

# The High Plains Sappony of Person County, North Carolina and Halifax County, Virginia

## *Sites of Significance in the Christie Indian Settlement: Churches, Schools, and General Store*



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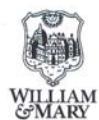
# The High Plains Saponi of Person County, North Carolina and Halifax County, Virginia

## *Sites of Significance in the Christie Indian Settlement: Churches, Schools, and General Store*

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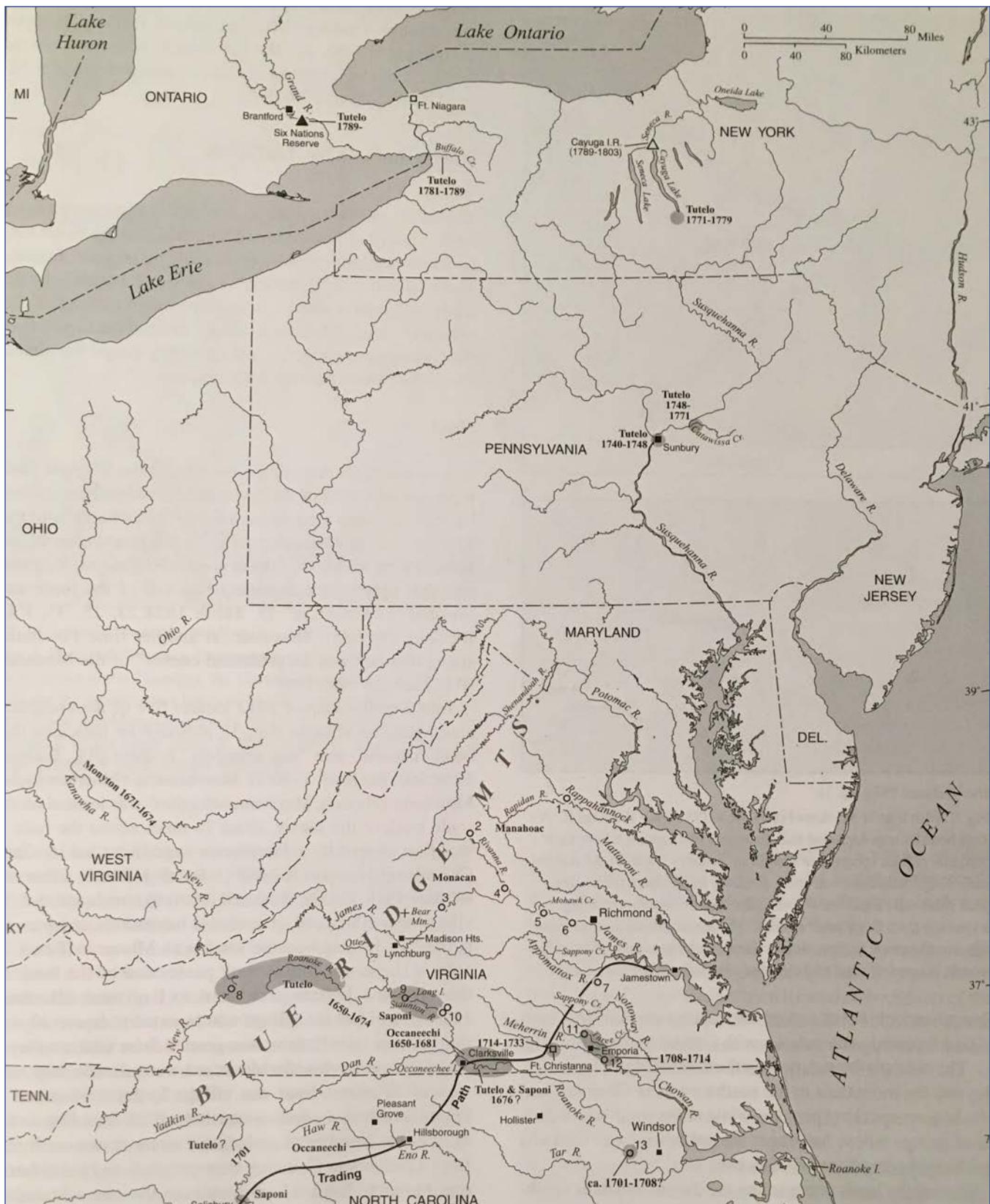


Figure 1. "Locations of Saponi-Tutelo and neighboring groups, with dates of known occupancy." Select villages and sites: 5. Massinacack (Mahock 1670); 6. Mowhemcho (Monakin 1670); 7. Manks Nessoneicks old fields (1650) and nearby Sappony creeks; 8. Totero (1671, 1674); 9. Sapon (1670), Hanathaskies (1671); 10. Saponi West and Saponi Town (1671); 11. Tutelo town and fort (1712-1714); 12. Saponi town and fort (1708-1714); 13. Saponi. Source: DeMallie (2004:287).

## CHAPTER ONE

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### INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

The oral history of the Saponi community and the documentary record of the High Plains region identify the village of Christie as an historically important district to the Indian Settlement straddling the border of Halifax County, Virginia and Person County, North Carolina. Multiple properties within the Christie geography – on both sides of the state line – are “sites of significance” to the High Plains Indian community. Through the National Park Service’s Underrepresented Communities Grant Program, and in collaboration with the state-recognized Saponi of North Carolina, the Virginia Department of Historic Resources [VDHR] seeks to identify, research, and nominate minority populations’ historically significant locales to the state and national registry of historic places. The VDHR project *Continuity Within Change: Virginia Indians National Register Project* moves that effort forward, through an archival, ethnographic, and oral history investigation of the Christie Indian Settlement, with attention to the tribe’s relationship to the Christie General Store, the community’s former Indian School, and the contemporary and historical Saponi churches.

While the village of Christie no longer exists, the location of the former railway depot, hamlet businesses, and the community’s social, political, and religious gathering spaces remain in the memories of the Saponi descendant community, and chronicled in the archives of Virginia and North Carolina. The High Plains Saponi continue to occupy the Christie environs, and the associated Indian family farms, homes, and cemeteries dot the landscape. This study, conducted by the Department of Anthropology’s American Indian Resource Center at the College of William & Mary, provides

the supporting materials necessary for nominating historical Saponi sites of significance to the National Register of Historic Places. The activity that is the subject of this report has been financed in part with federal funds from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior.

Special thanks and recognition are in order for the Saponi, who completed a 2016 Memorandum of Understanding [MOU] with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources in advance of the conducted research. Saponi Chairperson Dorothy Stewart Crowe and Julie V. Langan, State Historic Preservation Officer and Director, Virginia Department of Historic Resources were signatories to the agreement. Saponi council members and representatives Jennifer Ash, Tonda Huddleston, Angela Martin, Charlene Martin, Johnny Martin, Lindsey Martin, and Julia Phipps offered guidance to the MOU. Chief Otis Martin acted as tribal liaison for the project. Saponi Executive Director Dante Desiderio and tribal member Tom Epps also facilitated the research. Formal and informal individual and group interviews included members listed above, as well as James Coleman, Gerald Epps, Kenneth Epps, Sr., Robbie Epps, Royster “Chat” Epps, Shirley Hazel, Claude Martin, Jr., Della Faye Martin, George Washington Martin, Joyce Martin, Mary Sue Martin, O.C. Martin, Sheila Martin, Robin Martin, Ambra Rennick, Mitchell Stewart, Rev. Jack Stewart, Luther Talley, Nettie Talley, Sue Vernon,

and Sheila Wilson. They are thanked for their contributions and service, and through verbal agreement and MOU, agreeing to share the oral history of the Sappony community.

Founded c.1892, Christie, Virginia was a hamlet that emerged around an Atlantic & Danville Railway depot, and the associated economic and transportation activities. A small cluster of merchants and mills, primarily framed around farming, became a hub of business and social exchange for local residents. A significant population in this portion of Halifax County, Virginia and Person County, North Carolina were Native Americans living on the “high plains” between Bluewing and Mayo creeks, tributaries of the Hyco River. The Christie train depot was established in the midst of the neighborhood locally known as the “Indian Settlement.” By the 1960s, the train service was discontinued and the railway tracks removed. Along with the railway’s departure, other transportation modifications to the area roadways effectively bypassed Christie. The businesses in Christie mostly closed at this time, as did the post office, and the hamlet of Christie was no longer officially considered a locale, except in the memories of the local residents. Today, the site is in the jurisdiction of Virgilina, Virginia and the Christie name exists only on road signs as “Christie Road” [Rt. 740] and “Christie Circle” [Rt. 862]. The Christie General Store [VDHR 041-5281] is the only remaining historic mercantile structure standing on the Virginia side of the state line; 3500 ft. away are the remains of Christ Church at Mayo Chapel and the Sappony tribe’s associated graveyard [c.1880]. The old Atlantic & Danville Railway grade crosses through Christie and beyond the Indian Settlement. The Sappony Tribal Center, the historic Robertson House [VDHR 041-5275], and the Sam Calloway House are less than 500 feet from the Christie Store. Across the Carolina line, the archaeological site of the High Plains Indian School is .7 miles away from Christie, and the community’s contemporary worship center, Calvary Baptist Church [built 1946], is a further .7 miles. Thus, these cultural sites of significance to the Sappony – the churches, school, and store – are within a mile and a half of each other, literally straddling the Virginia-Carolina

