moravian-made pots quicker than the potters manufactured them. Three years later, in 1765, Moravians took a wagon “loaded with about 600 lbs. pottery” to Kershaw’s store in Camden.⁴⁵⁷ The road from the Moravian settlements to Camden broke off into two branches at Charlottesville, North Carolina and the western branch was located a mile east of the Catawba towns, close enough that Catawbans may have witnessed Moravians traveling with their goods toward Kershaw’s store.⁴⁵⁸ Catawba women understood the economic potential of locally-made wares and decided to alter their potting styles.

In addition to the Moravian potters, Catawba women probably knew other potters who lived nearby. John Bartlam, an English creamware potter, relocated his potting industry to Camden by October 1772.⁴⁵⁹ Catawba women, who traveled the Camden-Charleston path with their families and attended Camden trade fairs, probably met Bartlam and exchanged ideas about making pottery.

⁴⁵⁷Fries, ed., *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina*, 1: 237, 250-251[60 miles], 307 [600 lbs.].

⁴⁵⁸ Thomas Jefferys, “An Accurate Map of North and South Carolina,” 1776, *David Rumsey Map Collection*, <http://www.davidrumsey.com/maps4579.html> [accessed February 20, 2016].

⁴⁵⁹ Bradford L. Rauschenberg, “John Bartlam, Who Established ‘new Pottworks in South Carolina’ and Became the First Successful Creamware Potter in America,” *Journal of Early Southern Decorative Arts*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (November, 1991), 17.

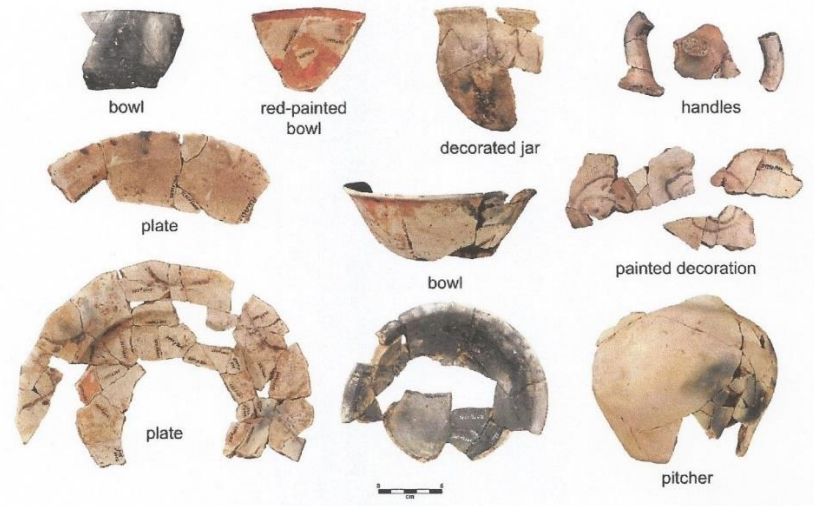


Figure 8: Catawba pottery sherds from the Old Town site. Courtesy of the Research Laboratories of Archaeology, UNC.



Figure 9: Variety of Catawba pottery forms at Catawba town of New Town (ca. 1790 – 1820s). Courtesy of the Research Laboratories of Archaeology, UNC.



Figure 10: Catawba-made bowl recovered from Sally New River's home site at New Town.
Photo courtesy of the Research Laboratories of Archaeology, UNC.

Sally and other Catawba women experimented with new pot forms, clay recipes, décor and burning methods, and may have used lead glaze temporarily to enhance the interior surface (Figures 8, 9, and 10). Prior to 1760, Catawba women used various exterior surface treatments on their pots that included cord marking, stamping, and incising. They tempered their pots with sand or crushed quartz to prevent cracking and shrinking. In 1762, at the Catawba towns in Lancaster and York counties (Old Town, Ayers Town, and New Town), women dug clay from a different clay hole, one unused prior to this time. The clay used by women at these towns had a much different organic composition than that used before 1760. At the Catawba towns, however, women spent less time making designs and patterns on their pots. They continued using the pinch method for smaller wares and the coil method for larger pots.⁴⁶⁰ They still practiced the same burn process, still smudged their pots, and continued using specific wood when burning pots. After 1760, however, Catawba women altered their pot forms and added red, orange, and silvery-blue sealing wax to the rims of the pots. A few rimsherds were decorated with faceted edging to mirror the shell-edge of English ceramics, as well as those made by Moravian potters.⁴⁶¹

⁴⁶⁰Riggs, "Temporal Trends," 31-34.

⁴⁶¹Davis and Riggs, "Introduction to the Catawba Project," 11-13 [types and paint]; Mark R. Plane, "Catawba Ethnicity: Identity and Adaptation on the English Colonial Landscape," *North Carolina Archaeology*, Vol. 53 (Oct.,

Rather than the tall, globular-shaped and conical-shaped pots with small bases made for cooking or storing large quantities of food, Catawba women began making pitchers similar to English-made creamware and pearlware pitchers. They made footed beaker pots (cooking kettles), pans, cups (with and without handles), plates, and cooking jars. Women made the pans, referred to as milk pans by English customers, 5 ½ to 11 ½ inches in diameter and about 5 inches in height. They made both pans and bowls with thin, gently sloping walls. They made plates with slightly rounded walls, brims, and flat bases, much like creamware and pearlware plates.⁴⁶² One version of a Catawba-made cup mirrored John Bartlam’s porcelain teabowl with a well-defined base.⁴⁶³

In addition to shifting pottery forms to mirror European stoneware, Catawba women experimented with new ways to make pipes. Before 1760, Catawba people used hand-formed stone and clay pipes. After the American Revolution, however, some Catawba women replicated the practice of making pipe molds as a quicker method. The “squeeze mold” technique may have originated with the Moravians, who made pipe molds of pewter or brass, or Catawba women observed Europeans using molds during their trips to Charleston. The women created the molds from a pipe slug, a formed pipe without a smoke chamber or bowl. Women used pliable damp clay to form a symmetrical square two-sided clay cast around the slug. Squeezing the sides firmly around the slug with their hands left a clear impression of the pipe. They

2004), 64 [milk pan]; Brett H. Riggs, R. P. Stephen Davis, Jr., and Mark R. Plane, “Catawba Pottery in the Post-Revolutionary Era: A View from the Source,” *North Carolina Archaeology*, Vol. 55 (2006), 68-77. For Moravian pottery forms, see Stanley South, “The Ceramic Forms of the Potter Gottfried Aust at Bethabara, North Carolina, 1755 to 1771,” *Scholar Commons*, (May, 1967), South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina, 6-52, http://scholarcommons.sc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1177&context=sciaa_staffpub [accessed Feb. 19, 2016].

⁴⁶²Riggs, Davis, and Plane, “Catawba Pottery in the Post-Revolutionary Era,” 28-77.

⁴⁶³Stanley South, “John Barthlam’s Porcelain at Cain Hoy, 1765-1770,” Chipstone Foundation, Milwaukee, WI, <http://www.chipstone.org/images.php/392/Ceramics-in-America-2007/John-Barthlam's-Porcelain-at-Cain-Hoy,-1765-1770> [accessed Apr. 18, 2015].

removed the pipe and allowed the mold to dry before burning. Before burning, however, Sally and other women placed parallel incisions or pierced holes in the outer edges of the mold halves, symmetrical guides used later when making pipes.

Catawba women used burned pipe molds as a timesaving method to manufacture more pipes. They removed the pliable clay pipe casting, and then bored the center with a small reed that left a small opening for smoking. On the opposite end of the slug, women created a small bowl to hold the tobacco.⁴⁶⁴ Although the molds cut the pipe building time by half, the women decorated most of the pipes with intricate incising, punctations, and red sealing wax.⁴⁶⁵ Later, in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, Catawba women created effigy pipes with molds of Indian heads (known as King Hagler's head, see Figure 11), frogs, turtles, tomahawks, chicken combs, and arrowheads. Today, Catawbas pass on many of their pipe molds as heirlooms to a younger generation who use the molds in their pottery making.⁴⁶⁶



Figure 11: A Hagler-head mold made by Evelyn Brown George in the 1990s. Photo Brooke Bauer, 2015.

⁴⁶⁴Blumer, *Catawba Indian Pottery*, 113-116.

⁴⁶⁵Riggs, Davis, and Plane, "Catawba Pottery in the Post-Revolutionary Era," 66.

⁴⁶⁶I received my grandmother's "King Hagler" pipe molds a few years ago.

By the latter half of the eighteenth century, Catawba women began incorporating European-made ceramics and stoneware into their daily lives but they relied heavily on their own pottery to satisfy household needs at Old Town (1761-1800). Later, at New Town (1790-1820), women blended the use of English ceramics with Catawba-made pots in household cooking, serving, and eating.⁴⁶⁷ The sites of post-Revolutionary Catawba towns are better preserved than earlier towns because they remain undisturbed by plowing and development, so we can see how women adapted to the backcountry's new household economy while holding onto the practice of potting.⁴⁶⁸ Investigating archaeological data collected at late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Catawba households reveals the types of pottery women made and the kinds of pots they used in their homes.

Although the evidence is vague about where exactly Sally lived from 1762 to 1790, she probably lived at Old Town with her husband, General New River. Several families of the same lineage lived at Old Town, a small but “not uncomfortable” town situated near a stream known as King’s Creek and Haigler’s Creek—names associated with King Hagler. Some of the dwellings resembled the log cabins of their white neighbors, one-room homes with a chimney. Many of the Old Town houses had cellar pits that Sally and other women typically used for storage. Some Catawba women built houses similar to the waddle and daub dwellings at

⁴⁶⁷Archaeologists recovered twenty-nine Catawba-made pots from the Old Town site, compared to four English serving vessels. At the New Town site, archaeologists found 50 Catawba pots and 69 English ceramics; see Plane, “Catawba Ethnicity,” 72, 77. These numbers are very misleading because they refer only to sherds large enough to recognize as a specific pot form. Catawba pottery is far more plentiful at both sites, but English wares are more common at New Town than at Old Town, R. P. Stephen Davis, Jr. (archaeologists) in discussion with the author, February 9, 2016.

⁴⁶⁸Fitts, Riggs, and Davis, “Summary Report of 2007,” 17; Shebalin, *Domestic Activities and Household Variation at Catawba New Town*, 16. Today, private businesses or individuals own the land where early eighteenth-century Catawba towns once stood. Private landownership and economic development prevents further archaeological investigation of these sites, which hinders us from understanding the social, economic, and political relationships of Catawba people who lived within these towns. For more about development on these town sites, see Jamie Self, “York County Museum Project Faces Debt,” *The Herald* (Rock Hill), August 22, 2010, <http://www.heraldonline.com/incoming/article12258650.html> [accessed Apr. 20, 2015].

Nassaw. The women dug pits near all of the homes, trenches used to process or store clay and burn pots, while other pits were dug to obtain clay for architectural uses.⁴⁶⁹

In 1780, the American Revolution disrupted the lives of Catawba women at Old Town, when the British brought the fight south. Catawbas, who had allied themselves with the Americans in the war, found their town at the center of British attacks that spring. Catawba women, men, and children fled north toward Virginia when British forces approached and attempted unsuccessfully to persuade Catawba leaders to join them. British troops burned the Catawba town in response to the Indians' resistance and "all was gone; cattle, hogs, fowls, etc."⁴⁷⁰

Catawba families returned from Virginia to rebuild their homes the following year.⁴⁷¹ In 1786, a traveler met Sally at the rebuilt town, where she and General New River lived in a log house. Sally acted as host feeding her visitor venison stew cooked in a large Catawba-made cooking pot and cared for his horse—the latter both an honored and economic activity because of the animal's value in trade and transportation.⁴⁷²

By 1781, Catawba women and their families established a second town two and a half miles south of Old Town, known today as Ayers Town (1781-1800). The dwellings at Ayers Town mirrored those at Old Town, a mix of one-room log cabins and wattle and daub homes. Clothing and other adornments helped Catawbas maintain their identity. Some Catawba women of Ayers Town wore English petticoats with blankets draped over their shoulders and heart-

⁴⁶⁹Davis, Riggs, and Cranford, "Archaeology at Ayers Town," 41-43; Coke, *Extracts of Reverend Thomas Coke*, 172 [not uncomfortable].

⁴⁷⁰William Feltman, "Diary of the Pennsylvania Line, May 26, 1781-April 25, 1782," *Pennsylvania Archives*, 2d Ser., XI (Harrisburg, PA, 1896), 741-742; Hutchison, "Catawba Indians," col. 2 [quote].

⁴⁷¹William Feltman, "Diary of the Pennsylvania Line, May 26, 1781-April 25, 1782," *Pennsylvania Archives*, 2d Ser., XI (Harrisburg, PA, 1896), 741-742.

⁴⁷²Watson, *Men and Times of Revolution*, 294-295; Coke, *Extracts of Reverend Thomas Coke*, 172.

shaped bangles in their noses. Catawba women still cultivated corn on a small tract of land and used it to produce flour to make bread or hoecakes.⁴⁷³ At Old Town and Ayers Town, Sally and other women wove color-tinted baskets and tablemats.⁴⁷⁴ Catawba women still made baskets but they are not as well preserved in archaeological sites.

In the 1790s, Sally and the General had moved to New Town (1790-1820) situated less than a mile north of Old Town. Catawbas also built a smaller community, known as Turkeyhead, one and half miles north of New Town.⁴⁷⁵ The reason for Sally's move to New Town remains unclear, but perhaps she and several other families moved to the settlement on the east side of the Catawba River because it was all that remained of their territory.

In 1796, Catawbas decided to transfer remaining Catawba land to Sally and other women, a parcel of land that included houses, fields, and burial grounds. Although conveying land to a woman or women was rare among white South Carolinians, this manner of recognizing women as equal owners of the land was common among Indians within the region of South Carolina. In 1675, for example, eleven female captains made their marks on a land cession treaty between the Kussoe Indians and the colony of South Carolina.⁴⁷⁶ At the Catawbas' New Town settlement, Sally and her relatives subsisted on farming, hunting, land rents, and basket and pottery sales.⁴⁷⁷ Although Catawba women still cultivated corn and smaller gardens, they focused less on

⁴⁷³Liston, *Tour to the Southern States*, 27.

⁴⁷⁴Smyth, *A Tour in the United States of America*, 194.

⁴⁷⁵Archaeologists know even less about Turkeyhead or the Bowers site because the property was sold in late 2002 to early 2003 for the construction of a large retirement community known as Sun City Carolina Lakes. Davis, Riggs, and Cranford, "Archaeology at Ayers Town," 55, 62. For three towns, see Liston, *Tour to the Southern States*, 26.

⁴⁷⁶Gene Waddell, "Cofitachiqui," *Carologue*, Vol. 16, No. 3 (Autumn, 2000), 8-15. For image of treaty, see *Cofitachiqui Illustrations*, "Indian Cession of the 'great and Lesser Cassoe signed in 1675,'" http://www.catawba-people.com/cofitachiqui_illustrations.html [accessed July 29, 2015].

⁴⁷⁷Jones, *Calvin Jones Journal*, 54 [8 houses].

harvesting crops because pottery production offered a higher economic return with thousands of pots sold annually.⁴⁷⁸

Between the 1760s and early 1800s, Catawba women participated more in the market economy as itinerant potters. The dominant Anglo-American society's notion of gender excluded married women from the market economy, at least as entrepreneurs. An evolving U. S. Indian policy that focused on changing American Indian gender customs to mirror Anglo-American patriarchal norms marginalized American Indian women from the market economy. Instead, participation in commerce continued to be a male-centered space, just as war and hunting had been prior to the policy, where men acted as intermediaries for women who produced Indian-made goods.⁴⁷⁹ However, Catawba women continued controlling the products of their labor, just as they had with the crops.