state line. The Christie district is a heritage resource significant to the Sappony people, and represents aspects of the Sappony historical experience within the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The Sappony are indigenous to the mountain foothills, piedmont, and interior coastal plain of Virginia and North Carolina, and closely related to the region’s other Siouan-speakers, the Tutelo. In historical documents the community’s name appears in several forms, including “Saponie,” “Sappony,” “Saponi,” “Sapon,” “Sappone,” etc. At one point in the eighteenth century, a coalescent community of Saponi, Tutelo, and others were settled at Fort Christanna, Virginia and collectively all called “Saponie” or “Christanna Indians.” Historically, there were multiple Saponi settlements, and through the colonial era, several out migrations of Saponi and Tutelo to New York, Ontario, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina (Figure 1). The contemporary residents of High Plains use the “Sappony” spelling, whereas “Saponi” is most often used across the anthropological literature. Hereafter, “Sappony” will be used to discuss the specific High Plains Indian Settlement. “Saponi” or “Saponi-Tutelo” will be used to discuss the historical ethnographic materials in the report, when discussing general Saponi history, language, and culture.

After intermittent contact with Europeans c.1560-1650, a brisk trade emerged c.1650-1675 between the Saponi-Tutelo and the English settled in the eastern tidewater. Colonial expansion and increased conflict led to several wars and subsequent treaties between the region’s Native peoples and Virginia. The Saponi, along with the Nottoway, Pamunkey, and others, were signatories of the 1677-1680 *Articles of Peace* negotiated at the Camp of Middle Plantation, later established as the colonial capital of Williamsburg. Through the articles in the agreement, the Saponi became “tributary” to the English king – a quasi-alliance – that forced the Saponi and other tribes to acknowledge the dominion of the Crown, but confirmed Indian governments and territories as dependent sovereigns. The Saponi-Tutelo tributary status was again confirmed by treaty in 1713/14 at the conclusion of the Tuscarora



Figure 2. Detail of an 1859 Map of the VA/NC border with c.1893 additions (in red). The red line across the map is the Atlantic & Danville railroad. The Christie depot on the state line, the Hyco River, Bluewing Creek, Mayo Creek, and Virgilina can all be seen. Source: A map of the state of Virginia: constructed in conformity to law from the late surveys authorized by the legislature and other original and authentic documents, by Herman Boye and Lewis Von Buchholtz, Virginia, 1859.

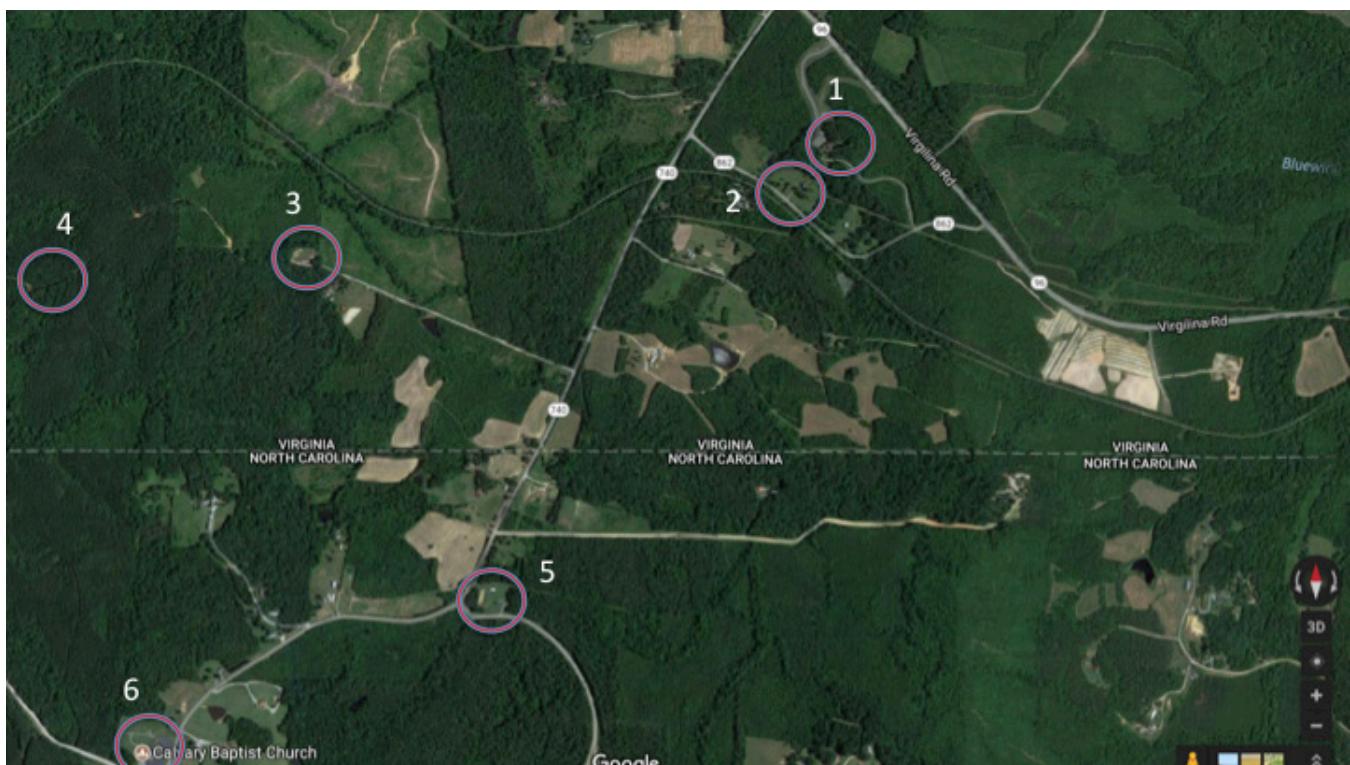


Figure 3. The Christie Indian Settlement: 1) Sappony Tribal Center, 2) Christie General Store, 3) Christ Church at Mayo Chapel and cemetery, 4) Epps home site and cemetery, 5) The High Plains Indian School, 6) Calvary Baptist Church and cemetery. Source: Google Map from Woodard Field Notes 2015.

War. As stipulated in these treaties, the Saponi were granted lands to inhabit and established multiple Indian Towns in the piedmont and interior coastal plain of Virginia. However, the Saponi-Tutelo removed from Virginia at several intervals during the colonial era, but returned to Virginia as many times, confirming their tributary status and traditional settlement areas. William Byrd II's famous c.1730 "Dividing Line" survey of the boundary between North Carolina and Virginia utilized Christanna Saponi navigation to traverse the region, including the area of the Hyco River where the Christie Indian Settlement is located today.

As with other nearby Native communities, the Indian Settlement at High Plains became engaged in the agricultural cycles of the region and fully invested in the mercantile economy. Like their fellow treaty signatories, the Nottoway and Pamunkey, the Saponi became primarily farmers and developed a rural lifeway similar that of their non-Native neighbors. By the nineteenth century, tobacco and corn were the major Saponi crop staples, and Christianity had become an important part of community life. Christ Church at Mayo Chapel was the Indian meetinghouse and ritual center. By the turn of the twentieth century, North Carolina and Virginia funded separate schooling for the Indian Settlement, jointly funding the High Plains Indian School. The establishment of the Christie depot, the Christie Store, and several mills created an economic hub in the midst of the High Plains community (Figures 2-3).

With increased urban migration after World War II, and desegregation in the 1960s, socio-political and socio-economic change significantly impacted multiple aspects of Saponi life. The move away from tobacco farming to wage labor jobs, increased education, and the removal of the A. & D. Christie depot and railway lines completely shifted the community's political economy by 1970.

The *Underrepresented Communities grant Continuity Within Change: Virginia Indians National Register Project*, aims to research and include Saponi sites within the recognized places of cultural and

historical significance to the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Saponi *Sites of Significance* study is the only Virginia state-sponsored research conducted on the High Plains Indians to date. As there have been limited anthropological or historical investigations of Virginia Indians beyond the tidewater, the *Continuity Within Change* project adds significant knowledge to our understanding of an overlooked and underrepresented period of Virginia Indian culture and history.