As Catawba women's pottery manufacture intensified from that of making pots for personal use to that of making and selling pots in a commodity exchange, their presence in the trade economy facilitated in distinguishing them as Catawba. Small groups of Catawba families traveled the Camden-Charleston road frequently, first walking by way of the rivers, and later traversing dirt roads cut for trade traffic. When selling pottery, they traveled seasonally from late spring to mid-autumn. Once the Catawba women and their families reached the Edisto River near present-day Orangeburg, they constructed temporary shelters of tree bark and began digging for clay and making pots along the river. After building an adequate supply of pots, the families

⁴⁷⁸Davis, Riggs, and Cranford, "Archaeology at Ayers Town," 54.

⁴⁷⁹Perdue, *Cherokee Women*, 129-132.

traveled to what became Charleston's City Market with their "little stock of earthen pots and pans" to barter for trade goods.⁴⁸⁰

Several factors aided Catawba women's ability to navigate the market economy as entrepreneurs. By 1790, Anglo-American farmers and planters surrounded Catawbas, and each struggled to maintain independent self-sufficiency. In other words, within the households of each group, families grappled with ways to get by. Because of the distance to the major market in Charleston, many of the settlers in the backcountry region of South Carolina depended on a local economy in which they exchanged goods and services.

Farmers depended on millers to grind their wheat and corn; they probably purchased liquor from more prosperous neighbors who could afford the costly distilling equipment; they depended on local craftsmen for ironware, shoes, saddles, barrels, and various other goods.⁴⁸¹

Within this barter exchange, a system similar to Catawbas' custom of reciprocity, Catawba women found their niche to sell and barter pottery and get goods they needed for *their* families.⁴⁸² Furthermore, as trade in the backcountry region grew, the General Assembly began appropriating funds to lay out and develop better roads, bridges, and ferries, improvements that made travel easier for Catawba families that owned a wagon. From 1753 to 1823, the Assembly appointed commissioners to clear roads and build ferries from Charlestown to the Catawba Nation.⁴⁸³ The growth of transportation expanded in 1787 to include making the Catawba and

⁴⁸⁰William Gilmore Simms recalled seeing Catawbas as a boy as they traveled to Charleston to sell pots; see *An Early and Strong Sympathy: The Indian Writings of William Gilmore Simms*, ed. by John Caldwell Guilds and Charles Hudson (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2003), 218-219.

⁴⁸¹Klein, *Unification of a Slave State*, 24-26; Steven Hahn, *The Roots of Southern Populism: Yeoman Farmers and the Transformation of the Georgia Upcountry, 1850-1890* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 1-85.

⁴⁸²Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina*, 240.

⁴⁸³Cooper, ed., *The Statutes at Large of South Carolina*, 4: 4 [1753]; David J. McCord, ed., *The Statutes at Large of South Carolina* (Columbia: A.S. Johnston, 1841), 9: 199-202 [1762], 255-256 [1775], 292-301 [1785], 537-544 [1823].

Wateree Rivers navigable for boats shipping trade goods into the region.⁴⁸⁴ As roads improved and Catawbas' adopted the use of a wagon, Catawba women were able to travel faster and somewhat more comfortably when making the long trip to Charleston.⁴⁸⁵ Owning a wagon was essential to the success of the women's pottery sales because it provided a means to carry tools, clothing, and food, and allowed them to bring their families (children) with them.

Appeal and demand proved most important to Catawba women's success as itinerant potters. While the housewives of Charlestown had greater access to goods such as Wedgewood earthenware, stoneware, porcelain, and china, they considered Catawba-made pots superior to all others. The ladies of Charleston insisted "that okra soup was always inferior if cooked in any but an Indian pot" and declared Catawba women's milk pans the best because "the milk grease came up to the top well."⁴⁸⁶

Closer to home, Sally and other women walked to the homes of their nearby Anglo-American neighbors to sell and barter pots. For example, at Tivoli, the plantation estate of William Richardson Davie located 2 miles south of New Town, Catawba women sold soup plates, jars, and pans to the residents. The plantations used some Catawba pottery alongside cast iron kettles and Dutch ovens in the main kitchen for food preparation and storage, not for table service. Kitchen slaves used lightweight Catawba-made jars when cooking food. In the slave quarters, Davie's slaves used Catawba-made pots more frequently to complement or in place of worn, damaged English-made ware.⁴⁸⁷ How the Tivoli slaves actually acquired Catawba pots remains unclear, but perhaps Davie or his overseer purchased the less expensive wares for the

⁴⁸⁴David J. McCord, ed., *The Statutes at Large of South Carolina* (Columbia: A. S. Johnston, 1840), 7: 549-551.

⁴⁸⁵Davis, Riggs, and Cranford, "Archaeology at Ayers Town," 58 [wagon hardware].

⁴⁸⁶Simms, *An Early and Strong Sympathy*, 219; Speck, *Catawba Texts*, 70-71.

⁴⁸⁷Mark Russell Plane, "A Historical Archaeology of Catawba Itinerancy" (PhD diss., University of North Carolina, 2011), 107-182.

slaves. Catawba women may have bartered directly with Davie's slaves, exchanging their pots for produce grown by the slaves. It is less likely that Davie enslaved a Catawba man or woman because of the proximity of his plantation to the Catawba towns and because Catawba men served alongside Davie in many battles in the southern campaign of the American Revolution.⁴⁸⁸ Whatever the situation may have been, the presence of a moderate quantity of Catawba-made pottery sherds at the Tivoli site reveals the influence Catawba women had in the market economy near their Nation.⁴⁸⁹

Catawba women's trade with the residents of Edenmoor contrasts significantly to Tivoli. At Edenmoor, a small farmstead located northeast of New Town along Twelve Mile Creek, Catawba women traded their pots for food and other goods. Edenmoor inhabitants used Catawba-made jars, pans, and soup plates, pots for more than cooking and storage, unlike the residents at the main house of Tivoli. Edenmoor occupants relied on Catawba pottery extensively for daily tableware use, a practice comparable to Catawba women at New Town and Old Town.⁴⁹⁰

Sally's Household

By the late 1700s, Catawba women spent less time making baskets and more time building pots as customer demands increased. At New Town, a fifty-year-old Sally lived in a one-room log cabin house built similar to her white neighbors. Sally built her house at the southern portion of New Town near a wagon road that connected the town to surrounding settlements and homes. Her home stood near six other Catawba log cabin dwellings, and each

⁴⁸⁸William R. Davie and Blackwell P. Richardson, *The Revolutionary War Sketches of William R. Davie* (Raleigh: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, Division of Archives and History, 1976), 8. Additional research is required on the probability of Catawbans at Tivoli.

⁴⁸⁹Plane, *A Historical Archaeology of Catawba Itinerancy*, 107-182.

⁴⁹⁰Plane, *A Historical Archaeology of Catawba Itinerancy*, 107-182.

surrounded an oblong square. I imagine that Sally and her female relatives sat together outside one of the dwellings, working in the clay together, as Catawba women do today. And, similar to today's Catawba potters, they talked in about their pottery business, including with whom they would trade, how much they would make for their pots, and which style of pot sold best. We are uncertain of precisely who lived in each of the other houses, but archaeologists are certain that Sally's house had a wood chimney and a wooden floor. Only one other log cabin at New Town had a stick and clay chimney with a stone-faced firebox and a wooden floor, the home of Colonel Jacob Ayers.⁴⁹¹ Sally and General New River were the primary residents of her home, at least until the General's death in the early 1800s.⁴⁹²

While Catawba women and their families traveled to Charleston, Sally remained at home, where she farmed, collected rent payments, cared for relatives, and acted as liaison between her people and non-Indians.⁴⁹³ At New Town, Sally made a smaller quantity of pots at her home compared to other women in the community. When she made pottery, she may have made and burned it at one of the northern dwellings with other Catawba women, or she may have only made a small amount of pottery at her home.⁴⁹⁴ As an elder Catawba woman, she would have taught younger women how to make various types of pots, following Catawba custom. As a matriarch and one of the most "industrious" Catawba farmers, Sally spent a large portion of her time harvesting crops and preparing food for relatives.⁴⁹⁵ The substantial amount of European

⁴⁹¹Jones, *Calvin Jones Papers*, 55, 57-58.

⁴⁹²"Joseph White to Lyman Draper, December 13, 1870," Draper MSS, Thomas Sumter Papers, 15VV, 99-100. Newspaper death notices identified General New River as General Scott; see "The Herald, Newburyport, Jan. 21, 1821," Vol. 24, Iss. 82, *Newburyport Herald* (Jan. 21, 1821), 3.

⁴⁹³Smyth, *A Tour in the United States*, 184-197; Liston, *Tour to the Southern States*; Jones, *Calvin Jones Papers*.

⁴⁹⁴Archaeologists recovered a large quantity of pot sherds at a northern house site; see Shebalin, *Domestic Activities and Household Variation at Catawba New Town*, 61.

⁴⁹⁵Jones, *Calvin Jones Papers*, 54 [industrious];

sherds, glass vessels, and metal cooking vessels and utensils found at Sally's house site indicates that she spent her days preparing food.⁴⁹⁶ Although fewer people occupied Sally's home in the 1800s, the quantity of food preparation implements is consistent with her farming practices and the goods she collected from land tenants.⁴⁹⁷

The site of Sally's New Town home highlights other domestic practices that indicate social and economic divisions within the small town. In contrast to her relatives who lived in the northern section of town, Sally kept her yard well maintained, swept and clean of refuse, tidiness that reveals different levels of Catawba women's participation in the trade economy as itinerant potters. Sally, who remained at home year around, devoted more time to the upkeep of her home. Catawba women who traveled and stayed away from the Nation for a large portion of the year focused less on farming and keeping a clean home. Because they spent months away from the Nation, their homes appeared rundown and abandoned as waste built up in the yards.⁴⁹⁸ However, the women and their families who traveled during the summer months were important to the distinguishability of the Catawba Nation.

In the early-nineteenth century, the Catawba population stood at fewer than 200 people and Catawba women's involvement in trade helped keep the Nation visible to Carolinians. Although bartering pots and leasing land served immediate economic needs, Catawba women's pottery also helped their Nation maintain a political presence and distinct Catawba identity in South Carolina. As Catawba families stopped at plantations and farms along the southern route to Charleston to "fetch their pots and jars to sell," their pottery became synonymous with *being*

⁴⁹⁶Shebalin, *Domestic Activities and Household Variation at Catawba New Town*, 60-61.

⁴⁹⁷ *Superintendents of the Catawba Nation, Plat and Lease Book, 1810-1825*, 82, 98, 132.

⁴⁹⁸ Shebalin, *Domestic Activities and Household Variation at Catawba New Town*.

Catawba, at least to non-Indians.⁴⁹⁹ White plantation owners, farmers, and slaves easily recognized the distinctive bands of Catawba women and their families who traveled the road from the backcountry to the coast. Although the Catawba women blended woolen petticoats with their customary practice of draping a blanket over one shoulder, their “brilliant black eyes” and “fine clear dark olive” skin set them apart from white and black. In addition, many Catawba people still wore earrings, nose rings, and decorative paint and feathers in their hair.⁵⁰⁰ The buff, red, and black mottled pots they sold and bartered served as an additional marker of their Catawba identity.

Sally and other Catawba women who lived during the late eighteenth century made conscious decisions about how they made their pots, new forms and styles that earned the status of “superior” to all others. Because the Catawba Nation no longer posed a threat to their surrounding neighbors, the state paid less attention to the small nation living in the backcountry. Traveling to sell pottery fit the needs of Carolina consumers, helped Catawba women provide for their families, and kept Catawba people visible to the state and its residents as Indians. Such a distinction was significant to Catawbas because South Carolina was moving quickly toward a biracial society. Catawba people, who refused to identify as either white or black, understood the importance of distinguishing themselves as Catawba. Catawba women’s a visible presence as potters became vital to preserving and projecting a Catawba identity.

⁴⁹⁹ Edwin J. Scott, *Random Recollections of a Long Life, 1806 to 1876* (Columbia: C. A. Calvo, Jr., 1884), 13; “Charley Watson, Ex-Slave 87 Years Old,” interview in *Slave Narratives: A Folk History of Slavery in the United States From Interviews with Former Slaves, South Carolina Narratives*, Vol. XIV, Part 4 (Washington: Prepared by the Federal Writers’ Project of the Works Progress Administration for the State of South Carolina, 1941), 189.

⁵⁰⁰Liston, *Henrietta Liston Journal*, 26; Watson, *Men and Times of Revolution*, 257; Coke, *Extracts of the Journals of the Late Reverend Thomas Coke*, 172.

CHAPTER 6: LAND OWNERSHIP AND LEASING, 1750-1840

The day was sunny and warm, perfect conditions for collecting rent. Sally woke early that morning in 1815 and began preparing to travel by wagon from her home at New Town to visit Euro-American land tenants living on parcels of Catawba land. Her journey took her several miles north of New Town to the James Spratt family plantation. She made her trip at least once every year to collect lease payments. Approaching the large house, Sally greeted James Spratt, who knew why she had come. He paid her a half bushel of salt, the equivalent of four gallons, which she carried back home. Sally made the same trip twice more that year and she received two bushels of wheat and \$2.50 in cash in payment for James Spratt's lease.⁵⁰¹ Sally pondered on what she received each time she made the trip back home. She knew the cash was enough to get through a few days, a week at the most, while the wheat and salt would last most of the year. As she traveled back home, she observed the rapidly growing white population in the region and may have wondered whether leasing Catawba land would be enough to allow her people to safeguard their towns and remaining land from further encroachment.

While we can never know what Sally's thoughts were, we do have lease records and payments that show Sally did business with the Spratt family. By the latter half of the eighteenth century, Catawbas confronted an ever-increasing Euro-American population in Catawba territory, growth that influenced Catawba women's lives directly in terms of their towns and access to natural resources. White settler migration into the Piedmont region following the American Revolution posed a huge threat to Catawbas. From the mid-1750s through the 1790s,

⁵⁰¹*Superintendents of the Catawba Nation, Plat and Lease Book, 1810-1825, 71-72.*

Catawba women and men watched with alarm as hundreds of Euro-American families settled in Catawba territory. The white families built small farms on fertile Catawba land. As trade in Indian slaves and deerskins declined, Catawbas adapted their economic system to fit the global trade in which their land became their most valuable asset. As white settlement in the Piedmont region increased, instead of trading with the Indians, the newcomers focused on the construction of a plantation system. What they wanted now from Catawbas was not deerskins and war captives but land.⁵⁰² To understand Catawbas' land leasing system of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, one must comprehend the constant pressure Catawba people confronted to part with their land and Catawba women's role in preserving Catawbas' homeland, the place where First Woman gave birth to Catawba people.

Catawba Land Ownership

In the 1700s, Catawba women controlled the land, as their ancestors had done. For Catawba women and men, land occupied a spiritual and historical place in their society that helped them create a Catawba Nation on the home of their female ancestor, First Woman. Catawba land rights originated with "wáriwe," the Master of Live, as Catawba chief King Hagler asserted in 1754 when he told North Carolina commissioners that the "Great man fixed our forefathers and us here and to Inherit this Land."⁵⁰³ Although Catawbas held their land as communal property, women of certain matrilineages managed specific tracts of land in which they grew crops, gathered wild plants, hunted small game, and collected firewood. Catawba men's relationship with the land was mainly in the forest where they hunted for game. Catawba women and men recognized clearly where the spatial boundaries of their land began and ended because these borders were bounded by well-known landmarks, such as rivers, creeks, hills, and

⁵⁰²Merrell, *The Indians' New World*, 36-37; Plane, "A Historical Archaeology of Catawba Itinerancy," 19.

⁵⁰³"Treaty between North Carolina and King Hagler and the Catawba Indians," August 29, 1754, *CRNC*, 5: 144a.

mountains. Within their territory, Catawba families, who called the land their own, bequeathed hunting and agricultural territory to their children, defended their land aggressively against enemies, and, at times, granted others temporary use rights.⁵⁰⁴

In the latter half of the eighteenth century, Catawba men were often away hunting or going to war, Catawba women controlled the towns. They held authority when making decisions about their homes and other improvements to the land. They controlled and managed the fields near the towns. Catawba women worked to safeguard the space on which their houses stood, where the crops grew, where they gathered resources for household materials, and where they collected clay for pots because all of these aspects were necessary to the survival of their families. Women and men had always moved their towns and fields to adapt to environmental changes, such as soil erosion, and to gain access to more firewood. For Catawba people, their mobility did not serve as a signal of abandonment of the land. Like their ancestors, they had always managed a vast amount of territory, and on that land they had access to natural resources that they used for subsistence. Less territory restricted their movement, threatened to destroy their economy, and in turn, disrupted the lives of Catawba women.⁵⁰⁵

Advancing white settlement threatened women's domain in the towns and fields. When Catawbas moved or vacated their homes and fields, immigrating white settlers considered the land abandoned and open for settlement. Settlers and colonial officials believed that occupancy and improvement of land equated true land ownership. Euro-Americans viewed land as an economic resource. They thought of land as privately held property with improvements,

⁵⁰⁴For a comprehensive overview of Indian land, see Nancy Shoemaker, *A Strange Likeness: Becoming Red and White in Eighteenth-Century North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 13-34.

⁵⁰⁵"October 14, 1760," *Journals of the Commons House, 1760-1762* (Vol. 33 Beginning p.314, Vols. 34 and 35), 14.

meaning the fixity of a house located within bounded property lines, neatly plowed fields, and domesticated grazing animals.⁵⁰⁶

Catawba mobility was the primary inconsistency to the European definition of land ownership. In the 1700s, Catawba women and men had a much broader notion of land ownership that included the forest and allowed for the construction of villages anywhere they chose within their territory. Sometimes they moved to accommodate hunting and agricultural practices, and other times they shifted their towns because of war or disease, as they did in 1760 after the smallpox hit the Catawba villages near Nation Ford. Following the epidemic, they decamped to a new location 60 miles south in territory once occupied by Wateree Indians, a group that coalesced with Catawba people after the Yamasee War. Two years later, in 1762, they moved their towns again, north along the Catawba River on land they occupied for the next seventy-eight years. They abandoned those towns briefly in 1780, when British forces attacked and destroyed their homes.⁵⁰⁷ When Catawba people moved or vacated their towns, they never lost sight of their ancestral homeland, to which they returned each time because of its connection to their ancestors.

In addition, Catawbas' occupation and ownership of land was communal. They viewed ownership in terms of the natural resources they took from the land, not the land itself.⁵⁰⁸ Europeans failed to take into account that Catawba women made improvements to the land, built homes, and farmed long before the arrival of Europeans. When Catawba women did the same

⁵⁰⁶“Letter from Arthur Dobbs to the Board of Trade of Great Britain,” August 24, 1755, *CRNC*, 5: 362-363 [land as an economic resource and fencing crops]; “Letter from Arthur Dobbs to the Board of Trade of Great Britain,” January 20, 1757, *CRNC*, 5: 742 [proposal to fix Catawba boundaries]; “Letter from Arthur Dobbs to the Board of Trade of Great Britain,” November 9, 1754, *CRNC*, 5: 149 [livestock].

⁵⁰⁷Riggs, “Temporal Trends,” 31-43.

⁵⁰⁸Cronon, *Changes in the Land*, 54-81.

things that Europeans did, the fact that they were Indians and women enabled European men to overlook the evidence of improvements.

The violence of the French and Indian War accounted for the initial migration of a small number of European settlers to Catawba territory. After General Braddock's defeat in the Ohio Country in 1755, a wave of Scots-Irish settlers fled the violence in Pennsylvania and Virginia for the Carolina Piedmont where they settled in Catawba territory. Eight years later, in 1763, Pontiac's War and the Paxton Boys uprising sent another wave of Scots-Irish and German settlers from the Ohio River Valley into Catawba territory, where they established homes and farms. The largest migration took place after the American Revolution ended in 1783 when a large number of Scots-Irish families from the Pennsylvania region settled on Catawba land.⁵⁰⁹ As the white population steadily grew, Catawba leaders appealed to North and South Carolina colonial officials to prevent further encroachment. In the late 1700s with the growth of the white population, Catawba women's land use changed dramatically as they found their towns consigned to a small tract of 500 acres of land and their mobility limited to that acreage.

Part of the settler problem that all Catawbas faced centered on the North-South Carolina boundary dispute between the two provinces that began in 1730. The provinces of North and South Carolina each claimed jurisdiction over land owned by the Catawba people based on a straight line running west from the Atlantic Coast along the 35th parallel. The governors of each colony provided royal land grants to many of the incoming colonists for Catawba land that North Carolina claimed as its own, land that initially included Bladen County, territory that bordered South Carolina and stretched west to the Mississippi. In 1750, the North Carolina General Assembly created Anson County from Bladen, and in the next decade, North Carolina officials

⁵⁰⁹James G. Leyburn, *Scotch-Irish: A Social History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962), 223-232. For migration causes, see Robert W. Ramsey, *Carolina Cradle: Settlement of the Northwest Carolina Frontier, 1747-1762* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1964), 10-21.

divided Anson County into Mecklenburg and Tryon counties.⁵¹⁰ In fact, both provinces continued to grant colonists enormous tracts of Catawba land.⁵¹¹

By 1755, when Sally was a young girl, Catawba territory spread 30 miles from the center of their six towns in every direction, an area that became a source of contention for North Carolina Governor Arthur Dobbs. Dobbs viewed the land as empty of habitation, unimproved, and uncultivated, and like many of his fellow Britons, open for settlement. The Catawba Nation consisted of only 1,500 people and could not possibly make use of the large quantity of land they claimed, Dobbs argued. More significantly, Dobbs failed to see the large communal fields worked by Catawba women as improved land. Governor Dobbs pressed the Crown to negotiate a treaty with the Catawbas and settle them on a tract of land a “Circle of Ten miles radius,” acreage sufficient by his accounts for the small nation.⁵¹² The North Carolina governor had an ulterior motive when petitioning for a land cession treaty with the Catawbas. He had purchased over 400,000 acres of land in the 1740s from Henry McCulloh and encouraged settlement in the area vigorously. A large portion of the land was located in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina near, if not directly on, Catawba land. However, with the increasing need for Indian allies during the French and Indian War, neither North Carolina nor South Carolina wanted to anger the Catawbas, not yet.

Although Catawba men petitioned each province to prevent settler encroachment, Catawba women’s voices did not reach colonial governments directly. If women spoke in council, white male chroniclers neglected to record women’s views on the issue because they

⁵¹⁰John Brevard Alexander, *The History of Mecklenburg County: From 1740 to 1900* (Charlotte: Observer Printing House, 1902), 68; Michael C. Scoggins, *The Day It Rained Militia: Huck’s Defeat and the Revolution in the South Carolina Backcountry, May-July 1780* (Charleston: The History Press, 2005), 19-21.

⁵¹¹Scoggins, *The Day It Rained Militia*, 20.

⁵¹²“Letter from Arthur Dobbs to the Board of Trade of Great Britain,” August 24, 1755, *CRNC*, 5: 359 [population]; “Letter from Arthur Dobbs to the Board of Trade of Great Britain,” January 20, 1757, *CRNC*, 5: 742.

viewed men as owners of land and the only authoritative voice. Catawba women, who spent much of their time together, certainly talked among themselves about what losing their land meant for their people. In 1757, Catawbas sent a message to South Carolina Governor William H. Lyttelton. Hagler and other Catawba leaders complained that Dobbs continued to provide settlers with royal land grants on Catawba land and ignored Catawba complaints about the illegal grants. For the Catawba leaders, the solution was simple—Lyttelton should settle the problem by making his unruly North Carolina “brothers” behave, or, Hagler warned, “Our yong people who are already greatly incenced perhaps May Not be prevald upon from Doing some great Mischief.”⁵¹³

In an attempt to stem the flow of white encroachment upon Catawba land and establish a legal boundary, Catawba headmen requested their “lands to be measurd out for them.”⁵¹⁴ Having their land surveyed would provide documented proof of Catawbas’ land ownership, a facet of English property law that Catawbas understood and used to protect their territory. Governor Lyttelton wrote the Board of Trade that same year regarding the North Carolina – South Carolina boundary and the jurisdiction of the Catawba Nation. He suggested that the Catawbas remain within South Carolina boundaries to serve as a buffer in the backcountry against the French and their allies. Although Lyttelton neglected to address the issue of the Catawbas request directly, he told the Board of Trade that Catawbas loathed being restricted to a small tract of territory because it reduced their hunting grounds in the Piedmont.⁵¹⁵ Unsurprisingly, Lyttelton focused on hunting as an activity of men, rather than Catawba women’s land management.

⁵¹³“Catawbas, Headmen to William H. Lyttelton, June 16, 1757,” Lyttelton Papers.

⁵¹⁴“Catawbas, Headmen to William H. Lyttelton, June 16, 1757,” Lyttelton Papers.

⁵¹⁵“Letter from William H. Lyttelton, Charles Town November 30, 1757,” Original South Carolina Correspondence from the Governors and Others (CO5/276-377) Vols. L thru M, 1757-1764, 17-20.

In late summer of 1760, both Catawba women and men met with Superintendent of Indian Affairs Edmond Atkin about their land.⁵¹⁶ South Carolina Lieutenant Governor William Bull, who did not attend the conference, wrote Lyttelton of the proceedings. Atkin convinced Catawba people to “surrender their claims to a large Tract of sixty Miles diameter,” Bull wrote, “in consideration of being quietly settled in a Tract of only fifteen Miles square.”⁵¹⁷ Little evidence remains of the so-called “Treaty of Pine Tree Hill” other than the letter from Bull and a single article in *The South Carolina Gazette*—neither a direct report from Atkin nor a treaty document exists.⁵¹⁸ Given that the British government relied heavily on written documents to support and justify land cession negotiations with Indian nations, the agreement may not have been a “treaty” in the true sense of the word but only a verbal agreement to use the land.

From the Catawba perspective, the agreement probably indicated a political and military alliance between themselves and the British during the French and Indian War, specifically for protective fortification. Catawbas governed their economic and diplomatic exchanges, including land agreements, by the principle of reciprocity, a ritual that included gift-giving. In exchange for the use of Catawba land, the English agreed to provide Catawbas with food, trade goods, ammunition, and the construction of a sorely needed fort. Although Catawbas viewed such exchanges as a method to establish and validate friendship, the British viewed the agreement as a

⁵¹⁶“October 14, 1760,” *Journals of the Commons House, 1760-1762*, 14. I have been unable to locate any documentation written by Edmund Atkin regarding the land agreement.

⁵¹⁷Bull’s letter failed to mention the presence of an interpreter for the Catawbas, a significant factor for people who spoke little English, see *Journals of the Commons House of South Carolina, 1760-1762*, 14-15.

⁵¹⁸“Charles-Town, August 9,” *South Carolina Gazette*, August 9, 1760, 3 [meeting]. James H. Merrell noted that Catawbas had relinquished their land to South Carolina Governor James Glen several years earlier, *The Indians’ New World*, 347 n21. According to Glen’s successor, William Lyttelton, South Carolina was purchasing a 1-mile square tract of land (640 acres) around a proposed fort in Catawba territory, see “Edmond Atkin to William H. Lyttelton, November 23, 1757,” Lyttelton Papers. For a comprehensive treatment of Indian land ownership, see Stuart Banner, *How the Indians Lost Their Land: Law and Power on the Frontier* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005).

land cession.⁵¹⁹ Catawbas continued complaining to South Carolina's governor about encroachment, grievances that contradict a land cession treaty.

When Catawba leaders visited Charlestown in 1762 to voice their concerns about encroachment, South Carolina officials complained that Catawba friendship cost the colony too much. The General Assembly concluded, "That these Indians have come often to Town on pretext to complain of pretended encroachments on their Land when...their real and only design has been to obtain presents."⁵²⁰ South Carolina leaders gave little thought to the use of the thousands of acres they gained two years earlier in the Pine Hill land agreement or the alliance building custom. Catawba people, however, expected payment to come regularly, as goods, firearms, and food—items that reaffirmed the Catawba-British alliance.

White encroachment on Catawba land continued. In 1763, Catawbas saw hundreds of white families enter their territory and establish homes and farms on Catawba land, which appeared to the settlers to be far more than the small tribe could use. By this time, Catawbas had relocated to their old territory, north of Pine Tree Hill along the Catawba River, where they built three towns known as Old Town, Turkey Town, and Ayres Town. Sally New River lived in Old Town, located on the east side of the Catawba River. Another band of Catawbas lived on the opposite side of the river in York County at Ayres Town.⁵²¹

The year of 1763 brought enormous change for Catawbas as land owners. The French and Indian War ended with Britain, France, and Spain signing the Peace of Paris on February 10, 1763. The British government quickly began imposing controls and limitations on the colonies.

⁵¹⁹*Journals of the Commons House of South Carolina, 1760-1762*, 14-15; "Charles-Town, August 9," *South Carolina Gazette*, August 9, 1760, 3.

⁵²⁰"Message from Thomas Boone to Assembly, May 18, 1762," *Journals of the Commons House, 1760-1762*, 106.

⁵²¹The Research Laboratories of Archaeology at the University of North Carolina has identified Old Town and Ayres Town, two of the towns that Catawbas occupied from 1762 to 1790, see Riggs, "Temporal Trends."

One component of this new order focused on Southeastern Indians—reinforcing the alliance between the British government and the Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, Cherokees, and Catawbas. Charles Wyndham, Earl of Egremont and Secretary of State for the Southern Department, wanted to ensure that these five Indian groups did not ally with the French or Spanish who remained in the South and “inculcated an Idea among the Indians, that the English entertained a settled Design of extirpating the whole Indian Race, with a View to possess & enjoy their Lands.” Egremont instructed Governor Arthur Dobbs to arrange a meeting between the governors of North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Georgia and the leaders of the five tribes in order to avoid further conflict in the colonies and to reassure the Indians of His Majesty’s friendship.⁵²² Egremont directed Dobbs to hold the meeting “without Loss of time” at Augusta or another place convenient for all parties. By July 15, 1763, the governors had agreed to hold the congress at Augusta.⁵²³

Before the Congress was held in Augusta, Sally and her people lost one of their greatest diplomats. In late summer of 1763, a band of northern Indians attacked and killed King Hagler near Pine Tree Hill.⁵²⁴ Hagler’s murder served as a turning point in Catawba diplomacy, and his death was defining moment for Catawba land ownership. Colonel “Big Town” Ayres assumed leadership of the Catawba Nation and represented a small party of Catawbas as interpreter and leader at the Southern Congress at Augusta in late 1763.⁵²⁵

In October 1763, a delegation of 60 Catawba men, women, and children led by Ayres left their homes in the Piedmont region and traveled to Fort Augusta, Georgia to meet with the

⁵²²“Letter from Charles Wyndham, Earl of Egremont to Arthur Dobbs,” March 16, 1763, *CRNC*, 6: 974-976.

⁵²³“Letter from Arthur Dobbs to Charles Wyndham, Earl of Egremont,” July 15, 1763, *CRNC*, 6: 991.