## METHODOLOGY

Today, the Christie district is a combination of archaeological sites, and architectural and heritage resources, including an active historic Indian cemetery at Mayo Chapel and the standing mercantile structure of the Christie Store [VDHR 041-5281]. Within the Indian Settlement, Saponi living memory – or oral history – connects multiple sites of significance. Halifax courthouse records document the more recent past of the Christie village, and there are some extant High Plains materials available within the Library of Virginia's archival collections. Thus the research approach employed multiple methodologies to establish cultural linkages to the Saponi community and establish clear historical documentation to the properties:

- Ethnographic field visits to multiple properties within the Saponi Indian Settlement
- Ethnographic interviews and oral history collection from the descendant community
- Archival research at multiple repositories
- Extensive review of the existing literature on the historical Saponi tribe

### *Field Visits to Saponi Sites of Significance*

The Halifax-Person County Indian Settlement has never received a complete archaeological or architectural survey of its historical American Indian cultural resources, however some sites within Christie were previously identified, and recorded with the Virginia Department of Historic

Resources [VDHR]. These sites include the Christie General Store [VDHR 041-5281] and the Robertson House [VDHR 041-5275]. Field visits with community members allowed for guided tours of the historical and cultural landscape, and the collection of multiple cognitive maps of the High Plains environment. Through this methodology, multiple cultural resources of the community were identified including historic Indian home sites [archaeological, partial standing, and standing], former church locations [archaeological] and cemeteries, former schoolhouse locations [archaeological], and hewn and notched-log tobacco barns and drying sheds [standing]. These sites were in addition to the tribe's current Calvary Baptist Church and cemetery, and Sappony Tribal Center. Combined, these resources create a matrix of heritage locations, sites of practice, and lived experiences of Indian families in the Christie area. Informal interviews, attendance and observation of church and civic functions, site orientation, and visual surveys were part of this methodology. One task for the potential NRHP and VDHR site listings was to accurately identify the multiple properties associated with the Sappony in Christie, their overall boundaries, and the potential for future research. Another goal was to informally assess the condition of the Christie Store, nearly ten years after its initial site report and issuance of a VDHR resource number.

There are multiple contemporary stakeholders associated with the Christie district. Various entities and individuals, both tribal and non-tribally affiliated, own the Virginia properties. A non-Native individual privately owns the Christie Store, and at the time of the present research, there was some question about the delinquency of the property. The Sappony are interested in the preservation, restoration, and stewardship of the property, but do not have the financial resources to acquire it. This inequity and imbalance needs further consideration and attention, as most subjugated or colonized communities lack both the ownership of historical sites of significance to their people, and because of the asymmetries of the system's dynamics, they also lack the financial resources to retain, reacquire, or purchase historically-significant properties.

The Sappony Tribal Center, a more recent structure, is adjacent to the old mercantile store property, and includes an historic tobacco drying shed among several outdoor facilities (Figures 3-4). Tobacco structures can be found throughout the Christie district. The Mayo Chapel archaeological site and cemetery [active] is controlled by a private tribal entity, but not under the jurisdiction of the tribal government. The tribe owns an historical archaeological home site, including the remains of a possible meetinghouse, and cemetery, with limited road access adjacent to the Mayo Chapel lot. Several other historic family cemeteries and homes are owned by individual tribal members and families. In North Carolina, the archaeological site of the former Indian School is in private hands of a tribal member. The Calvary Baptist Church and cemetery [active] is its own entity, outside of the Sappony government, but the congregation is nearly exclusively the tribal membership.

#### *Civic-Engagement and Ethnography*

Today, multiple recognized tribal entities located in Virginia, North Carolina, and Ontario, and some unrecognized organizations in West Virginia and Ohio, claim historical connection to the Saponi or Tutelo. The Saponi-Tutelo descendants in Canada preserve a genealogical Tutelo identity, but are all affiliated with the tribes of the Six Nations Reserve near Brantford, Ontario; most are Cayuga. In North Carolina, the state-recognized Indians of Halifax and Warren counties have been known as the Haliwa-Saponi for nearly fifty years. Another group, known as the Occaneechi-Saponi, were recognized by North Carolina in 2001. The Sappony have been state-recognized by North Carolina since 1911, and also recognized in 1913 and funded until 1962 by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Members of the latter tribe are genealogically and historically associated with the Indian Settlement at Christie, and are the constituents associated with the present research report. However, until the second quarter of the eighteenth century, the Saponi historical experience and cultural milieu was largely one of a single people, even with multiple sites of habitation across the Virginia-Carolina piedmont. Thus,

descendants in multiple contemporary geographies may claim historical linkages to the Saponi-Tutelo until that era. The Saponi are affiliated with the High Plains of Halifax, Virginia and Person, North Carolina and constitute a separate and distinct community in that region. Tribal members retain direct memories of visiting the properties related to the town of Christie described herein, and the community's historical relationship to the High Plains sites are well documented. The Saponi and VDHR entered into a Memorandum of Understanding prior to the ethnographic and archival investigations, and the Saponi are commentators and reviewers of the research report.

The civic engagement with the Saponi community in High Plains has informed the project's methodologies, which have been conducted to the highest ethical standards of anthropological research. As such, all principal investigators, the lead ethnographer, and graduate student researchers completed extensive training and updated state-certified credentials [2015, 2016-2018] for working with human subjects through the Collaborate Institutional Training Initiative [CITI]. Within the report, three bodies of ethnographic data contain the memories of Saponi descendants: the Louise Nunn manuscript [cited as Nunn 1937], and the field notes of Drs. Stephanie Hasselbacher and Buck Woodard [cited as Hasselbacher Field Notes 2015-2016 and Woodard Field Notes 2015, 2017]. The Nunn manuscript dates to the 1936 ethnography and interviews in Halifax and Person counties, conducted as part of a Master's thesis research in the Department of Sociology at Columbia University. The 1937 Nunn MS focused on racial comparatives and racially driven perspectives of the High Plains community, typical of the period during which the sociological research was conducted. However, the Nunn MS offers excellent Saponi quantitative and qualitative data not otherwise available.

Until the current research project, the Nunn MS was the only published full-length scholarly work on the Saponi. Thus, the historical anthropological research presented in this report is original, and is the most comprehensive monograph on the Saponi to date.

Field interviews and observations by Hasselbacher and Woodard were conducted under Saponi verbal agreement and the MOU secured by VDHR. Interviews were conducted in person, by phone, and by email. Interviews were both formal and informal, and engaged in one-on-one and group settings. In all of the ethnographic citations for the Saponi Sites of Significance report, the names of the quoted Saponi ancestors and descendants have been withheld for privacy, and for clarity of the data presented. In cases where the historical data are older than seventy years and in public record, such as census schedules and courthouse documents, direct names have been used where appropriate. An exception to the aforementioned statement includes Sam Calloway and Cloyd Martin, Sr., proprietors of the Christie Store during the 1960s [both deceased, but more recent than seventy years]. Claude Martin, Jr. and Jim Coleman are mentioned in relationship to the High Plains School, with regards to the deconstruction of the structure, c.1972.

#### *Archival and Historical Research*

Research of historical records and more recent public documents was conducted at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation's Rockefeller Library, the Library of Virginia, Swem Library at the College of William & Mary, and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. Noteworthy records of the Saponi relationship to the twentieth-century government of Virginia can be found in the Indian School Files, 1936-1967, from the Virginia Department of Education, and a few records in the James Coates Papers, 1833-1947 – both housed in the Library of Virginia. Additional archival materials were checked and reviewed from digital sources at [www.Ancestry.com](http://www.Ancestry.com) and [www.FamilySearch.org](http://www.FamilySearch.org). Of the secondary sources, previous work consulted included DeMallie (2004) and Mooney (1894, 1912) on the contact-era Saponi social organization, the colonial-era ethnohistory and cultural milieu; Hazel (1991) and Everett (1999) highlight some colonial-era Saponi documents, as does White (1980). A review of the mid twentieth century's Tutelo ceremonial complex in Ontario can be found in Speck and Herzog (1942). Mathis (1964) is the source on the historiog-



Figure 4. Sappony tobacco drying barn, notched log with chinking and tin roof, typical of the region. This structure is located at the Sappony Tribal Center adjacent to the Christie Store. Source: Woodard Field Notes 2015.

raphy of Halifax and Person counties. A summary of Saponi-Tutelo culture and brief history can be found in DeMallie (2004); Nunn (1937) is the only comprehensive source for early twentieth-century Sappony political economy. While brief, the North Carolina Humanity Council's teacher resource guide (NCHC 2011) provided tribally originated historical content on the community. A few contemporary

remarks may also be found in Oakley (2005) and Perdue (1985). Richardson (2016) briefly describes colonial-era Saponi settlements in Virginia-Carolina, and connections to select contemporary descendant communities in North Carolina. A review of Saponi-Tutelo Siouan linguistics can be found in Hale (1883), Oliverio (1997), Oliverio and Rankin (2003), and Rankin (1980, 2007, 2012).

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## CHAPTER TWO

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND UNTIL 1775

#### LANGUAGE

The Saponi and Tutelo spoke similar dialects within the Siouan-Catawban language family, and are most closely affiliated with the Biloxi of the Gulf Coast and the Ofo of the Mississippi River. Biloxi, Ofo, and Tutelo are grouped together as a related branch of Eastern Siouan [also called Ohio Valley Siouan], while the neighboring branch of the distantly related Catawban include the Woccon and Catawba of North and South Carolina. These languages are firmly documented in written and ethnographic sources, however there are other communities within the Virginia-Carolina piedmont for which we have poor or nonexistent data (Martin 2004:77). Those poorly recorded groups in closest historical proximity to the Saponi-Tutelo include the Chisca, Cheraw, Eno, Keyauwee, Manahoac, Monacan, Occaneechi, Saraw, Saxapahaw, Shoccoree, Sugaree, Wateree, and Waxhaw. The majority of these communities merged with the Usheree, also known as Catawba, during the colonial era. While noted as a multilingual community during the eighteenth century, two dialects emerged as the extant Catawban language during the period of the Early Republic: Esaw and Saraw (Rudes, Blumer, and May 2004:301, 315-318).