⁵²⁴William Jenkins, *Records of the United States of America, South Carolina*, September 5, 1763, E.1p 9/89.

⁵²⁵“Minutes of the Southern Congress at Augusta, Georgia,” *The State Records of North Carolina*, Walter Clark, ed. (Winston: M. J. & J. C. Stewart, Printers to the State, 1895), 11: 156-207.

governors. During the same month, King George III issued a proclamation that established the Appalachian Mountains as the settlement line and closed off the frontier to further Euro-American expansion. Although Catawba land was situated east of the line, one section of the Royal Proclamation of 1763 related to Catawbas. The proclamation prohibited any person from making “any Purchase from the said Indians of any Lands reserved to the said Indians within those parts of our Colonies where, We have thought proper to allow Settlement.”⁵²⁶ Catawba women and men would have raised their eyebrows at the assumption that the British king *reserved* their own lands for them, but the stipulation that only representatives of the Crown could negotiate land transfers “at some public Meeting or Assembly of the said Indians” was important for preventing their lands from being stolen piecemeal by individual settlers.⁵²⁷ Thus, the proclamation set the stage for the Catawbas’ visit to Georgia.

At the Congress of Augusta, Colonel Ayres called attention to white encroachment within Catawba territory. He informed the colonial governors “his Land was spoilt” by settlers who lived within a hundred miles in each direction of the Catawba towns and never paid for the use of the land. Ayres’s reference to the proximity of whites to Catawba towns reveals that Catawbas still believed the boundaries of Catawba territory reached much further than Atkin had conveyed to the South Carolina governor in 1760. For Ayres and other Catawba men and women, the settlers stole their land and destroyed the natural resources that Catawbas depended on. He described the expansiveness of Catawba territory prior to settlement, informing the Governors that Catawba hunting grounds formerly extended east to the Peedee River and west to the Broad River but “now is driven quite to the Catawba Nation.” Catawbas’ hunting ground was greatly

⁵²⁶“The Royal Proclamation—October 7, 1763,” http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/procl1763.asp [accessed 19 September 2013].

⁵²⁷“The Royal Proclamation—October 7, 1763,” http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/procl1763.asp [accessed 19 September 2013].

reduced because of white settlement, Ayres added, which resulted in a “scarcity of Buffalos and Deer.” Catawbas had lost so much land, Ayres emphasized, that hunters were unable to find and kill an adequate amount of deer to feed their families. In addition to the shortage of game, Catawba people could no longer cut trees to build their homes because the white settlers “keep all to themselves.”⁵²⁸

At the Congress, Ayres adhered to the 1760 agreement between Atkin and the Catawbas. Ayres confirmed Catawbas’ willingness to accept a reduced tract of land on the condition that Catawba men could hunt unmolested throughout their ancestral territory. He requested South Carolina to survey 15 miles on each side of the Catawba towns occupied prior to 1763.⁵²⁹ The provision that Ayres put forth omitted the important tasks that Catawba women did, but the 15 miles square, the equivalent of 144,000 acres, included land on which Catawbas lived—where Catawba women farmed, gathered nuts and berries, and collected clay.

The governors pressured Ayres to accept their terms immediately or Catawba land would go unprotected for an undetermined length of time. They advised Ayres, “If you stand to your former Agreement,” referring to Catawbas’ 1760 meeting with Atkin, “your Lands shall be immediately surveyed and marked out for your use but if you do not your claim must be undecided till our Great King's Pleasure is known on the other side the Waters.”⁵³⁰ Ayres, who was the only headmen present at the congress, had to give an immediate answer to the governors. In the early 1700s, Catawbas operated from a position of power as a militarily powerful Nation, but by 1763, the Nation was a shadow of its former self. Ayres had little negotiating power or

⁵²⁸“Minutes of the Southern Congress,” *CRNC*, 11: 156-207 [quote, 189].

⁵²⁹In the minutes of the congress, Colonel Ayres is the only Catawba headman mentioned, in contrast to a long list of headmen from the Creeks, Chickasaws, Choctaws, and Cherokees, see “Minutes of the Southern Congress,” *CRNC*, 11: 179, 189.

⁵³⁰“Minutes of the Southern Congress,” *CRNC*, 11: 198.

skill in diplomacy—King Hagler had wielded these talents skillfully until his death. While we will never know what Ayres thought about the land cession or why he was the only leader in attendance, he must have felt overwhelmed and defeated by the decision he made as one headman of a smaller, less powerful Nation. Ayres’s decision, one he must have made thinking of the survival of Catawbas, would plague him in the coming months.

Tensions about the land cession developed quickly when Ayres returned to the Nation. According to Catawba law of consensus, only the unanimous consent of the entire adult Catawba population could approve the treaty terms. By 1763, the Catawba population had rebounded to nearly 300 people, but Ayres’s band counted for only one-fifth of Catawbas.⁵³¹ Despite the endorsement of 60 Catawbas, primarily women and children, Ayres had no authority to cede Catawba land without the approval of the entire tribe.⁵³² Although the small party of sixty Catawbas “unanimously” approved Ayres as chief, within weeks of his return to the Nation, Catawbas deposed Ayres. Catawba leaders speaking for the entire Catawba population claimed that on his return from Augusta, a drunken Ayres sold all the presents he received from the colonial representatives.⁵³³ Perhaps someone swindled him out of the presents somewhere along the route back home or he traded the items for other goods (including whiskey). He also may have traded the presents for cash to aid in the party’s return to the reservation or because of his immediate family’s economic situation. Regardless of his reasons, Ayres committed two mistakes as a solo leader—agreeing to the land cession and selling the presents.

⁵³¹For decisions based on consensus, see Merrell, *The Indians’ New World*, 112; Jenkins, *RSUS, SC*, February 12, 1765, E.1p, 9/442; “Minutes of the Southern Congress at Augusta, Georgia,” *CRNC*, 11: 164 [sixty]; McReynolds, “Catawba Population Dynamics During the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries,” 44-45 [population count].

⁵³²“Minutes of the Southern Congress,” *CRNC*, 6: 202.

⁵³³“February 20, 1764,” *RSUS, SC*, E.1p, 9/41.

When Ayres sold the gifts, he broke the Catawba custom of reciprocity. Whether Catawbas actually chose Ayres to represent and agree to the considerable 1763 land cession remains ambiguous. In addition to violating the law of consensus, Ayres neglected to distribute the gifts among all Catawbas. Catawba women and men viewed Ayres as an incompetent leader who failed to follow the custom of reciprocity, a practice that bound Catawba people through kinship and held their community together economically and socially. By 1765, Catawba women and men selected Captain Frow as their new leader.⁵³⁴

The British colonies assumed the 1763 treaty was binding, despite the lack of Catawba ratification. Within a year a surveyor began measuring and charting the boundaries of Catawba land, as agreed upon in the treaty. The 1764 plat that resulted from the survey showed only one field near what appeared to be three occupied Catawba towns on a small section of the land, highlighting why white settlers believed land in Catawba territory was vacant (Figure 12).⁵³⁵

Catawba women and men viewed the land much differently. To Catawbas, the land included a diverse quantity of natural resources that Catawba women and men used for the subsistence of their families. Oak, pine, and hickory trees lay within the surveyed land. Numerous pathways and waterways led in and out of three Catawba towns, routes that Catawba people still used for transportation. Also within this new boundary, Catawba women gathered a diversity of wild plants and nuts, hunted small game, and used clay holes located near the river and branches for collecting clay and building the pots on which their families increasingly depended for their livelihood. The towns are depicted as clusters of homes with dashes drawn

⁵³⁴I think Captain Frow may have been Captain Joe, a headman who made his mark on numerous land leases in the 1780s and 1790s. For examples of similar laws prohibiting the cession of Indian lands later in history, see Theda Perdue and Michael D. Green, *The Columbia Guide to American Indians of the Southeast* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 85-86, 96.

⁵³⁵1764 Samuel Wyly Map "Catawba Nation," Map Collection 4-7-4, SCDAH.

along the edges of the river and diagonal lines drawn near the towns illustrate how women improved and managed the land. Meanwhile, Catawba men hunted throughout the heavily wooded forest when they were not away at war. Most important, Catawba used the map as a legal document to prove their ownership and to illustrate the absence of white planters and farmers.



Figure 12: A portion of the 1764 Samuel Wyly map with Catawba towns highlighted. Photo courtesy of Brooke Bauer, original map held by South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Map Collection.

As guaranteed at the 1763 Congress, Catawbas received legal title to their land in the form of a land survey and grant. Copies of the 1764 plat identified Catawbas' land as the

“Catawba Nation,” “Indian Land,” or “Indian Boundary.”⁵³⁶ Yet by 1765, Catawba leaders were sending complaints to the South Carolina legislature informing them of the ineffectiveness of the survey, noting that “there is several people of North Carolina settled within our lines.” Settlers from North Carolina disregarded the 1763 boundary line between the provinces meant to stop North Carolina from granting additional tracts of land within the Catawbas’ territory, land that lay within South Carolina borders.⁵³⁷ Although the South Carolina governor attempted to prohibit all settlers from inhabiting Catawba land, officials who governed from Charlestown had little control in the backcountry. Because of the geographical distance and almost certainly a lack of will, South Carolina leaders did not force the removal of white planters and farmers with the boundary, nor prevent further settlement. Whites continued to reduce the Catawbas’ land base.⁵³⁸

Land Leasing System

For Catawba people, the 1770s brought no relief from settler encroachment, despite the 1763 treaty and the Royal Proclamation’s guarantee of protection. In addition, Catawbas became entangled in another war that altered the boundaries of Catawba territory and the lives of all Catawba people. As Catawbas’ world changed again, women and men found ways to adapt while holding onto land management practices in which Catawba women shared a status complementary to Catawba men as landowners.

In the latter half of the eighteenth century, several factors empowered Catawba women in their roles as land leasers. Catawba women still controlled the products of their labor, crops and

⁵³⁶Douglas Summers Brown, “Catawba Land Records, 1795-1829,” *The South Carolina Historical Magazine*, Vol. 59, No. 2 (Apr., 1958), 1.

⁵³⁷A. S. Salley, “The Boundary Line between North Carolina and South Carolina,” *Bulletins of the Historical Commission of South Carolina*, No. 10 (Columbia: The State Company, 1929), 17-21.

⁵³⁸Kirkland and Kennedy, *Historic Camden*, 1: 57; Brown, “Catawba Land Records, 1795-1829,” 1. For sectional politics in South Carolina, see Klein, *Unification of a Slave State*.

other goods cultivated on the land; it was not a stretch for them to handle leases on a level equal to Catawba men. Women's land ownership was an economic and social necessity that enabled them to feed and raise their children, and thus, strengthened the Nation demographically. In addition, the prolonged absence of Catawba men, away hunting or at war, made it easier for Catawba women to conduct land business with white planters and farmers.

By 1775, as British colonists argued that the American Revolution was about political freedom, it was also about territorial expansion, especially on lands the Crown considered reserved for Indians. Due to the demographic growth in the northeastern British American colonies, the high price and scarcity of land pushed young Euro-American men to migrate south into Catawba territory in search of fertile, inexpensive land. The white populace, consequently, had exploded in the Piedmont region due to immigration and natural increase. In North Carolina alone, the non-Indian population grew from 45,000 in 1750 to 275,000 in 1775.⁵³⁹ In Georgia, acting Royal Governor James Habersham took measures to remove "stragling northward People" from Indian land.⁵⁴⁰ In South Carolina, the white population grew from 25,000 in 1750 to 49,066 in the 1770s, and 38% of the 49,066 lived in the backcountry—overwhelming numbers for 300-400 Catawbas who were struggling to hold onto their land.⁵⁴¹

In January of 1772, Catawba women and men met with William Henry Drayton, a member of the South Carolina Council and land speculator, in one of their towns to discuss leasing land to him for twenty-one years. Drayton's lease proposal dealt with Catawba women's

⁵³⁹Colin G. Calloway, *The American Revolution in Indian Country: Crisis and Diversity in Native American Communities* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 19.

⁵⁴⁰"Letter to George Galphin from Governor James Habersham, August 12, 1772," *The Letters of Hon. James Habersham, 1756-1772, Collections of the Georgia Historical Society* (Savannah: The Savannah Morning News Prints, 1904), 6: 199-200.

⁵⁴¹For white demographics, see Peter A. Coclanis, *The Shadow of a Dream: Economic Life and Death in the South Carolina Low Country, 1620-1920* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 64-70; Klein, *Unification of a Slave State*, 9. For Catawba population in 1770s, see Mooney, *The Siouan Tribes of the East*, 73.

concerns about their land by reserving a smaller, unspecified tract of land for the Catawba towns and cornfields, an allocation he hoped would put their fears to rest. Drayton claimed that he wanted to protect Catawbas as a father and ensure that settlers did not abuse them. Attempting to sweeten the deal, he emphasized that he would *allow* Catawba men to hunt throughout Catawba land—a reduction from 1763 treaty agreement that allowed men to hunt throughout their ancestral territory. In return for his protection, a payment of seven pounds and seven shillings, and his so-called preservation of Catawba land, Catawba people would generously permit him to rent tracts of their land to colonists, but at a much higher price.⁵⁴²

The proposal would have heightened Catawbas' anxiety over the possibility of losing their land. Although Drayton's proposal guaranteed that a tract of land within the 144,000 acres would be set aside for the towns and fields, the agreement failed to provide a precise geographical location. Catawba women must have wondered anxiously if they would have to vacate their homes and fields for a location where they would have to rebuild their towns and clear the land for fields. Furthermore, Catawba crops currently grew in rich, fertile soil. Drayton made no promise that the land he had in mind would be fertile or that Catawba women would get to choose it. Drayton's proposal must have troubled Catawba men as well. According to the 1763 treaty, Catawba men were permitted to travel and hunt throughout their ancestral territory, a much larger, unrestricted area than the vague parcel of land guaranteed to Catawba people.⁵⁴³ The land grab was nothing new to Catawbas, but red flags must have gone up for Catawba women and men alike.

⁵⁴²John Wyly to Joseph Kershaw, January 28, 1773, and enclosure ("A Copie of The Talk Deliverd by Mr. Drayton to the Catawba Indians th8 January 1773, as nigh as I Can Reollect"), Joseph Brevard Kershaw Papers, South Caroliniana Library, Columbia; *SCCJ*, December 1, 1772, RSUS, S.C. E.1p, 10/6, 247-248 [letter from *SCCJ* detailing the lease].

⁵⁴³I have been unable to locate evidence to show that Catawba hunters exercised their right to hunt throughout their ancestral territory.

For Catawba people, the lease proposal came as a double threat because it was sanctioned by the colony of South Carolina. When Drayton arrived in the Catawba town, he passed along a letter from the South Carolina Council that emphasized the lease was the best method to preserve their lands. The land scheme failed. Camden resident John Wyly, who witnessed the Catawbas meeting with Drayton, claimed he wanted nothing to do with the affair.⁵⁴⁴ The evidence neglects to tell us why John opposed Drayton, but perhaps the tension between the two men originated from Drayton's belief that the Quakers, "a dangerous body" that refused to take up arms in the war needed to be expelled from the country.⁵⁴⁵ John's criticism of Drayton's proposal may have resulted from the Camden resident's close relationship with Catawbas. John was also the brother of Samuel Wyly and friend to Joseph Kershaw, two men who had carefully developed diplomatic relationships with Catawba people. John wrote immediately to Kershaw, who served as the Catawba agent, that the Catawbas "did not understand that [Drayton] was to Settle the whole of the Land."⁵⁴⁶

At some point, Indian Superintendent John Stuart, successor to Edmond Atkin, learned of Drayton's plan and went before the South Carolina Council to state his opposition to the land scheme. Standing before the Council in the state house in Charlestown, Stuart argued that the 1763 Royal Proclamation and treaty prohibited such negotiations. He reminded the Council that only the Superintendent of Indian Affairs had authority of the King of England to deal with the Indians and negotiate any land transfers between colonists and Indians. At first, the Council was

⁵⁴⁴John Wyly to Joseph Kershaw, January 28, 1773, and enclosure, Joseph Brevard Kershaw Papers; *SCCJ*, December 1, 1772, RSUS, S.C. E.1p, 10/6, 247-248.