Over the Appalachian Mountains on the Kanawha, New, and Tennessee rivers, two politically allied groups variously called the Mohetan / Tomahitan / Tamahita and Moneton / Monyton had some association with the Occaneechi, Saponi, Saraw, and Tutelo. Early English sources document the Monyton and Tomahitan traveling among the eastern piedmont towns. Based on scant linguistic

details and the political geography, “it is certain the Monyton spoke a language of [Eastern] Siouan,” and that Monyton and Tomahitan were likely “culturally and linguistically close,” if not the same peoples. There is no evidence however that either group was connected beyond trade to the Saponi-Tutelo, and the linguistic data is too scarce to affiliate them beyond an Eastern Siouan designation (DeMallie 2004:290-291; Oliverio and Rankin 2003:165; Speck 1935:212). The Tomahitan had established trade networks throughout the Carolinas, and down the Tennessee and Mississippi river valleys (Alvord and Bidgood 1912:211-222). Eventually they, along with the Tennessee River Koasati and Yuchi, joined the Creek Confederacy (May 2004:407; Jackson 2004:416; Swanton 1922:184-191).

The Monacan and Manahoac, asserted to be Siouan speakers by Mooney (1894:27), have been shown to have no documented linguistic affiliation with the language family, but only political association (DeMallie 2004:286). John Smith stated that the “Mannahoacks” were “all confederates with the Monacans though many different in language,” and that the groups “of sundry languages” could “not any one understandeth another but by Interpreters (Barbour 1986 I:150, 165). John Lederer listed the “Mahoc” and “Monakin” along with the Saponi and Occaneechi as “one language is common to them all, though they differ in Dialects” (1958:10). This reference may be an early recognition of a regional trade language, which crosscut the language families [glossed as differing in “Dialects”]. Goddard persuasively argues that Mooney’s Siouan identification of the Monacan and Manahoac as “extremely dubious,” particularly since most of their village names

[the only linguistic material that survives] are of apparent Algonquian origin. The few recorded personal names point “to an otherwise unknown language” (2005:18). Rankin (2007:19) and Martin (2004:82) concur, “no conclusion can be firmly drawn about the original languages of these groups,” based on the lack of evidence. They further agree that the “one language in common” refers to a lingua franca trade language known at Occaneechi, documented by Robert Beverly (1947:191). Goddard (2005:18) sums up the current linguistic analysis, “the Monacan and Manahoac spoke different languages, and... in fact, the components of the Manahoac by themselves spoke several” languages, which “undercut any claim that the Monacan and Manahoac groups all spoke Virginia Siouan.”

Of the above listed groups, the Occaneechi had the longest affiliation with the Saponi-Tutelo during the historic period. Beverly indicated the language of the Occaneechi was “The general Language here us’d” which was “understood by the chief Men of many Nations,” whose “Languages differ very much” (Beverly 1947:191). Like the Monacan and Monahoac however, the Occaneechi language is only speculated to be Siouan, due to their political association with the Saponi-Tutelo, as “no actual words of Occaneechi have been preserved” (Rankin 2007:14; but see Feest 1966). Beverly postulated that it was a “general sort of Language, like what Lahontan calls the Algonkine...but what this [Occaneechi] Language may differ from that of the Algonkines, I am not able to determin” (191).

Thus, Beverly’s remark about the Occaneechi establishes they spoke the trade “lingua franca,” but does not identify which language was utilized across the region. During the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, Indian guides and translators relied on by Virginia’s English traders were Algonquian and Iroquoian speakers, not Siouan (Lederer 1958; Salley 1911; Wurm et al 1996:1220). Most westward-bound Virginians utilized Appamattock, Chickahominy, Pamunkey, and Weyanock guides, as well as the displaced Susquehannock and local Tuscarora (Everett 2009; Byrd 1841:105, 107). Hong Lawson stated in 1709 that the Tuscarora “tongue,”

“Jargon,” or “Lingua of the Country” was “understood by some in every Town of all the Indians near us” (225-231). Thus, it is possible that the lingua franca of the region, understood at Occaneechi, was Iroquoian, rather than Siouan. Complicating matters, in Lederer’s 1670 southwestern expedition, he utilized Chickahominy guides who spoke the “Warrennuncok” dialect, which may have been Algonquian. The Chickahominy name for their main town was Warranuncock [also known as Warreny / Wahrani / Oraniocke and similar variations] (see Rountree and McCartney 2017:73, 101-102; contra Goddard 2005:44). The Chickahominy guides were the main informants for Lederer’s tour of the piedmont and lower mountains, and therefore his narration contains more coastal Algonquian content than Siouan (DeMallie 2004:291; Feest 1975:152; Speck 1938:11). Through the early accounts, we also learn that until 1676 the Occaneechi had good northern relations with the Iroquoian Susquehannock, from whom they received their trade in firearms, among other goods (DeMallie 2004:292). The short “Saponey” vocabulary acquired in 1716 at the coalescent Ft. Christanna community [which included a number of allied groups including the Occaneechi, Saponi, and Tutelo], contained a small sample of the supposedly widespread Siouan “lingua franca” of the Occaneechi. In fact, the majority of recorded numbers are Algonquian, some words Siouan, and a scattering of Iroquoian is present (Alexander 1971; Rhodes and Costa 2003).

From the extant historical record of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the Occaneechi had multiple “trade relations” or socio-political engagements with documented Algonquian, Iroquoian, and Siouan speakers. It may be an anomaly, or even an oddity, that the “lingua franca” language of the trading center at Occaneechi, “for all the Indians for at least 500 miles,” left no record in any of the word lists, trade jargons, or anything yet identified in the travel journals of the period (CMHS 1871:167). Or possibly, the “lingua franca” of the region was some other language than Siouan, such as a pidgin Algonquian or Iroquoian (see Rudes 2005 on Algonquian pidgin). Therefore, the classification of the Occaneechi as Siouan

speakers rests solely on their political affiliation with the Saponi-Tutelo, rather than any linguistic documentation.

By the second quarter of the eighteenth century, guides for the English into the piedmont included the Eno and Saponi, the latter of which can be confirmed as speaking a Tutelo-related Siouan dialect (Rankin 1980). During this era, Virginia officials used a single Siouan translator for the Occaneechi, Saponi, “Stuckanox,” and Tutelo. Thus by this time, the headmen of the coalesced allies all spoke Saponi-Tutelo, or the colonial interpreter was competent in multiple Native languages. The combined group applied to Virginia for a tract of land, as well as signed a single treaty in 1713/14 (EJCCV 3:296, 366, 376). In 1722 Lt. Governor Alexander Spotswood concluded another treaty with the Iroquois League in Albany, on behalf of Virginia and the Indians in alliance with the colony. Spotswood counted the “Christanna Indians” as the “Saponies, Ochineches, Stenkenocks, Meipontskys & Toteros” (NYCD 5:637). The identity of the Stenkenock has never been confirmed, nor if they originally spoke Siouan (Goddard 2005:15, 18), although Rankin has made an interesting etymology (2007:19; Speck 1935:212). Similarly, the Meipontsky are practically unknown and no identification concerning their affiliation is possible, outside of an alliance with the Saponi-Tutelo (Mooney 1894:37). The name “Totero” appears multiple times 1671-1728, possibly influenced by an Algonquian pronunciation, before becoming standardized in English as Tutelo (DeMallie 2004:299). Byrd stated that the “Sappo-ny, the Occaneches, and Steukenhocks” were the “remnant of several other nations,” but due to colonial-era demographic collapse had coalesced “into one body, and all of them now go under the name of the Sappo-ny.” No longer “preserving their different Rules,” Byrd said that by 1728, they were “speaking the same language, and using the same customs” (Byrd 1967:308-310; Spotswood II:88). After this period, the Saponi and Tutelo are the only names mentioned of these groups in historical records, whereby the “remnants” of the other communities must have been incorporated into those of the Siouan speakers.

A few other terms have linguistic significance, as they appear in documentary sources in association with the Saponi-Tutelo. Early piedmont records from Maryland and Virginia mention the “Nyhassan,” mostly in reference to the Saponi, but never the Tutelo. Despite Mooney’s (1894:31, 37) argument linking Nyhassan to the Siouan self-referential “ye-san,” that assertion is “incompatible” and “unexplained linguistically” (DeMallie 2004:299). Another moniker was used by the Iroquoians for the Siouans, “Tedarighroone” and its variations, and collectively included the Saponi, Tutelo, and Catawba (NYCD 6:811). Finally, one of the last speakers of the Tutelo language reported that the “Saponies and Tuteloes...could understand one another’s speech” and that they neighbored a “companion tribe” in New York, the “Patshenins.” The language of the Patshenins was not recorded, nor whether they were anything but associated with the Saponi-Tutelo. By inference, Hale suggested this term might refer to the long-affiliated Occaneechi, but that association must be considered speculative (1884:10).

#### HISTORICAL SAPONI-TUTELO SETTLEMENTS AND TERRITORY, 1650-1750

Based on early historical accounts, seventeenth-century maps, linguistic analysis, and glottochronology, the homeland for the Eastern Siouans was in the Ohio Valley, with the Ofo-Biloxi division moving westward down the Mississippi and the Saponi-Tutelo eastward over the Appalachians. During the seventeenth century, the presence of the Monsoopelea [ancestral Ofo] at the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi, and the Monytion’s location in West Virginia, would seem to confirm this interpretation. Rankin and Fiedel postulate the separation of Ofo from Tutelo to have occurred about AD 800 (Fiedel 2013:222-223; Brain, Roth, and De Reuse 2004:593-596; Rankin 2007).

By the mid seventeenth century, the Saponi-Tutelo habitations and hunting areas were primarily situated along Virginia branches of the Roanoke River drainage, concentrated on the New,

upper Roanoke, and Staunton rivers [1650-1676]; additional settlements were seated on the Appomattox [1680], the Nottoway [before 1650, and c.1685], Meherrin [c.1685], and Roanoke [c.1688]. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Siouans had villages on the Nottoway [1712-1714], Meherrin [1708-1714], lower Roanoke [1701-1708], and Yadkin [1701] rivers (see Figure 1). English records from the period identify multiple Siouan-allied towns throughout the Virginia and North Carolina piedmont, although not all were Saponi or Tutelo.

Following the 1711-1713 Tuscarora War, many of the Siouans and their allies gathered on the Meherrin River near the English plantation of Robert Hicks. Per the 1714 treaty arrangements signed by the collective group in Williamsburg, Lt. Governor Alexander Spotswood constructed a fort at this Meherrin River location, named Christanna. By 1716, Spotswood had a garrison of thirteen men, a blacksmith, gunsmith, a chapel, schoolhouse, and reported about 300 Saponi were settled at Fort Christanna (EJCCV 3:396-397; Fontaine 1972:155-157). They remained at this location for approximate fifteen years, but following funding shortages for colony's support of the fort and through multiple disagreements, most Saponi removed to Carolina to join the Catawba c.1729 (Byrd 1967:310). However, a few years later the Saponi returned to Virginia and requested to settle vacant lands on the Roanoke or Appomattox rivers (EJCCV 4:269), and were there in 1736 (Mooney 1894:50).

A large body of Saponi-Tutelo removed from Virginia northward about 1740 to Shamokin, a village on the Susquehanna River near the present town of Sudbury, Pennsylvania. Shamokin was founded by immigrant Delaware [Lenni-Lenape] and like other Native villages of the region and era, was a coalescent community. The town appears to have had elements of diverse tribes, speaking multiple languages. Situated on both sides of the river, the Saponi and Tutelo were first mentioned as residents in 1744; the following year, missionary David Brainerd reported there were more than fifty houses with three hundred people; he described half of the town as Delaware, and the remainder Seneca

and Tutelo. Shamokin was reported to have suffered multiple ills, including disease and problems with alcohol; famine and smallpox were recorded. By 1748, the Tutelo removed farther north on the Susquehanna to found the village of Skogari. This village, situated at the confluence of Cattawissa Creek, remained occupied through the end of the French and Indian War, until at least 1771 (Brainerd 1822:233; DeMallie 2004:287, 296).

Based on the population estimates by Spotswood and John Fontaine c.1716, and those of Brainerd in 1745, it is clear that not all Saponi-Tutelo removed from Virginia. Reports from the midcentury indicate Saponi bands remained in the Virginia-Carolina piedmont, and as in earlier periods, not all "Saponi" were settled at a single location at the same time. The aged Alexander Spotswood had a party residing on his lands at Fox's Neck in Orange County, Virginia in 1740-1743. Another group was recorded in Amelia County in 1737. Trader William Eaton listed thirty Saponi living in Granville County, North Carolina in 1752 and 1754, and still others moved in with the Southampton Nottoway and Carolina Tuscarora. At least two Saponi joined Meherrin, Nottoway, and Tuscarora warriors in Williamsburg during the French and Indian War. Thus c.1750, the Saponi, Tutelo, and the remnants of their allied groups were settled in multiple locales in Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and Virginia (Amelia County, DB1; Grinnan 1896:189-190; Maryland Gazette 4/21/57; Merrill 1989:116; Saunders 1886 5:321).

## SAPONI-TUTEO HISTORY AND CULTURE, 1650-1775

### *Early Descriptions*

The first mention of Virginia Siouan speakers in the English records was by Edward Bland in 1650, during an expedition south of contemporary Petersburg to trade with the Tuscarora in Carolina. At the falls of the Roanoke River, Bland's Algonquian guide told him that many people lived up the waterway "being the Occonacheans and the Nesoneicks [Saponi]" who occupied piedmont territo-

ry “which is of a very rich and fertile soile” (Alvord and Bidgood 1912:126).

When John Lederer made the first recorded visit to a Saponi town in 1670, he described it as “Sapon, a Village of the Nahyssans.” The settlement was fifty miles up the Staunton River from the confluence with the Roanoke:

“Sapon is within the limits of the Province of Carolina [modern Virginia], and...has all the attributes requisite to a pleasant and advantageous Seat; for though it stands high, and upon dry land, it enjoys the benefit of a stately River, and a rich Soyl, capable of producing many Commodities, which may hereafter render the Trade of it considerable” (1672:12).

Not far beyond “Sapon” was “Pintahae,” the chief residence of the Nahyssan “King,” who Lederer described as “an absolute Monarch.” He further remarked that the

“People [are] of a high stature, warlike and rich. I saw great store of Pearl unbored in their little Temples, or Oratories, which they had won amongst other spoyle from the Indians of Florida, and hold in as great esteem as we do” (12-13).

Lederer engaged in light trade at Sapon, offering “Glass” beads and “Metal” to the leaders, who conferred about his intentions and inquired where he was going. Finding Lederer’s interpreter’s answers “reasonable,” the “great Men” also consulted “their Godds” whether to allow Lederer to attend “their Nation and Councils,” and were soon also “satisfied” with their query. After spending some time at Sapon, the council thought it strategic to offer Lederer “to stay amongst them” by way of offering “a Marriage with the Kings or some of their great Mens Daughters.” Lederer declined, but assured them he would “return to them within six months” (12).

From this scant information, it would appear that multiple Siouan towns were under the

government of a single chief, glossed as the “absolute monarch.” However, this position of power was shared in some way with a council of great men, which may have crosscut the villages or operated at the town level. Marriage bonds were used as a strategy to link communities, in both internal and external arenas. The Saponi had a polytheistic belief system, and according to Lederer, ritual practitioners – like a shaman or conjurer – and a specialized structure for ceremonies.

In discussing the Indian Trade, Lederer divided the goods into two groups: those materials desired by Natives closer to the English settlements, and materials suitable for farther away indigenous communities:

“If you barely designe a Home-trade with neighbor-Indians, for skins of Deer, Beaver, Otter, Wild-Cat, Fox, Racoons, &c. your best Truck is a sort of course Trading Cloth, of which a yard and a half makes a Matchcoat or Mantle fit for their wear; as also Axes, Hoes, Knives, Sizars, and all sorts of edg’d tools. Guns, Powder and Shot, &c. are Commodities they will greedily barter for: but to supply the Indians with Arms and Ammunition, is prohibited in all English Governments” (26).

“To the remoter Indians you must carry other kinds of Truck, as small Looking-glasses, Pictures, Beads and Bracelets of glass, Knives, Sizars, and all manner of gaudy toys and knacks for children, which are light and portable... [there are] advantages to be made by a Trade with those remote Indians” (27).

Thus the Saponi, first mentioned in 1650, were by 1670 heavily engaged in the Indian Trade with the Virginia Englishmen. Lederer’s list for trading with “neighbor-Indians” was aimed at the coastal plain and piedmont towns, including the Saponi. Manufactured goods would soon replace many aspects of traditional Saponi material culture, such as brass kettles for ceramic vessels, English woolens and linens in place of buckskins, and iron tools supplanted ones made of stone, bone, and wood.

However, indigenous settlement types and foodways were maintained more or less unchanged well after the Siouan entrance into the deerskin trade.

While among the piedmont towns, Lederer recorded extensive riverine horticultural fields with “rich soyl” on high, level ground, “open in spacious Plains.” The towns “yearly reap great crops of Corn, of which they always have twelve-months Provision” (13). In narratives of the 1670s, the Siouan towns were described as having an “abundance of corne and all manners of pulse [beans],” “grapes,” as well as dried “store[s] of fish,” and ample amounts of “beavor,” “deer,” “turkeys,” “bulls [bison],” “flesh and beares oyle” (Alvord and Bidgood 1912:190-191, 213). Lederer also wrote of “Swans, Geese, and Ducks,” and a “great variety of excellent Fowl, as wilde...Pigeons, Partridges, Pheasants, &c.” (23-25). In other towns Lederer visited he described “an abundance of Grain” which yielded “three Crops in a Summer,” and the gathering and parching of “Nuts and Acorns over the fire, to take away their rank Oyliness; which afterwards pressed, yeeld a milky liquor, and the Acorns an Amber-colour’d Oyl. In these, mingled together, they dip their Cakes” (15). From these records, it is apparent the Saponi were mixed horticulturalists – hunting, fishing, gathering, and growing crops.