⁵⁴⁵William Henry Drayton, "Speech Upon the Articles of Confederation Delivered Before the General Assembly on January 20, 1778," in H. Niles, ed., *Principles and Acts of the Revolution in America* (Baltimore: Printed and Published for the Editor, William Ogden Niles, 1822), 110-111.

⁵⁴⁶John Wyly was probably brother to land surveyor Samuel Wyley. John Wyly to Joseph Kershaw, January 28, 1773, and enclosure, Joseph Brevard Kershaw Papers; *SCCJ*, December 1, 1772, RSUS, S.C. E.1p, 10/6, 247-248.

willing to turn over South Carolina alliance and responsibility for the Catawbas to Drayton, it withdrew support of his plan and deemed it “an improper and impolitic measure” that could result in “bad consequences,” possibly another Indian war for the colony.⁵⁴⁷ Several months after the Council made its decision, Catawbas reminded the Council “they would not part with their Land to any people whatsoever that as long as any Indians remained the Land was to belong to them,” a sentiment Catawbas repeated into the 1800s.⁵⁴⁸

When Sally’s people heard rumors of conflict between the colonists and the crown, they sent several headmen to Charlestown to gather news. By then, the rebels were in charge. South Carolina’s Council of Safety, created to raise militia, supplies, and funds for the fight, told the Catawba delegation “that our brothers on the other side of the water, wanted to take our property from us without our consent.”⁵⁴⁹ The claim surely caused the Catawba leaders to look at one another mindful of the threat to Catawba land that their people had been confronting for decades. Yet, Catawbas’ close relations with the white residents of Camden and the fact that the rebel Americans controlled the colony influenced the Catawba men’s participation in the war.

In September of 1776, Catawba women helped fortify the towns as their husbands, sons, and brothers prepared to go to war against the crown. With the prolonged absence of Catawba men, the women knew the towns and their families would be vulnerable to enemy attack, as they had during previous conflicts.⁵⁵⁰ In preparation for an anticipated attack, women gathered and

⁵⁴⁷SCCJ, December 1, 1772, RSUS, S.C. E.1p, 10/6, 247, January 20, 1773, 11/1, 29; Stuart to the Catawbas, February 18, 1773, Joseph Brevard Kershaw Papers.

⁵⁴⁸SCCJ, October 30, 1773, RSUS, S.C. E.1p, 11/2, 2.

⁵⁴⁹“Papers of the First Council of Safety of the Revolutionary Party in South Carolina, June – November, 1775,” *The South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine* (Charleston: The Walker, Evans, & Cogswell Co., 1900), 1: 41-75; William Moultrie, *Memoirs of the American Revolution, So Far as It Related to the States of North and South Carolina, and Georgia* (New York: Printed by David Longworth for the Author, 1802), 1: 81 [quote].

⁵⁵⁰William Edwin Hemphill, Wylma Anne Wates, and R. Nicholas Olsberg, eds., *The State Records of South Carolina: Journals of the General Assembly and House of Representatives, 1776-1780* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1970), 127, 172-173 [Assembly’s concern about the defense of the backcountry].

stored food supplies close to their homes, and they made certain that all firearms fired properly. That same month, a contingent of twenty Catawba men served as scouts under South Carolina militia's Colonel Andrew Williamson in an expedition against the Cherokee Middle Towns. Whether Catawbas viewed the conflict as an opportunity to renew fighting with the Cherokees remains unknown. By the end of September, Catawba women mourned the loss of one Catawba man killed in the battle and nursed two wounded men back to health.⁵⁵¹

Catawba women continued to fill the role of provider, but also that of nurse as large parties of Catawba warriors left their towns to assist the Americans throughout South Carolina and in Georgia.⁵⁵² As the war raged on, Catawba women mourned and buried deceased kinsmen who died in battle or from disease.⁵⁵³ Catawba men who traveled to the low country of South Carolina and the northeast portion of Georgia suffered the same illnesses that their American counterparts experienced—smallpox, malaria, typhoid, and other fevers common to the region.⁵⁵⁴

In 1780, the conflict attacked Catawbas from two fronts—disease and the British troops. The summer and fall of 1780 turned into a season of “deadly sickness” that Catawba fighters brought home to their towns and people. In June, Lord Charles Cornwallis stationed his British troops in the settlement of Camden and approached the Catawba towns. At Camden, Cornwallis

⁵⁵¹“Letter from the North Carolina Council of Safety to Patrick Henry, October 25, 1776,” *CRNC* (Raleigh: Josephus Daniels, Printer to the State, 1890), 10: 860-861; Foster Alexander Sondley and Theodore F. Davidson, *Asheville and Buncombe County* (Asheville: The Citizen Company, 1922), 52-53. For a detailed account of Colonel Williamson's expedition, see Drayton, *Memoirs of the American Revolution*, 2: 354-359 [killed and wounded Catawbas, 357]. “Fragment of a Daily Journal Kept by an Unidentified Officer Relating to the Cherokee Expedition of 1776,” trans. by Will Graves in *Southern Campaigns of the American Revolution*, Vol. 2, No. 10 (Oct., 2005), 34-36 [20 warriors].

⁵⁵²Moultrie, *Memoirs of the American Revolution*, Vol. 1, 455.

⁵⁵³Officers for the American rebels mentioned a “violent illness” in 1776, see Drayton, *Memoirs of the American Revolution*, 2: 336. In 1779, William Moultrie suffered from “sickness” when he encamped outside of Charlestown, see Moultrie, *Memoirs of the American Revolution*, 1: 390-400.

⁵⁵⁴Fenn, *Pox Americana*; Peter McCandless, “Revolutionary Fever: Disease and War in the Lower South, 1776-1783,” *Transactions of the American Clinical and Climatological Association*, 118 (2007), 225-249.

noted that most of his men, including his surgeon and Lieutenant Colonel Francis Rawdon, suffered from some sort of sickness.⁵⁵⁵ When British troops arrived in the backcountry near the Catawba towns, Catawba women, children, and elders fled to Virginia under the protection of the warriors, taking only what they could carry with them. Rawdon, who learned of Catawbas withdrawal from the region, sent a message to Catawba leaders stating if they returned to their towns, the British would provide them with protection.⁵⁵⁶ According to a resident who lived nearby, Catawbas, who allied themselves with the Americans, ignored Rawdon's offer.⁵⁵⁷

Why would Catawbas uproot their families from their homes, pushing their wives, children, and the elderly into the violent and defenseless countryside? The British troops must have been imposing in technology and number, but perhaps the "deadly sickness" in the region served as additional motivation to leave their homes and quarantine their people, as they did in 1759. Regardless, Catawbas did not return until spring of 1781, when women found their Catawba homes burned, their fields destroyed, and "all was gone; cattle, hogs, fowls...all gone."⁵⁵⁸ If inadequate provisions were not enough, Sally and other Catawbas continued dealing with cyclical bouts of disease that resulted in death and plummeting birth rates.⁵⁵⁹ Catawba women and their families grappled with demographic changes that altered traditional sources of authority and knowledge, felt strangled economically, and worried whether their children had a homeland to inherit.

⁵⁵⁵McCandless, "Revolutionary Fever," 233-234.

⁵⁵⁶"Lieutenant Colonel Francis Lord Rawdon to Lieutenant General Charles Earl Cornwallis, 11 June 1780" transcribed from the Cornwallis Papers in Scoggins, *The Day It Rained Militia*, 185-186 [Cornwallis Papers microfilm at the SCDAH, Columbia]. For Catawbas in Virginia, see Fries, *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina*, 4: 1695-1696.

⁵⁵⁷Hutchison, "The Catawba Indians," 1.

⁵⁵⁸Feltman, *The Journal of Lieut. William Feltman, of the First Pennsylvania Regiment, 1781-82*, 30-31 [burned]; Hutchison, "The Catawba Indians," 1[all gone].

⁵⁵⁹Kirkland, *Historic Camden*, Part 2, 118-119.

After the American Revolution, Catawba peoples' anxiety about land encroachment escalated as the settler population around the Catawba Nation exploded. In 1782, in response to a second wave of migrants, a delegation of Catawba leaders traveled to Philadelphia to discuss their concerns with members of the United States Congress. The men requested that "certain tracts of lands reserved for their use...may be so secured to their tribe as not to be intruded into by force, nor alienated even with their own consent."⁵⁶⁰ The request indicates that Catawbas feared losing their land to further encroachment, particularly through coercion.

As Catawba women and men watched the white population grow, they must have deliberated about what action they could take to stop the advancement of white settlement. No longer able to muster enough warriors to fight the settlers, Catawba leaders decided that diplomacy was safer for their people. Despite the leaders' appeal, Catawbas received little protection under the new American government as legal owners of their territory. The 1781 Articles of Confederation gave Congress authority to manage Indian affairs only with Indians who lived outside of the thirteen states. According to Article 9, Congress could not get involved in the issue between the Catawbas and South Carolina because doing so infringed on that states' rights.⁵⁶¹ Congress recommended that the South Carolina legislature settle the issue to "the satisfactions and security of the said tribe," and in effect, put the fox in charge of the hen house.⁵⁶² There is no indication that South Carolina leaders deliberated about the 1763 treaty nor

⁵⁶⁰*Journals of the American Congress from 1774-1788: In Four Volumes*, Vol. 4 (Washington: Way and Gideon, 1823), 101-102.

⁵⁶¹"Articles of Confederation, March 1, 1781," *The Avalon Project*, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/artconf.asp [accessed June 25, 2015].

⁵⁶²*Journals of the American Congress from 1774-1788*, 4: 101-102. For a detailed treatment of the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation in terms of Indian relations, see Leonard J. Sadosky, *Revolutionary Negotiations: Indians, Empires, and Diplomats in the Founding of America* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009), 83-89; Fred Anderson and Andrew Cayton, *The Dominion of War: Empire and Liberty in North America, 1500-2000* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 184-185; David Andrew Nichols, *Red Gentlemen & White Savages: Indians, Federalists, and the Search for Order on the American Frontier* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2008), 77-78.

is there any mention of state legislation on Catawba lands until 1785.

In February of 1785, Catawba women and men heard of South Carolina Governor William Moultrie's paternalistic plan to "save" the Catawbas. Moultrie introduced a proposal to the General Assembly that would put uncultivated Catawba land to use by allowing Catawbas to lease out parcels of their land as a means of financial support for the tribe. "If they are Suffered to live in their present Ignorant uncivilized manner" Moultrie insisted, "they will be a burthen to the state." The assembly refused to act on Moultrie's plan, ostensibly because the Catawbas had not requested to lease their land and because the 1763 treaty barred the private acquisition of Indian lands.⁵⁶³ More significantly, assembly approval of the governor's scheme would have recognized Catawbas as legal property owners with rights as landlords that South Carolina law protected. Despite the legislature's opposition, the land leasing system began unofficially later that year when Catawbas initiated the first lease to Samuel Knox, who migrated to the region in the 1750s.⁵⁶⁴

For adult Catawbas, the lease system was the solution to their "settler" problem. Women and men rented large tracts of land to the newcomers, a measure that worked for a time and provided Catawba people with needed cash and goods. Importantly, the lease system also produced a paper trail of the Catawbas' territorial boundary, a factor the Indians hoped would keep stragglers and squatters off their land. These early leases began as spoken agreements sealed with a handshake between leading Catawba men and individual renters. Although there are no written records of council meetings, Catawba leaders discussed the lease proposals with

⁵⁶³Lark Emerson Adams and Rosa Stoney Lumpkin, ed. *The State Records of South Carolina: Journals of the House of Representatives, 1785-1786* (Columbia: USC Press, 1979), 97, 133 [hereafter cited as *JHR, 1785-1786*].

⁵⁶⁴Pettus, *Leasing Away a Nation*, 29. I have been unable to locate the original lease document.

Catawba women and men before finalizing the verbal contract, as they did of any issue of import to the Nation.

As the leasing system grew, Catawba women wanted to ensure they had the unrestricted ability to collect wild plants, firewood, water, clay, while men made certain they had access to hunt throughout the forest unhampered. In 1783, a group of Catawba men met with Samuel Knox to discuss his use of Catawba land. Where the group met remains unclear, but perhaps they gathered on the specific tract of land leased to Knox to negotiate terms. Catawbas' chief concern in these lease negotiations centered on whether the boundaries hampered their access to natural resources. In Knox's case, Catawba men described the property boundaries in Catawba terms, as "yap" (trees), "yačamaťú?" (creeks), "ča?" (branches), and the Indian line boundary established by the 1763 treaty.

Most of the leases Catawbas contracted in the early years started out similar to Knox's contract—verbal agreements between Catawba people and settlers that, over time, developed into written legal documents. Knox, who leased hundreds of acres of Catawba land and owned additional land in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, established a plantation on Catawba land and began farming.⁵⁶⁵ Two years later, in 1785, the Catawba men made their marks on a back dated lease document, agreeing to a twenty-five year lease term. Four of six Catawba leaders made their marks on the lease, including General New River, Major John Brown, John Thompson, and Captain Squash; Colonel John Airs (Ayres) and Pine Tree George gave their verbal consent.⁵⁶⁶ These early lease contracts focused on the land and its boundaries, but contained little information about who received payment. Judging from the payment method

⁵⁶⁵*Alexander Sutton, et. al. vs. John Jackson*, Court of Equity, York County, No. 60, File 1, 1830, Historical Center of York [regarding the Samuel Knox Estate].

⁵⁶⁶Louise Pettus, trans., "A Copy of Samuel Knox Lease with the Catawba Indians," Land Lease, Blumer Collection, NASC.

shown in the lease book of the 1800s, Catawbas of specific lineages took turns collecting rent. Between 1783 and 1785, Catawbas received advance payments from Knox for the lease, a total of ten silver dollars, three horses, and a rifle. According to the lease document, when the terms of the 25-year lease concluded, Catawbas allowed Knox and his heirs to lease the land for ten dollars per year forever.⁵⁶⁷

Meanwhile, Catawba people attempted to stop white planters and farmers from whittling away Catawba sovereignty and land rights. The state had appointed new agents, but these men either neglected their duties or their power was limited in preventing further encroachment. When Catawba appeals of 1786 and 1792 for agents with greater legal authority went unanswered, they petitioned again to confer greater authority to their agents. In 1815, the General Assembly empowered their agents to prevent squatters from trespassing on their land.⁵⁶⁸ Catawba agents had authority to prosecute anyone who resided on Catawba land without a lease and granted them the ability to collect for damages or injuries done to the Catawbas' personal property because of unlawful entry. If the agents collected any money, it was designated for the use of the Nation. The Assembly also authorized the agents to seize property for unpaid debts, an ongoing but unresolved problem for Catawba landowners.⁵⁶⁹

Catawba people soon found themselves surrounded by settlers who had moved onto fertile Catawba land. The affordable cost of renting enormous tracts of Catawba land attracted hundreds of landless farmers to the region. Newcomers like Knox told their kin and former neighbors about the rich, fertile land in Catawba territory and by 1790, the white population

⁵⁶⁷Pettus, "Samuel Knox and the First Catawba Indian Lease."

⁵⁶⁸"Catawba Indians, Petition Asking that their Superintendents be Empowered to Prevent Trespass on their Lands," #5, 1815, *Petitions to the General Assembly*, South Carolina, SCDAH.

⁵⁶⁹David J. McCord, ed., *Statutes at Large*, No. 2093 (Columbia: A.S. Johnston, 1839), 6: 18-19. York County's Court of Common Pleas records fail to indicate whether any agent prosecuted anyone for squatting on Catawba land.

totaled nearly twenty thousand, while the Catawba population remained just under three hundred people.⁵⁷⁰ Overwhelmed at the growing Euro-American demographics, Catawba women and men embarked on the leasing system to ensure they received just compensation for their land.

Catawbas did not consider these documents land sales, only permission to use the land. Although they leased land to white settlers, the land still belonged to and provided sustenance to Catawba people. In March 1786, South Carolina leaders addressed a 1771 complaint of the Catawbas, who expressed concern about white farmers and planters obstructing their ability to hunt within their territory. Annoyed Catawba leaders emphasized their alliance to the state as loyal friends and good soldiers, service that did not merit tenants beating them when they hunted on leased land. Catawbas further stressed that they “are a people who have been Raised to Hunting and killing Deer, and are unacustomed to any other Mode of Industry wherewith to support ourselves and familys.”⁵⁷¹ Many of the lease contracts protected the tenants from “any hindrance Molestation or interruption from the s[ai]d Cataba Nation” as long as Catawbas received rent payments, wording that neglected to safeguard Catawba land use rights.⁵⁷² In March 1786, the South Carolina House of Representatives resolved that Catawba people had the right, according to the 1763 treaty, to hunt throughout the territory. The proclamation made no mention about Catawba land ownership or the threats of encroachment, but a section of the resolution allowed for the Catawbas to select at least five agents to represent them. The proclamation directed the agents to manage the leases and to assist Catawbas legally when

⁵⁷⁰*Heads of Families at the First Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1790: South Carolina* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1908), 9. For Catawba population, see Mooney, *The Siouan Tribes of the East*, 73.

⁵⁷¹Adams and Lumpkin, eds., *JHR, 1785-1786*, 511-12.

⁵⁷²“Samuel Elliott Land Lease with Catawba Indian Nation Headmen,” June 8, 1811, White Homestead Archives, Fort Mill.

settling grievances with white tenants for “breach of Contract.”⁵⁷³ The first agents or commissioners, as the State recognized them, included Charles Miller, Andrew Foster, Thomas Spratt, and Nathaniel Irwin.⁵⁷⁴

In the 1790s, Catawbas realized the 1763 treaty and subsequent Indian boundary line failed to protect their land from further encroachment. In 1791, a small delegation of Catawba men seized an opportunity to plead their case to President George Washington when he travelled near their Nation. Catawba leaders conveyed to Washington their concerns about growing white settlement on Catawba land. By this point, the United States Constitution had changed the role of the federal government in treaty making giving the United States government the absolute power to negotiate treaties with American Indian nations. Because of the new centralized government, Washington dismissed the headmen’s apprehensions believing the 1763 treaty secured their land.⁵⁷⁵ The following year, in 1792, Catawba leaders submitted a petition to the South Carolina legislature, reminding state leaders of Catawba loyalty and service to South Carolina. The headmen told the legislative officials that the 1763 treaty guaranteed Catawbas legal possession of their land. Although the petitions neglected to include Catawba women, the appeals did address concerns that centered on places that women controlled. The distress and

⁵⁷³Adams and Lumpkin, eds., *JHR, 1785-1786* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1979), 549, 589, 591, 594.

⁵⁷⁴Pettus, *Leasing Away a Nation*, 96.

⁵⁷⁵George Washington, *The Diary of George Washington, from 1789 to 1791 Embracing the Opening of the First Congress and His Tours through New England, Long Island, and the Southern States*, Vol. 4 (New York: C. B. Richardson & Co., 1860), 196; “The Constitution of the United States: A Transcription,” Art. 1, Sect. 8, *The Charters of Freedom*, http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution_transcript.html [accessed June 26, 2015]; Brown, *The Catawba Indians*, 293. For further details on the U. S. Constitution, see Woody Holton, *Unruly Americans and the Origins of the Constitution* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2007); Sadosky, *Revolutionary Negotiations*, 119-122.

consequences of the American Revolution had prompted them “to Rent out of our land for the Suply[sic] of our Wants” because British troops had destroyed their towns and fields.⁵⁷⁶

In the 1790s, the leasing system became unmanageable for Catawba women and men. Many leases changed hands several times, and were partitioned and sold to new tenants for a profit, earnings that Catawba people seldom received. Because the leases changed hands so often, Catawba land owners found it difficult to collect payments, never certain who the most current leaseholder was, a situation that helped some tenants avoid making lease payments. Discouraged, Catawba people continued searching for a solution to the illegal leases, requesting that the state of South Carolina give their agents the power to regulate the lease system.⁵⁷⁷

Catawba women and men had little power in controlling who the leaseholders were once the agents took over. Little evidence remains of how Catawbas negotiated the contracts, but once the state gave the commissioners power to regulate leases, farmers and planters no longer needed to meet with Catawba headmen to lease land. Instead, they went to the Indian commissioners, who scheduled a meeting with all the parties in attendance. The commissioners, who also served as surveyors, drew up lease contracts using a handwritten contract template in which they wrote in the date, the names of the Catawba headmen, the leaseholder’s name, and the boundaries. The commissioners and the leaseholder witnessed the document and all of the Catawba men made their marks on the contract, except for John Nettles who signed his name.

Although Catawba people continued leasing their land to Euro-American settlers as a means of support, they recognized the threat that white settlement posed to their towns, homes, and fields. In 1796, a party of twelve Catawba men visited George Washington at Mount

⁵⁷⁶The *Journal* does not mention anything further about the Catawba petition, see Michael E. Stevens, ed, *Journals of the House of Representatives, 1792-1794* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1988), 77-78 [hereafter cited as *JHR, 1792-1794*].

⁵⁷⁷Stevens, ed., *JHR, 1792-1794*, 77-78.

Vernon. Washington did not indicate the purpose of the visit, only that the Catawba delegation's visit of several days disturbed his annual retreat.⁵⁷⁸ However, one can imagine that the delegation hoped that Washington would remember their service and help Catawbas secure their land.

Catawba women were conscious of the danger to their land, homes, and the very survival of their people. In spring of 1796, before the Mount Vernon trip, women and men of the Nation took action to secure the remainder of commonly held Catawba tribal land. While there is little evidence to show that Catawbas met over a period of months to discuss the land issue, it is reasonable to assume that Catawbas held more than one council to deliberate a topic that concerned the Nation—as they do today. Although we do not know the exact place, time, and length of the meeting, but Catawbas likely debated the issue, sometimes heatedly, for hours to days on end. Catawba women may have stood together, arguing that towns, homes, and fields had always been under their control and the land upon which the towns and fields stood needed to be preserved for Catawba people, especially the children.

Finally, in the spring of 1796, Catawba women and men made their decision. They used the American legal system to place the remaining land in control of the women of the Nation. In April 1796, three Catawba men deeded approximately 500 acres on the east side of the Catawba River to Sally New River and “women of the said nation.” Four of the five agents witnessed the land transaction. Sally was the only Catawba woman singled out by name on the deed “in consideration of Divers good causes unto them done by her.” In the contract, the Catawba leaders “confirm[ed] unto her the s^d Sally New River her with other women of the Nation themselves their heirs successors or assigns forever all that messuage tract or parcel of Land

⁵⁷⁸George Washington and Jared Sparks, *The Writings of George Washington Being His Correspondence, Addresses, Messages, and Other Papers, Official and Private, Selected and Published from Original Manuscripts*, Vol. XI (Boston: Ferdinand Andrews, Publishers, 1839), 152-153.

situated and lying in a tract or parcel of Land fifteen miles square to them guaranteed by the government Now by the States.”⁵⁷⁹

The land deed is significant for two reasons. First, by legally deeding the remainder of their land to the women, Catawba leaders acted on their recognition that white settlement and the leasing system posed a real threat to Catawba land and to the Catawbas’ survival as a people. In transferring land to Catawba women, the deed embodied the Catawba custom of women owning improved land—that is, houses and fields. The particular land specified in the deed was also significant: it was the site where Catawbas still resided and most threatened by encroachment. By recording a deed to this particular tract in the name of Sally New River and “other women of the Nation,” the Catawbas used the American legal system to maintain founding principles of Catawba ways of life with a specific focus on women as protectors of their land.⁵⁸⁰

As for the rest of their land, Catawbas continued leasing to white tenants in order to survive. From the early 1780s through 1839, Catawba women and men relied on their agents to keep records of the leases and payments. Many of the early written leases did not include a survey or a plat and boundary. Disputes soon surfaced between leaseholders, arguments that led to property damages and lawsuits.⁵⁸¹ The early lease contracts stipulated that “in case there should arise any disputes, about the bounderies of lines between two lease-holders, or other interlocking of lines that neither they [sic] Nation nor their Superintendents shall be lyable either

⁵⁷⁹1796 Land Indenture to Sally New River, Lancaster County, Deed Book G, 166; Brown, *The Catawba Indians*, 228, 277. In the late 1700s, message was defined as “the house and ground set apart for household uses,” see Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, 3rd ed. (Dublin: Printed by W. G. Jones for Thomas Ewing in Dames, 1768).

⁵⁸⁰Hudson, *The Southeastern Indians*, 185-191 [kinship system]; Lanman, *Adventures in the Wilds of the United States and British American Provinces*, Vol. 2, 410-411[First Woman].

⁵⁸¹The *Alexander Sutton, et. al. vs. John Jackson* court case of 1830 is the only lawsuit I have located that focuses on Catawba land, see Court of Equity, York County, No. 60, File 1, 1830, Historical Center of York [regarding the Samuel Knox Estate].

in damages or any other costs on account of the Same.”⁵⁸² Many of the disputes began because early leases failed to provide precise boundary lines. Samuel Knox’s 1785 lease, for example, described his property as being near the 1763 Indian line using trees, creeks, and branches as the boundary. To settle the disagreements, Catawbas and their agents agreed to have all the leases surveyed, platted, and recorded in ledgers known as the lease books.

One of the Catawbas first agents, Charles Miller, recorded many of the initial Catawba land leases, plats, and payments from 1763 to 1800. According to rumor, his wife destroyed the first lease book when he died.⁵⁸³ A second lease book kept from 1810-1829 shows an equal number of Catawba women and men leasing large tracts of land to Euro-Americans.⁵⁸⁴ South Carolina’s Surveyor General recorded other land leases with the state in 1838 when the General Assembly passed a Reversionary Act that required leaseholders to submit their plats to the state. The Act required leaseholders to pay a bond to the state treasury, an amount equivalent to their rent payment. The Assembly planned to use the collected money for the Catawbas. Not surprisingly, most of the leaseholders refused to turn their plats into the state, and the Catawbas never received money from the state for the few who did submit their plats.⁵⁸⁵

One of the major problems Catawba landowners confronted was the agents’ inconsistency when recording the leases and land boundaries, a problem that led Catawbas to issue complaints to the state legislature regarding selling and subleasing lands. New tenants, who subleased, purchased, and paid for land from the original leaseholders, refused to pay rent to

⁵⁸²“Samuel Elliott Land Lease with Catawba Indian Nation Headmen,” 8 June 1811, The White Homestead Archives, Fort Mill, South Carolina.

⁵⁸³I have searched for the first lease book. Unfortunately, the book may have been destroyed because I have been unable to locate it.

⁵⁸⁴*Alexander Sutton vs. John Jackson*, York County Court of Equity, No. 6, File 1, May 31, 1830, Historical Center of York, South Carolina; *Superintendents of the Catawba Nation, Plat and Lease Book, 1810-1825*.

⁵⁸⁵David J. McCord, *The Statutes at Large of South Carolina, Containing the Acts from 1814, Exclusive, to 1838, Inclusive* (Columbia: A. S. Johnston, 1839), 6: 602-603.

the Indians.⁵⁸⁶ Catawba landowners needed their agents to use the authority granted to them in 1786 and 1792 to regulate subleasing practices and to ensure Catawbas received rent payments. By 1805, frustrated Catawba leaders petitioned the General Assembly to allow them to choose new, effective agents to represent them.⁵⁸⁷ Aside from sending petitions to state officials, Catawbas had few legal options in collecting rent. Non-Indian tenants, meanwhile, began pushing for their own representation.

Catawba women and men dealt with many tenants who believed they owned the land they leased from Catawbas. In February 1787, a group of eighteen white residents who lived on Catawba land sent a petition to the House of Representatives. In the petition, the residents declared the region “seems to have escaped the notice of the Legislature” because it was left without representation. The petitioners wanted South Carolina to annex the area between Twelve Mile Creek and the North Carolina-South Carolina line into one of the adjoining counties. This specific region belonged to Catawba Indians, as stipulated in the 1763 treaty. In response, the House appointed a committee to investigate the situation of Catawba land and the petitioners, but there is no evidence that the committee investigated.⁵⁸⁸

In 1791, Catawba women and men grew anxious when one hundred and fifty-three people, who identified themselves as the “Inhabitants of the Indian Land,” filed another grievance. The petitioners detailed their right to representation as landowners. They admitted that they did not believe it was the state’s intention to deprive them of representation since most

⁵⁸⁶Stevens, ed., *JHR, 1792-1794*, 77-78.

⁵⁸⁷“Headmen and Acting Chiefs of the Catawba Nation of Indians, Petition for an Act to Enable them to Appoint New Trustees or Agents,” #6, December 5, 1805, *Petitions to the General Assembly*, South Carolina, SCDAH.

⁵⁸⁸Michael E. Stevens and Christine M. Allen, *The State Records of South Carolina: Journals of the House of Representatives, 1787-1788* (Columbia: Published for the South Carolina Department of Archives and History by the University of South Carolina Press, 1981), 51-52, 88 [hereafter cited as *JHR, 1787-1788*]. The committee included Justice Pendleton, Colonel Bratton, Colonel Patton, and Mr. Minor Winn. I have been unable to locate the report.

of them had served in the American Revolution and had “fought and bled by your sides for the Cause of Liberty,” an argument parallel to Catawba men’s claim. They asked the House to consider their leases equal to freehold or titled estates because tenants held the land for terms of ninety-nine years, a request that went against Catawba law, as well as United States federal law that prohibited states from exchanging or selling Indian land.⁵⁸⁹ Still, the House failed to act, and the complaints continued through 1808 when leaseholders elected William Pettus to the House of Representatives. Legislators refused to seat Pettus because he was ineligible according to the 1790 state constitution that listed four conditions to run for office: One must be a white male, 21-years of age, a resident of the state for three years, and, most importantly, own five hundred acres of land free of debt. Pettus failed to qualify because of the final requirement. Although he leased over 1,000-acres of land from the Catawbas, he did not hold title to the land. In addition, the leaseholders who voted for him did not own their property, a factor that nullified the vote.⁵⁹⁰

Catawbas, cognizant of the tenants’ petitions, pressed their leaders to appeal to state legislators for protection to their land. Catawbas wanted the Assembly to pass and enforce laws that regulated lease terms and prohibited trespassing on their land. South Carolina finally passed legislation on the lease system in December 1808, when the General Assembly limited the terms of Catawba leases to ninety-nine years. The 1808 act called for five Indian commissioners to oversee the leasing system and to record rent payments. A new lease book managed by Hugh White began when the governor appointed him as one of the five new agents. To ensure the validity of the leases, at least four of the commissioners and four Catawba headmen had to

⁵⁸⁹Michael E. Stevens and Christine M. Allen, *The State Records of South Carolina: The Journals of the House of Representatives, 1791* (Columbia: Published for the South Carolina Department of Archives and History by the University of South Carolina Press, 1985), 212 [hereafter cited as *JHR, 1791*].