A little over a year after Lederer’s tour, a 1671 expedition led by Thomas Batts and Robert Fallam set out from Fort Henry [modern Petersburg] with Appamattuck and Susquehannock guides, and pushed into the western piedmont. After several days on the trail, they reached “the Sapiny Indian town” and after a few hours of continued travel arrived at the “Saponeys west” settlement. There, the Saponi enthusiastically received the English traders, firing off volleys of shot “as a salute and [then] feasted the visitors.” A Saponi guide led the traders to a third village of the Hanathaskies, about twenty-five miles away on an island in the Staunton River. This latter village corresponds to Lederer’s “Sapon” (Briceland 1987:135-136; DeMallie 2004:291). After touring these three Saponi towns, Batts and Fallam travelled for three more days to reach the “Toteras” or Tutelo settlements. There, they “were exceed-

ingly civilly entertain’d.” In most of the Batts and Fallam narratives, the relations with the Saponi-Tutelo were positive, and it is clear Virginia was firmly engaged with them in the Indian Trade. Remarks about continued “civil entertainment” at each town, “courteous” receptions, and firing off volleys on their arrival and after their departure “which is more than usual,” underscores the ongoing trade and familiarity. The narratives’ descriptions confirm “guns,” “powder,” and “many brass potts and kettles” were among the flow of manufactured goods into the Siouan settlements, and an increasing number of “English...a tradeing with them Indians.” One such trader was named John Stewart, who also from time to time kept a “Saponi Indian” with him (Alvord and Bidgood 1912:185-187, 193, 215; NCHC 2011:166). Of note however, was the trade in firearms, which as Lederer stated was “prohibited.” Some traders disobeyed the trade laws, but as multiple narratives attest, other sources for Indian firearms included raiding Spanish settlements, engaging Indians allied with the French, and down the line Indian trade from other English colonies.

#### *Bacon’s Rebellion and the 1677 Articles of Peace*

In 1676 a large body of Susquehannock arrived in the piedmont as refugees from the northern Chesapeake. During the same era, some Saponi relocated closer to the English settlements, settling a town at modern Saponny Creek in Chesterfield County, north of the Appomattox River. Increased Virginia trade relations, and likely, raids by Iroquoians, precipitated this move (Feest 1973). At this point in time, “northern Indians” were more frequently and vigorously raiding multiple Mid-Atlantic Native communities, and a cyclical warfare emerged between the Iroquois and southern groups, particularly the Siouan and Catawban speakers (Merrell 1987).

Driven out by similar Iroquois attacks, and engaged in fresh war with the English, the Susquehannock sought shelter with their southern allies along the Roanoke River. The Occaneechi and Susquehannock had good relations, and as Lederer

indicated, their northern trade was the source of the early firearms in the region. However, the Susquehannock turned on their hosts and tried to unseat the Occaneechi from their fortified island towns. After a deadly fight, the Susquehannock were repulsed. In May of 1676, Nathaniel Bacon, leader of a popular rebellion in the Virginia colony, arrived at Occaneechi Island in pursuit of the Susquehannock. The Occaneechi volunteered to join Bacon's forces in attacking the Susquehannock. The combined English-Occaneechi war party tracked the Susquehannock and defeated them. Bacon, engaged in an all-out war against the Virginia government and the colony's Indian trading partners, soon betrayed the Occaneechi and attacked their island fortresses. Bacon later reported his rogue army recovered a large amount of beaver hides, killed two Occaneechi chiefs, and "destroyed about 100 men...besides women & children." Bacon and his followers rampaged through the colony for most of 1676, attacked Virginia-allied Indian towns, and burned the colony capital of Jamestown. The unexpected death of Bacon effectively dissolved the rebellion (Anonymous 1900:2; Rice 2012; Washburn 1957:43-45, 193).

At the conclusion of Bacon's Rebellion, commissioners were sent from England to restore governmental order and negotiate a renewed peace with Virginia's Indian allies. With Jamestown in ashes, King Charles II's agents convened a meeting with neighboring Indians at the "Camp of Middle Plantation," now known as Williamsburg. During the treaty negotiations, commissioners Hebert Jeffreys, Francis Moryson, and John Berry sought to address Indian grievances, confirm Indian landholdings, and protect their subsistence rights. Indian signatories of the 1677 *Articles of Peace*, also known as the Treaty of Middle Plantation, included the Pamunkey, the Nottoway, Weyanock, and Nansemond. The *Articles of Peace* stipulated that Englishmen were forbidden to plant within three miles of an Indian town, and that any who encroached upon Indian lands would "be removed and proceeded against." Signatories to the treaty agreement were given English patents for their lands, and "have the same confirmed to them and their posterity...without any fee." An annual

presentation of three Indian arrows to the Virginia Governor was required, in lieu of paying a quitrent, in addition to the tribute of twenty beaver skins. Those in agreement with the treaty acknowledged their chiefly titles and lands were grants from the King of England, and that thereafter, all signatories were confirmed as in alliance with the Crown as "tributaries" (Moretti-Langholtz and Woodard, n.d.).

In 1680 a second version of the treaty was concluded, adding the Indians of Maryland, the Appomattuck, Nanzatico-Portobacco, Manakin [Monacan], Saponi and Meherrin to the document. In the eyes of the English, this agreement confirmed the dominion of the English monarch over Virginia, the colonies' tributary Indians, along with the existing subjects of England, Scotland, Ireland and France. The Saponi residing in modern Chesterfield County on Sappony Creek were the signatories to the second *Articles of Peace*. This treaty reestablished the political and trade relationships between Virginia and the neighboring Indian tribes, the latter decimated by the recent English uprising and the simultaneous annual Iroquoian attacks. From the towns nearest Fort Henry [modern Petersburg], the Appamattuck joined the Saponi delegation, as did Indians from the nearby Monacan town. Two signers endorsed the treaty for the "Sappones," the "young King" "Mastegonoe" and "chiefe man" "Tachapoake." While not all of the Saponi towns were situated as close to the English as the Sappony Creek settlement, the endorsement of the "young King" may indicate the wider Saponi agreement to the treaty's terms (Miscellaneous Virginia Records, 1606-1692).

#### *The Saponi Relocation to North Carolina, 1685-1708*

At some point in the early to mid 1680s, the Saponi occupied a former Meherrin village known as Unote located on the Meherrin River in modern Southampton County, Virginia. William Byrd I reported in the 1680s that the "Saponees" and "Toteros" were both settled south of the Nottoway River and were "a hunting on the South Side of the

Maherin River.” Byrd stated that the two towns had not planted corn for the last few years, because of continuing raids by the Seneca [Iroquois], “till this year & now they have a considerable quantity of rare ripe corne growing.” The Tutelo town was fortified, likely with a palisade, and was situated on a hill at a fork on the south side of Three Creeks in Southampton County. In the mid to late 1680s another town was situated on “Saponi Island” in the Roanoke River, below the Occaneechi. William Byrd II indicated that the Tutelo were settled on the upper-most island, above Occaneechi. The Occaneechi occupied the middle island until at least 1681. At that location, there was an orchard of peach trees, indicating the fruit’s introduction and adoption by the piedmont Indians sometime during this period (Byrd 1901:286-290; Feest 1973). From the documentary sources, it is unclear whether the Saponi occupied these sites in succession or simultaneously, although most authors favor the interpretation that the Roanoke River islands were occupied by the Saponi and Tutelo after they moved further south from Unote and Three Creeks (DeMallie 2004:292; Feest 1973:154).

The Saponi and Tutelo were next mentioned in 1701, living on the Yadkin River, near modern Salisbury, North Carolina (see Figure 1). As reported by John Lawson, the river then carried the name “Sapona.” He visited the “Sapona Town and Fort,” which was situated “in a clear Field, about a Mile square.” Lawson indicated the Saponi had sweat lodges for curing illness, as well as a resident Indian “doctor” who had a storehouse of various herbs and medicines. So too, an “old King” and a council governed the Saponi under the same political organization. The “old King” may have been “Mastegonoe,” the former “young” signatory of the 1680 *Articles of Peace*; Lawson described him as “a good Friend to the English” (1709:46).

John Lawson wrote little about the Saponi, but noted a few cultural details. When an “ambassador from the King of Sapona” arrived at the Waxhaw town, his face was painted red, and he carried a flintlock gun, and a large cutlass through his belt. The King had two “fat” horses at his lodge, which

he displayed to Lawson, but appeared not to ride them (DeMallie 2004:292). The Saponi were trapping beaver, and along with the Tutelo, had “Plenty of Buffelos, Elks, and Bears, with other sort of Deer amongst them.” Lawson stated the “Toteros, a neighbouring Nation, came down from the Westward Mountains, to the Sapponas.” Thus, it may have been that the Tutelo lived in the upland region at the headwaters of the Yadkin or along the New River. Both groups were still engaged in the cyclical attacks with the Northern Iroquois, and Lawson reported the Saponi had fresh Seneca captives. He also stated that the “Toteros, Saponas, and Keyauwees, 3 small Nations, were going to live together, by which they thought they should strengthen themselves, and become formidable to their Enemies.” Soon after Lawson’s visit, the Saponi-Tutelo, Keyauwee, Occaneechi, and Shoccoree all moved closer to the Carolina colonial settlements, creating a polyethnic “Sapona Town” east of the Roanoke River near modern Windsor, North Carolina. Together, the town population numbered 750, including men, women, and children (1709:48; Mooney 1912 2:855).

In 1708 the “Saponie King” asked the Virginia Council to reinstate or confirm their tributary status, and approve a planned Saponi settlement in Virginia. The Council welcomed the Saponi back to the colony, acknowledged their treaty-status, and agreed to assign them lands in the vicinity of their old habitations along the Meherrin River. The Saponi returned to the area around Unote, about ten miles southeast of modern Emporia, and constructed a fort. Outside the palisade, their town and cornfields spanned both sides of the river. The Tutelo apparently remained in Carolina, for in November of the same year the Nottoway reported that the “Toteros” had attacked, and asked the Virginia Council for permission to pursue them. The Council agreed, and allowed any other tributaries to join them, all supplied with ammunition (DeMallie 2004:293; EJCCV 3:188, 196, 202; Feest 1973). Resolution must have been satisfactorily found, because by 1711 the Tutelo were granted permission to settle with the Saponi, and the Virginia Council stated the Tutelo “have always been faithful and

friendly to her Majestt's subjects." Subsequently, the Tutelo again built a fort on Three Creek north of modern-day Emporia. The Occaneechi and Stuckanox had also joined the Saponi earlier in the year, requesting a tract of land north of the Meherrin River "above the Tuscaruro trading path." Trade from Virginia soon returned, but the Saponi shortly complained about the amount of rum being trucked at their town. In response, the Council ordered an act in 1712 to prohibit the "selling of rum within the precincts allotted to the Tributary Indians" (DeMallie 2004:293; EJCCV 3:296, 310, 312-313; Feest 1973).

#### *Tributaries of Virginia and Fort Christanna, 1708-1728*

Lt. Governor Alexander Spotswood welcomed the Siouans and their allies back into the tributary ranks of Virginia's allied Indian communities. The Saponi had been away from Virginia's borders for over twenty years. He counted the Occaneechi, Saponi, Stuckanox, and Tutelo among nine tributaries of the colony, with an estimated total population of 700, including 250 fighting men – of which the Siouan affiliates may have represented less than half. During this same period, the Tuscarora War exploded in North Carolina; the brewing of which may have been the source of the Saponi-Tutelo relocation to Virginia. The Tuscarora, inflamed by land encroachment, continued slave raiding, trade imbalances, and with probable encouragement by the Northern Iroquois, went to war against all of Carolina's eastern colonial settlements. Virginia responded by protecting its southern borders, and enlisted rangers and tributary Indians to police and "scour the Woods between James River and Merratuck [Roanoke]." Twenty of the Saponi, Occaneechi, and Stuckanox were called into action and supplied ample powder and shot. Rather than invading Tuscarora country, Spotswood planned to create a buffer of roving militia and Indian allies, and stave the flames of war from reaching the Virginia settlements. Through 1713 Virginia mobilized the Southside county rangers and militia, as well as all of the southern tributaries. At the conclusion of the war and the defeat of the Tuscarora, the Saponi

and Tutelo were acknowledged for their remarkable service:

"It is ordained that there be given to each of the Indians that served in the Detachment under Capt Hix two pounds of powder & eight pounds of Shott...the Tottero King...[a] Reward of Cloathing and 8 pounds of powder & 32 Shott & to the Great man of the Saponie's 6lb powder & 24lb Shott" (EJCCV 3:332, 342, 358; Spotswood I:167).

Following the 1711-1713 Tuscarora War, Spotswood proposed to relocate multiple Indian communities to the frontier of the Virginia colony, in an effort to maintain the buffer of protection from "strange Indians." To affect this end and to attract tributaries, Spotswood planned to create a series of settlements focused on trade and military security. The regulation of the Indian Trade and a fortified garrison were seen as desirable by the Saponi-Tutelo, and they entered into a new treaty with Virginia in 1713/14. The Siouans agreed to relocate to a six-mile square tract on the Meherrin River, near the plantation of Indian Trader and Ranger Captain Robert Hix [or Hicks]. The governor built a small five-sided fort, garrisoned by an officer and twelve men, a blacksmith, and a gunsmith. Hypothetically, the rangers and Indians would "submit to the other Regulations proposed for the better security of the Frontiers," and patrol the area between the Appomattox and Roanoke rivers. The Indian Trade would be centered at the fort, and more fully regulated for supply, standardization of exchange, and colonial oversight for quality, quantity, and fairness. Named Fort Christanna, the settlement included a church and school, "to allow their Children to be educated in the principles of the Christian Religion;" the assigned preacher and schoolmaster was Rev. Charles Griffin. At Christanna, the four groups of Occaneechi, Saponi, Stuckanox, and Tutelo were "incorporated into one Nation." In 1715 Virginia received petitions from the Eno and Saraw who wished to be received as tributaries and allowed to settle at Christanna with the Saponi (Figure 1). Fear of Seneca attacks delayed their relocation, but by April of that year Spotswood reported about 300

Saponi in residence. All of the “confederated” Indians at Christanna were collectively called “Saponi” (EJCCV 3:363, 366, 376, 396-397; Beaudry 1985; Spotswood II:88).

The Indian school at Christanna operated from 1716 to 1718, and averaged about 70-80 students. In contrast to the Brufferton Indian School at the College of William & Mary, which was also included in Spotswood’s broad tributary policy, the Christanna school of Charles Griffin catered to both boys and girls, without preference for their parents’ political status. The Brufferton primarily educated young boys from chiefly families, and during this era a Brufferton student’s residence had a strong relationship to the annual tribute from the allied tribes. At Christanna, observations from 1717 indicate that the Saponi “Children can all read, say their catechisms and prayers tolerably well.” According to Rev. Hugh Jones who visited the fort, Rev. Griffin was well regarded, “The Indians so loved and adored him that I have seen them hug and lift him up in their arms, and fain would have chosen him a King of the Saponi nation” (Fontaine 1972:157; Jones 1956:12, 59, 167).

According to another visitor John Fontaine, the Saponi Town at Christanna was built in a circular form, with houses abutting each other, except for three locations, which served as entrances to the village. All of the doors faced the central plaza, where a tree stump served as a raised platform for leaders to address the town. The houses were constructed from square timbers set in the ground, with gabled roofs, the whole being covered with sweet gum, hickory, or oak bark. Inside the single room dwellings, the families had small hurdles around the house walls, covered with deer and bearskins, and trade blankets. Bulrush mats acted as partitions to divide the sleeping quarters situated on either side of a central fire, with most Indians sitting on the floor with their kettles, wooden bowls, and trenchers. Smoke left the building through a hole in the roof. On the landing between the town and the river, the Saponi had wattle-and-daub sweatlodges, each big enough for a single person (Catesby 1731-1743 2:xi; Fontaine 1972:96-97).

The Saponi were reported to have had no domesticated animals, and were still unaccustomed to riding horses. The traditional subsistence of mixed horticulture continued, with men hunting and women raising corn. Fontaine also described Saponi marriage relations, which included a man taking one wife for all of her childbearing years. If a woman could no longer bear children, a second wife could be taken, but both had to be maintained [polygyny]. Jones confirmed the Christanna Indians allowed polygyny, and placed emphasis on fidelity. Adulterous women were punished by having their hair cut off, which was then attached to a standing pole outside of town. Public shame led many to be outcasts from the village. Fontaine noted that children were bound on cradleboards until they were two years of age. The boards were described as rounded at the top, two small platforms at the bottom for each leg, a hole cut from the middle for waste, and small holes for lacing and straps. Children could be propped up or suspended while their mothers worked. For trade goods among the Saponi, Fontaine’s descriptions and a small word list, are complimented by the 1979-1980 and 2001-2002 archaeological surveys of Ft. Christanna. From those resources, it is clear the Saponi had incorporated a diversity of European materials, including: guns, powder horns, gun powder, and lead shot; blue and red wool for leggings, wrap skirts, blankets, and matchcoats; garments such as breeches, coats, hats, and shoes; buttons, buckles, brass tinklers, and glass beads; kettles, swords, hatchets, knives, fishhooks; jews harps, looking glasses, and small mirrors (Alexander 1971; Beaudry 1985; Fontaine 1972:93-95; Jones 1865:16).