⁵⁹⁰Hutchison, “The Catawba Indians,” 1; Pettus, *Leasing Away a Nation*, 35.

witness and sign each document. The legislation allowed tenants to make rent payments three years in advance, a condition the General Assembly amended in 1812 to seven years.⁵⁹¹

Although the 1808 act regulated lease terms, the legislation failed to benefit Catawbas. The act is the first state law that established regulation by placing new restrictions on the leasing method. Most of the annual rent payments were contracted at low rates that varied widely from between \$.12 and \$30 for three years.⁵⁹² One local farmer complained that some of the leaseholders attempted to take advantage of the Catawbas by “pressing rent in advance as far as the Law would allow them.”⁵⁹³ Other settlers argued that placing a restriction on advance payments protected Catawbas from squandering their earnings on whiskey.

Poverty became such a problem that Catawbas asked state legislators to extend the advance payment terms to seven or eight years in November 1810. Rather than thinking of the term extension as Catawba women and men land owners showing their tenants mercy or leniency, changing the payment conditions serves as an indication that Catawbas, who lived in a state of constant want, had an immediate need for the lease proceeds.⁵⁹⁴ State officials did not respond to Catawbas’ appeal until December 1812, when they amended the 1808 act. The 1812 amendment allowed for advance payments up to seven years and made tenants legal freeholders, but only if they contracted a ninety-nine year lease of Catawba land, a term the state accepted as equivalent to freehold title.⁵⁹⁵

⁵⁹¹*Statutes at Large*, No. 1926, 5: 576-77. The ninety-nine year lease term was common as the longest possible term under colonial and federal period common law, see Stanley L. McMichael, *Long Term Land Leaseholds: Including Ninety-nine Year Leases* (Cleveland: Stanley L. McMichael, 1921), 13-14.

⁵⁹²*Superintendents of the Catawba Nation, Plat and Lease Book, 1810-1825*.

⁵⁹³Hutchison, “The Catawba Indians,” 1.

⁵⁹⁴“Chiefs and Head Men of the Catawba Indians of York District, Petition for the Repeal of an Act Concerning Rental Terms for their Lands,” #6, November 30, 1810, *Petitions to the General Assembly*.

⁵⁹⁵The latter clause of the 1812 act allowed tenants to vote and run for office; see *Statutes at Large*, No. 2018, 5: 678-679.

As Catawbas struggled to make ends meet, they adapted to the barter economy in the region in order to survive. The lease book of 1810 to 1829 illustrates how Catawba women and men adapted to the new economy. Between the years of 1790 and 1810, Catawbas and American inhabitants in Catawba territory experienced an economic transformation to their communities. The backcountry districts of South Carolina shifted from a small farming frontier to a community dominated by large plantations, as shown by the large tracts of land in the lease book (Figure 13).⁵⁹⁶

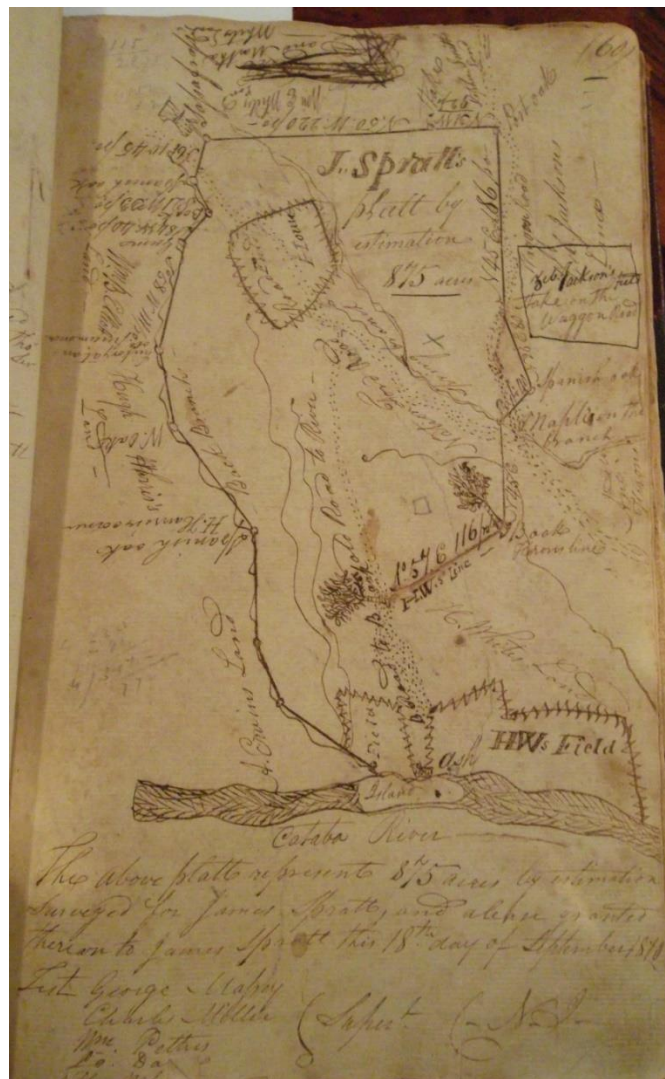


Figure 13: One of James Spratt's Catawba leases of 875 acres. Photo Brooke Bauer, original held by a private collector.

⁵⁹⁶For details on the change in the backcountry, see Klein, *Unification of a Slave State*, 1-8; and Moore, *World of Toil and Strife*.

In this evolving world, Catawba people also shifted the ways in which they participated in the economy. The deerskin trade had declined as overhunting and competition from white-owned livestock reduced deer populations. As settlement in the Piedmont increased, the frontier trade economy of the newcomers also changed to a market economy to which the Catawbas adapted. In this setting, Catawba women and men used their land as an asset, which enabled them to feed and clothe their families, and kept them busy traveling throughout the area.⁵⁹⁷

During the leasing years, Catawbas, especially in spring and summer, traveled from tenant to tenant, collecting lease payments. Ledger transactions in the lease book show that Catawbas received most of the payments in cash. Other items offered in lieu of cash included corn, wheat, beef, sugar, and coffee, as well as cattle, horses, shoes, satisfaction of store credit, and cloth. Out of hundreds of transactions recorded, one Catawba received whiskey as payment twice, a figure that challenges the stereotype of the drunken Indian. Barter transactions were typical among backcountry farmers and planters who simply broadened the exchange practice to include Catawba landowners.⁵⁹⁸

The rent payments that Catawbas collected varied considerably. In August 1816, for example, tenant Andrew Heron leased 370 acres for \$5 per year from Sally New River. Heron paid Sally a total of \$24.75 in cash, plus flour, beef, corn, bacon, and wheat over the next five years. From 1821 to 1826, Catawba Jamey Kegg began receiving payments for Heron's lease, a total \$55 cash from Heron with no mention of Sally and an amount double that of Sally's. Other leases designated for Sally also show late 1821 as the last time she collected rent.⁵⁹⁹ By this

⁵⁹⁷Plane, *A Historical Archaeology of Catawba Itinerancy*, 19.

⁵⁹⁸“Evidence of Leasehold (Catawba Indian Lands), 1791-1856,” Secretary of State, Recorded Instruments, SCDAH; *Lease Book*, SCDAH; Klein, *Unification of a Slave State*, 26-28 [local exchange].

⁵⁹⁹*Superintendents of the Catawba Nation, Plat and Lease Book, 1810-1825*, 97, 122.

date, Sally was approximately 75-years old. She was either too old to travel by foot to collect rent or she died sometime in 1821.

The lease book shows how Catawbas continued in their attempts to protect their land by using the American legal system. Some Catawbas left wills that stipulated who inherited and collected rent for certain leaseholds. Although Catawba men owned and collected rent for a sizeable portion of Catawba land, the wills illustrate the endurance of Catawba customs. A majority of the wills recorded for a few Catawbas list women as the heirs of real property, a continuation of early Catawba custom in which women controlled the land.⁶⁰⁰

The wills also serve as small snapshots of information on Catawba kinship. One of the earliest wills recorded by the agent was that of Colonel Jacob Ayres. Upon his death, the Colonel ordered that his wife, Nancy Ayres, receive rent payments from two of his leases. He also left daughters Polly and Sally Ayres five leases each from which they could collect payments.⁶⁰¹ The evidence does not tell whether Jacob Ayres had a male heir, but the wills, specifically Ayres, show that women still managed the land.

The lease book shows that adaptation and change did not mean the loss of Catawba ways, including women's management of land. Sally New River held more leases than other Catawbas held, and consequently, collected the most in cash and goods—money, food, and other items she shared with her family. In addition, the lease book suggests that Sally retained her sense of responsibility for relatives and, as the most respected woman leader, for the entire Catawba community. In this role, she collected the rent for other Catawbas, including orphaned children.⁶⁰²

⁶⁰⁰Sally New River left no will; see *Superintendents of the Catawba Nation, Plat and Lease Book, 1810-1825*.

⁶⁰¹*Superintendents of the Catawba Nation, Plat and Lease Book, 1810-1825*.

⁶⁰²*Superintendents of the Catawba Nation, Plat and Lease Book, 1810-1825*.

Transactions also show that Catawbas took turns collecting payments based on kin groups. Jamey Kegg, who became landholder and collector of Andrew Heron's lease, was nephew to Sally New River and her only surviving relative in 1821.⁶⁰³ The business of leasing reinforced Catawba kinship bonds created by early customs of hunting and farming.⁶⁰⁴

Catawba women and men had to assert their rights as landowners repeatedly. In 1817, rumor reached the Catawbas that their surrounding neighbors thought a large number of Catawba warriors had left the Nation and that the remaining Indians wanted to leave their homes for land west of the Mississippi. In response, the outraged and alarmed Catawbas sent a message to South Carolina officials declaring, "our Young Warriors are all at home and following their Common Employment [hunting]...we and them are determined to live on our native lands... as long as we have life and Means to go upon in support of the same."⁶⁰⁵

Petitions from 1810 through 1821, Catawbas reminded the General Assembly that leased land remained "our land." In late 1821, the Catawbas, having leased nearly all of their land, asked the General Assembly not to lengthen the terms of leases. They complained that some renters had tricked them into renewing for ninety-nine years. Catawbas opposed the lease terms of ninety-nine years established by the 1812 act and wished to return to seven-year terms of initial agreements. Catawbas also repeated their grievances against squatters and delinquent tenants who lived on their land. The resolution to the problem of trespassers and tenants behind on payments, Catawbas insisted, was to allow the Indians to retain possession and control of

⁶⁰³ T. D. Spratt to Lyman Draper," January 12, 1871, Draper Manuscripts, Thomas Sumter Papers, 15VV100.

⁶⁰⁴ *Superintendents of the Catawba Nation, Plat and Lease Book, 1810-1825*. Jesse Ayres, a Catawba leader, held one lease less than Sally did.

⁶⁰⁵ "Resolves of Meeting by the Headmen of the Catawba Nation, 23rd Nov. 1817," Blumer Collection, NASC.

tracts of their land to lease to whom they thought trustworthy or to cultivate for the tribe.⁶⁰⁶

Although leasing to honest tenants who paid on time appealed to all Catawba landowners, the request to retain their land for cultivation would have originated from the women.

Conclusion

Social and political changes of the 1820s and 1830s left Catawbas and their land vulnerable, but they struggled to hold onto the land guaranteed in the 1763 treaty. To do so, Catawbas leased tracts of their land to Euro-American settlers, action that reinforced Catawba land ownership. By 1822, Sally had passed away. A year after Sally's death, Jamey Kegg leased the parcel of land deeded to Catawba women in 1796 to a white man, who in 1824 sold the lease to another white man. In 1828, tenants, fearful about rumors that "wealthy individuals" planned to purchase the entire reservation from the Catawbas, petitioned the Assembly again to purchase Catawba land.⁶⁰⁷ The Indian Removal Act of 1830 exacerbated the situation between the Catawbas and their tenants when efforts to remove the Catawbas neighbors, the Cherokees and other southern tribes to the West.⁶⁰⁸

The Indian Removal Act did not target Catawba people directly because of the considerable population decline in the Nation, which stood at approximately 110 by 1826.⁶⁰⁹ Catawbas no longer posed a threat to the security of the backcountry nor did non-Indian residents need them for protection, as they did in the early- to mid-1700s. South Carolina's white

⁶⁰⁶Although the agents signed most of the petitions sent during the early 1800s, the only signatures on the 1821 petition were that of seven Catawba leaders. "Chiefs and Head Men of the Catawba Indians, Petition Asking that Leases on Certain of their Lands not be Lengthened and Asking that they be Allowed to Retain Possession of Certain Lands Claimed by White Men," #8, December 9, 1821, *Petitions to the General Assembly*, South Carolina, SCDAH.

⁶⁰⁷Merrell, *The Indians' New World*, 246-247.

⁶⁰⁸Merrell, *The Indians' New World*, 246-248 [elders]; Perdue and Green, *The Columbia Guide to American Indians of the Southeast*, 72-99, 128-130.

⁶⁰⁹Mills, *Statistics of South Carolina*, 114. I have searched the 1830-1840 South Carolina governor's records for any correspondence between the state and Andrew Jackson regarding the Indian Removal policy and South Carolina without success.

residents and officials tended to view Catawba Indians as an inconvenient obstacle because they owned the most fertile land in the state.⁶¹⁰ Under pressure from the tenants, South Carolina began its campaign to acquire Catawba land in 1832 when state leaders appointed commissioners to negotiate with Catawbas.⁶¹¹ Although the Indian Removal act overlooked Catawbas, tenant demands served as motivation for Catawba removal.

Catawbas confronted a state and tenant campaign to acquire Catawba land as the leasing system began to fall apart. By the late 1830s, Sally New River and many of the “other women of the Nation” had passed away. These women understood firsthand that Euro-American settlement threatened Catawba land ownership. A few years after Sally New River’s death, two beloved Catawba men resistant to a land cession passed away—John G. Brown and Thomas Brown.⁶¹² In 1838, respected elders Lewis Canty, Jacob Ayers, and John Ayers, each opposed to a cession treaty, were dead and soon, new leaders agreed to meet with the commissioners. The new leadership, led by Jamey Kegg, focused on relocating to live with the Cherokees, who had managed to remain in North Carolina on land deeded to them, rather than protecting Catawba land in South Carolina.⁶¹³ However, only a small group of Catawbas agreed to follow Kegg to North Carolina, while others wanted to remain on their homeland.

In 1840, Catawba leaders agreed to talk. In March, five state commissioners and the people of the Catawba Nation met at Nation Ford, a crossroad near the Catawba River and near the town of Sally’s birth. Within two days, each side had agreed on the terms of a treaty. Little

⁶¹⁰Merrell, *The Indians’ New World*, 247.

⁶¹¹*Senate Journal*, December 19, 1832, RSUS, S.C. A.1a, 27/6, 139-140.

⁶¹²John Genet Brown and Thomas Brown received lease payments until 1824 and 1826, respectively; see *Superintendents of the Catawba Nation, Plat and Lease Book, 1810-1825*, 29, 30, 87, 88, 91, 92.

⁶¹³Stevens and Allen, eds., *JHR, 1787-1788*, 51; Stevens and Allen, eds., *JHR, 1791*, 212; Reverend Archibald Whyte, “An Account of the Catawba Indians,” Lyman Draper Manuscripts, Frontier Papers, 10U94-99 [cited as Whyte MS]; Merrell, *The Indians’ New World*, 248-249 [Kegg].

evidence remains of what actually occurred during the meeting other than the final outcome. The state promised to pay the Catawbas \$5000 to purchase land near the Cherokees or in some other thinly populated area. If Catawbas failed to locate suitable land, they would receive \$5000 in cash. In addition, under the terms of the treaty, the state owed them \$2500 for leaving their homes, plus another \$1500 per year for nine years. On March 3, 1840, the 144,000-acre Catawba reservation was gone.⁶¹⁴

The Nation Ford Treaty was a failure. Catawbas never saw the \$5000 for new lands nor the \$2500 promised for relocation. Seventeen women age fifteen and older and eleven men age fourteen and older, all led by James Kegg, went to live temporarily with the Cherokees in North Carolina⁶¹⁵ The remaining Catawbas dispersed throughout the Piedmont region of South Carolina. Pushed out of their reservation, these Catawbas stayed near their ancestral homeland and struggled to survive. In 1841, agent Joseph White purchased 630 acres within the old reservation borders on the west side of the Catawba River, where a small number of Catawbas returned to live. Most of these Catawbas vacated the new reservation by 1843 because they were unable to farm the unproductive soil.⁶¹⁶ By 1850, however, Catawba people who remained in South Carolina purchased the 630-acre reserve, where most of them returned to live and teach their children about Catawba history and customs.⁶¹⁷

⁶¹⁴Brown, *The Catawba Indians*, 305 [copy of treaty, 306].

⁶¹⁵Reverend Archibald Whyte, "An Account of the Catawba Indians," Lyman Draper Manuscripts, Frontier Papers, 10U94-99 [cited as Whyte MS]; Merrell, *The Indians' New World*, 248-249 [Kegg].

⁶¹⁶Hutchison, "The Catawba Indians," 1.

⁶¹⁷Merrell, *The Indians' New World*, 250-257.

CONCLUSION

After signing the Nation Ford Treaty of 1840, Catawba families left their homeland along the Catawba River and set out in several directions. A small group of Catawbas joined Cherokee relatives in the North Carolina mountain, while at least one Catawba lived nearby in Asheville. Another family group lived near Spartanburg, South Carolina and other families moved to Chester County. A few Catawba families considered joining the Choctaws or the Chickasaws in Indian Territory. They eventually moved west of the Mississippi in 1849, while a much smaller family set out toward Charleston in 1851.⁶¹⁸ A few Catawbas stayed on 630 acres of land located within the old reservation borders on the west side of the Catawba River that agent Joseph White purchased with treaty appropriation money in 1841.⁶¹⁹ By 1844, some Catawbas had decided to “make our nation whole” and, over the next decade, Catawba families trickled back into the borders of their old territory.⁶²⁰

Whether Catawba women initiated the return to their homeland is unclear, but they must have agreed with the return to the land of their ancestors, a place where they would raise their children and teach them about Catawba history and customs. By 1850, most of the Catawbas had returned to live on the 630-acre reserve.⁶²¹ In 1849, Catawbas designated Nancey George, at seventy years of age the oldest Catawba and “the one according to their costum,” to be their

⁶¹⁸Report of the Committee on the Ways and Means, December 1849, in Whyte’s “Catawba Indians,” Draper Manuscripts, Frontier War Papers, 10U103⁷⁻¹²; Watson, *Catawba Indian Genealogy*, 63 [1851].

⁶¹⁹Merrell, *The Indians’ New World*, 250-257.

⁶²⁰Merrell, *The Indians’ New World*, 254.

⁶²¹Merrell, *The Indians’ New World*, 250-257.

record keeper.⁶²² What Nancey knew or recorded remains a mystery, but she probably passed her knowledge about Catawba history and practices to younger Catawbas.

Nancey and other Catawba women still played an influential role in the lives of the younger generation. In 1860, the Catawbas once again had a school on the reservation. The state paid for two teachers from the Catawbas' 1840 treaty appropriation money: Mrs. F. N. Dunlap received \$18.00 and, remarkably, Catawba Eliza Scott received \$30.00, almost double that of Dunlap's pay.⁶²³ Eliza's ability to read and write English must have been acceptable enough to teach. The same year, local white residents began to press the ideals of republican motherhood on Catawba women as a way to reinforce their notion of morality and civic duty among Catawbas. In July 1860, at a public ceremony, former South Carolina Governor Robert Allston awarded five Catawba women with Coronet Liberty Head Quarter Eagles, each worth \$2.50, for their role as "most orderly, industrious, and of good example to their children."⁶²⁴ Why Allston chose Catawba women as recipients of the award remains unclear. Perhaps he recognized the authority they held within Catawba society or he wanted to acknowledge them as "civilized" women who served as examples to their relatives. The five women represented all the Catawba mothers, aunts, and grandmothers whose families, farms, and pots—kinship, land, and economic productivity—expressed what it meant to be Catawba, just as Sally New River had in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.⁶²⁵

⁶²²Massey to Seabrook, September 29, 1849, Legislative Papers, Indian Affairs, Governors Correspondence.

⁶²³Mrs. F. N. Dunlap should not be confused with Mrs. Eli Dunlap who taught Catawbas at the turn of the century; see Catawba Indians-Education, Thomas Blumer Collection, NASC.

⁶²⁴"Scraps & Facts," *Yorkville Enquirer*, July 26, 1860, 3.

⁶²⁵In the early 1800s, Catawba women took care of nephews, nieces, and other relatives; see *Superintendents of the Catawba Nation, Plat and Lease Book, 1810-1825*.

Twenty-first century Catawba women are still the heart of Catawba people socially, politically, and spiritually. Although the number of Catawba speakers is few, women teach Catawba children their indigenous language and tell them that it was through First Woman, the mother of all Catawbas, that the Catawba Nation eventually came into existence. Today, Catawba women still have a voice in tribal politics and serve on boards that administer tribal elections. In these positions, they advocate for their fellow Catawbas and help make tribal government accountable to tribal citizens. They serve as healers, council women, and members of committees that make decisions about real estate, housing, education, health care, emergency management, social services, and economic development—roles and responsibilities that continue those of their ancestors.

Kinship continues to anchor Catawba people to a Catawba identity. Over time, as Catawbas adapted to changes in their world, they began to trace kinship through either Catawba mother or father.⁶²⁶ The terms of the 1840 Nation Ford Treaty promised Catawbas appropriation money, and because of the small annual amount Catawbas began questioning the identity of Catawbas applying for the funds. The debate around Catawba legitimacy shifted from South Carolina residency to lineage in 1894 when Jefferson Davis Ayers, a Catawba Indian living in South Carolina married to a white woman, sued the state to have his children included in the disbursements.⁶²⁷ The state court's decision supported matrilineal descent, a ruling that

⁶²⁶ For a comprehensive treatment of Catawba belonging in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, see Mikaëla M. Adams, "Who Belongs? Becoming Tribal Members in the South" (PhD diss., University of North Carolina, 2012), 107-111, 130-136.

⁶²⁷ "Letter from A. E. Smith to Nancy Harris, From Rock Hill, South Carolina, Jan. 16, 1892," Administrative files, Agents 1883-1897, Thomas Blumer Collection; "Letter from Nancy Harris to A.E. Smith from Gainesville, Texas, Feb. 10, 1892," Administrative files, Agents 1883-1897, *TBC*; "Letter from Robert L. Harris to the Indian Commissioners Office, Dec 18, 1895," BIA Correspondence, 1887-1899, Fred Sanders Collection, Native American Studies Center. For Jefferson Davis Ayers case, see *Report of the Comptroller-General of the State of South Carolina to the General Assembly for the Fiscal Year Ending October 31, 1894* (Columbia: Charles A. Calvo, Jr., State Printer, 1894), 177; "The Catawba Indians Only Inherit from their Mothers," *Rock Hill Herald*, January 30, 1904, 1.

originated more from an attempt to avoid appropriating extra funds to out-of-state Catawbas and less the recognition of Catawba customs.⁶²⁸ In 1915, an anonymous Catawba man, married to a woman of Catawba/White blood, approached the agent to have his children included in the disbursement. The Catawba woman's mother was a white woman, which barred her from receiving appropriation money, and thus, restricted her children from receiving appropriation funds. South Carolina's Attorney General asserted, "If the mixed breeds had a right to share from an Indian mother and white man, they certainly had a right to share from an Indian father and white woman." The Catawba man carried the issue to court, where Circuit Judge Ernest Moore dismissed the case and ordered the agent to pay all Catawbas alike. Local non-Indian opinion suggested that if the Catawbas refused to agree to the judge's decision, the South Carolina legislature should discontinue disbursement of funds to Catawbas completely. The state's decision of *who* was a Catawba clearly violated Catawba sovereignty—their ability and right as a people to determine who was Catawba. Catawbas, who lived in poverty and desperately needed the appropriation money, probably felt they had no other option than to comply with Moore's order agreeing to disperse funds to children of Catawba men.⁶²⁹

Being more inclusive in this way helped Catawbas survive the many transformations occurring within their world, just as Catawba people had done in the early 1700s. Today, being Catawba is not about blood quantum or having a tribal enrollment card. Catawbas still consider lineage an important factor for Catawba identity, as well as living on or near the Nation and being politically active in tribal affairs. Although Catawbas have adjusted the way in which they

⁶²⁸ *Report of the Comptroller-General*, 177.

⁶²⁹ "The True Status of the Catawbas," *The Record* [Rock Hill], June 14, 1915, *TBC*, 1; Rock Hill Herald, Jan. 6, 1911, 4 [poverty]. Thomas H. Peebles served as Attorney General in 1915, see "Webb-Kenyon Act Will Be Tested," December, 10, 1915, *The Herald and News*, 7, <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86063758/1915-12-10/ed-1/seq-7/> accessed August 19, 2014.

trace lineage, the response to “who are your people?” remains essential to being Catawba. Children still learn this way of being Catawba. They listen to their elders discuss their relatives by name, and they learn to recite their Catawba lineages.

Catawba women continue to manufacture and sell pottery to supplement their families’ income. Although women remain the primary makers and sellers of pottery, some Catawba men also produce and sell pottery. Catawba potters travel throughout the United States to build and demonstrate pottery at fairs, festivals, powwows, and art shows. Collectors, interested in purchasing pottery, visit the homes of potters who live in the Nation, where buyers hear stories of who taught the potters or how a specific piece of pottery was constructed. Young Catawbas learn to make pottery from skilled women, particularly from mothers, grandmothers, and aunts, just as Sally and her relatives did hundreds of years ago.

Twenty-first century Catawba potters are similar to their ancestors in that they are innovative artists who adapt their product to fit the market. They try new techniques, make new styles, and use new decorative incising, even as they continue building more “traditional” shaped pots and jars. Catawba pottery has come to denote one’s “Catawbaness” to non-Catawbas, but within the Catawba Indian community *being* Catawba comes from the kinship and the stories involved in learning to make pots. Evelyn George, who died in 2007, exemplified this type of service to her people. Known for putting “jumper cables on the cultural heart” of Catawba people, she taught many Catawbas about their history, trained them in Catawba dance, and instructed them in the ways of making pottery. She always warned the younger generation to hold onto their customs and not “let it get away from them,” because these practices are vital to Catawba identity.⁶³⁰

⁶³⁰“We Lost a Part of Our History:’ Catawba Master Potter Evelyn George Dies at 93,” December 11, 2007, *The Herald*, 1A.

Land remains a central struggle for Catawbas. Just as Catawbas struggled to hold onto their land in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, their descendants have fought to recover their land. From 1840 to the early 1900s, Catawbas lived in perpetual poverty on their land, receiving small annual appropriations from South Carolina that barely enabled them to get by. In 1885, Catawba leader James Harris began investigating the 1840 treaty, and in 1905, the Catawba Nation initiated a lawsuit to regain the original 144,000 acres.⁶³¹

Over the next fifty-two years, the Catawba Indian Nation petitioned the state of South Carolina repeatedly for their ancestral land while fighting to keep the small tract they still owned. Their 630 acres were some of the poorest in York County, full of rocks and unsuitable for cultivation. In 1930, South Carolina's Indian agent T. O. Flowers informed a subcommittee of the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs that Catawbas lived on the poorest land in the county. Flowers reproached the committee for believing rumors that Catawbas were "indolent" and lazy and declared that "the fact is they haven't anything to work with and no place to make a garden."⁶³²

In 1940, South Carolina and the BIA proposed to provide \$75,000 for the purchase of land for the Catawbas as part of a relief program through the Farm Security Administration. The proposal intended to aid Catawbas but mandated that the arrangement extinguish any further claims against the state. The Department of Interior stepped in the following year and refused to allow South Carolina or the BIA to use the program to limit the tribe's access to the courts. Finally, in 1943, a Memorandum of Understanding between the Catawbas, South Carolina, and

⁶³¹"Letter from P. H. Head to William Teller, November 28, 1889," Bureau of Indian Affairs File, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington [mention Harris investigating treaty in 1885]; "Indian Claimants," July 24, 1896, *State*, 2.

⁶³²"Statement of Mr. Flowers, South Carolina Indian Financial Agent, before a subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, March 28, 1930," transcribed in "Catawba Tribe v. South Carolina: From Augusta to Richmond—One Tribe's Struggle Continues," *The NARF Legal Review*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (Spring, 1984), 5.

the U.S. government facilitated the reorganization of the Catawba Nation as a federal tribe. Catawbas hoped for the return of their homelands with the implementation of the memorandum. Recovery of their land seemed to be within their grasp when the state acquired an additional 3,434 acres of land, which was placed in trust with the Department of Interior for the Nation.⁶³³

The federal Indian policy of 1950s, however, renewed the threats to Catawbas' homeland. By 1959, the federal government terminated the Catawbas' status as a tribe and allotted the land acquired over the preceding two decades. The Catawba Division of Assets Act distributed the 3,434 acres among Catawba citizens, many who sold their allotments piecemeal in order to provide for their families. The original 640 acres was unaffected by the 1959 act and remained in trust for the Catawbas. In 1976, Catawbas requested that the United States Department of Interior recover land ceded in a 1763 treaty.⁶³⁴ In 1993, after a 16-year lawsuit against the federal and state governments, the Catawba tribal council agreed to a \$50 million land claims settlement that reinstated their federal status and returned a small portion of their land located within their ancestral territory.⁶³⁵ The Catawbas' land claims settlement was successful because the 1840 treaty signed at Nation Ford had been illegal according to the United States Constitution. South Carolina had usurped the constitutional power of the federal government to negotiate the treaty with Catawba people.

Today, approximately 1,000 out of 2,800 Catawbas live on a 1,000-acre reservation located on the west side of the Catawba River in South Carolina.⁶³⁶ The land, in many ways, has

⁶³³For a detailed account of the Catawba land claims settlement, see "Catawba Tribe v. South Carolina," 1-6.

⁶³⁴"Catawba Tribe v. South Carolina," 6-8.

⁶³⁵H.R. 2399 (103rd): Catawba Indian Tribe of South Carolina land Claims Settlement Act of 1993, <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/103/hr2399/text> [accessed April 10, 2014].

⁶³⁶Email correspondence with Elizabeth Harris, Public Relations, Catawba Indian Nation, May 23, 2014 [acreage and population in 2014].

enabled the Catawbas to survive, but not because it gave them sustenance. Since the late eighteenth century when Catawba men petitioned Congress on behalf of all Catawba people, threats to their land challenged Catawba women and men to develop strategies to retain it, not as individuals or as separate towns, but as a people connected through a shared history, homeland, and kinship. Men may have made the petition, but their tie to that land derived from First Woman, Sally New River, and the generations of Catawba women who lived on that land and reaped its bounty.

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