Of the appearance of the Saponi, Fontaine remarked that sixty young men came to the fort with feathers in their hair and through their ears, each man painted blue and red. All were wrapped in stroud cloth of the same colors. Their hair was cut in multiple patterns: shaved with a Mohawk standing “like a cock’s-comb,” some with half a head shaved, and others with a full head of hair. The hair-style variations may reflect the differing origins of the Christanna Indians, as Fontaine’s short word list included Siouan, Algonquian, and Iroquoian words.

Hugh Jones wrote, “Each Nation has some distinguishing Mark, especially in the Cut or Tie of their Hair.” Thus, the Christanna Indians were a polyglot of peoples, of whom the Saponi-Tutelo were Siouan. Possibly, others were Algonquian speakers, as Jones remarked “some of them [are] with their Hair cut off on one Side, and a long Lock on the other,” which was the typical pattern of the coastal Algonquian males. Nonetheless, all of the women Fontaine described wore their hair “long straight [and] black...which comes down to their waist.” The women also wore stroud wrapped about their middle, but without tops; others “had two deerskins sewed together and thrown over their shoulders like a mantle.” Both sexes oiled their bodies and hair with bear’s grease (Fontaine 1972:93-94; Jones 1865:11).

The Christanna Saponi government consisted of several headmen and women, at least two of which appeared at the 1713/14 Williamsburg treaty council as the “Hoontky” or the chief of the Saponi named Tawhee Soka, and Mawseeuntkey, “Hoontky” of the Tutelo. Two other “Great Men” signed as proxies for the “Hoontky” of the Occanechi, and “Hoontky miha” or female leader of the Stuckanox. The latter men were named Chawco and Ne-hawroose. It is unclear what relationship these leaders had to one another as a “Hoontky” or “Hoontky miha;” the title does not appear in the recorded vocabularies. At Christanna, Fontaine reported that the collective body of “Saponi” were governed by twelve elders, and that the “Nation hath no king at present.” Whether the signers in Williamsburg were members of the council of twelve, or whether “Hoontky” referred to these counselor positions is also not known. These men, however, annually paid tribute to the Virginia Governor, and “had the power to act for the whole nation.” Whatever their origins, the configuration of twelve council members likely represented socio-political or kinship aspects of each constituent Christanna community (Fontaine 1972:93; Robinson 1983:220-224; cf. Woodard and Moretti-Langholtz 2009).

Through the 1715 beginnings of the Yamasee War in South Carolina, multiple Native groups

petitioned the Virginia Council about relocating to Christanna. The Saponi’s twenty plus years in Carolina had acquainted them with communities throughout the piedmont, including those composing the coalescent Catawba. The Eno, Saraw, Sugaree, Winyaw, and Waxhaw [most times in collaboration with the Catawba] all visited Christanna and Williamsburg, and appear in the Virginia Council records of the period. How many individuals from these remnant nations actually merged with the Christanna Saponi is not known; many of them however, including some Saponi, settled with the Catawba in the subsequent decades (EJCCV 3:395-396, 405-406, 411-412, 421-422; Gamble 2013:85; Robinson 1983:229-230, 236-237).

In 1717 London officials barred the Virginia Indian Company Act, including funding streams that would have continued Spotswood’s vision for the Saponi and Ft. Christanna. Spotswood’s monopoly and regulation of the Indian Trade was broken up, and the Governor was unsuccessful at getting additional financial support for the fort’s affairs. The following year Christanna’s Rev. Charles Griffin returned to Williamsburg to head the Bafferton Indian school, and the Christanna garrison was abandoned by the colony. Some Saponi, however, continued to reside at the fort, and entirely took over the settlement. Iroquois attacks increased through the end of the decade, ambushing the Saponi fort traffic and burning the cornfields of the town. Between 1720 and 1722, the governments of New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia facilitated a peace between the Northern Iroquois and the Siouans. The treaty conferences also confirmed the relationship of the colonies to the Iroquois and the protocols of Euro-Indian diplomatic exchange. Through Virginia as a mediator in 1720, the Saponi accepted a wampum belt from the Pennsylvania Indian towns under the control of the Iroquois [i.e. Conestoga and Conoy], and by 1722 the Treaty of Albany created a formal peace between the Iroquois and Saponi. At the same time, the defeated Tuscarora mostly abandoned their Virginia-Carolina territory, moved north with the Iroquois, and were adopted as the sixth nation of the Iroquois Confederacy (DeMallie 2004:295; NYCD 5:671-672).

William Byrd II and a troupe of Virginia-Carolina boundary surveyors visited Christanna in 1728. As the party approached the town, men and women rode out on horses to greet Byrd, apparently as a sign of respect. Byrd noted the Saponi remained awkward riding horses. The surveyors stayed the night at the town and described the “Sapponeys” as having the “reputation of being the honestest, as well as the bravest Indians we have ever been acquainted with” (1841:88).

During the next leg of the survey, Byrd relied on a Saponi man named Ned Bearskin as a hunter and guide, and from him, recorded a few details about Saponi cosmology. According to Bearskin, the Saponi believed in a supreme god, and several minor deities. Jones (1956:60) recorded this godly presence as named “Mohomny,” and both accounts agree that Mohomny was a positive force that was just and responsible for the creation of all earthly and heavenly things. In the afterlife, the Saponi believed there was a path of souls, which forked into differing roads for the good and bad. The good souls followed the right path and were allowed to enter a land of plenty, which was guarded by an old man seated on a richly woven mat. There, the season was always late spring, fruit was ripe all year, and corn grew effortlessly from warm soils. Deer, turkey, elk, and bison were innumerable, and everyone remained young. In contrast, the left hand path was difficult in terrain, and led to a barren place where it was winter all year. Overseen by an old woman with rattlesnakes for hair and who sat upon a giant toadstool, the cold country was devoid of food, except for a bitter tuber that caused ulcers and stench. Everyone was old. Ugly women with panther-like claws, who talked constantly with shrill voices, tormented the men. After spending a number of years in this state of despair, the souls were returned to earth to attempt to live a better life, and hopefully in the next afterlife, take the right hand path to blissful eternity (Byrd 1841:52-53).

Aspects of Saponi cosmology parallel other tribes’ beliefs, including the ranking of deities, the path of souls, the guardians of the forked road, and the characteristics of a good and bad afterlife. The

two guardian figures and their environs have traits that link them to the sun and the moon, day and night, the sky world and the underworld, and thus basic features of a cosmogram that was widespread in Native North America (cf. Lankford 2007:205).

From Bearskin, Byrd also recorded the Siouan names of land and water features along the proposed piedmont boundary between Virginia and North Carolina: Yapatio Creek or “beaver lodge;” Tewahomini Creek or “He [a Tuscarora] is dead water;” Moniseep Ford or “shallow water;” Ohimpamoni Creek or “fish fall down water;” Hycootomony River or “buzzard lodge water;” Massamoni Creek or “red earth water.” Combined with Fontaine’s 1716 short list, these words are the only identifiable Eastern Siouan vocabulary collected during the colonial period. The Hyco River, which runs through contemporary Person and Halifax counties, retains the fragment of the original Saponi toponym (Rankin 1980).

#### *Saponi Cyclical Warfare and Peace with the Iroquoians, 1727-1753*

During the late 1720s the peace between the Siouans and the Iroquois proved to be temporary. The Tuscarora killed some Saponi in 1727 and the Meherrin complained to the Virginia Council that the Saponi and “the old Occaneechee King” had attacked them. The next year the Nottoway and Saponi both claimed the other had murdered their members; the Council ordered the culprits from both groups to be jailed, including a Saponi headman named Tom. The Saponi became enraged and stated that if their leader were hanged, they would remove beyond the Roanoke River and then attack all of the English plantations south of the James River (EJCCV 4:26, 132-133, 152-153, 185-186; Mooney 1894:50). Byrd wrote that a drunk Saponi headman killed an Englishman, and was subsequently hanged for the crime. As an outcome, the Saponi left Ft. Christanna and relocated to deep Carolina, settling with the Catawba. This second exodus from Virginia occurred before 1728 (Byrd 1841:89). However, in the spring of 1732 the Sa-

poni again petitioned Virginia to resettle lands they formerly occupied. The Tutelo and the Saraw joined them, and the body was granted permission to occupy tracts on the Roanoke or Appomattox rivers (EJCCV 4:269).

Hostilities continued through 1732-1733, with reports of Tutelo scalps being taken by the Conoy, and reciprocal attacks between the Saponi and Nottoway. Headmen from the Saponi made peace overtures to the Nottoway and Tuscarora, which were eventually accepted. The Tuscarora invited the Saponi to incorporate with them on their Roanoke River reservation, indicating the peace agreement was substantive. The Saponi seriously considered the move, but by 1736 at least some, if not all, Saponi were still residing in Virginia (EJCCV 4:303; Mooney 1894:50).

The cessation of Iroquoian hostilities and firm commitments to peace may have motivated some Saponi-Tutelo in about 1740 to relocate north to Pennsylvania on the Susquehanna River (Figure 1). The emigrants first settled at Shamokin alongside refugee Delaware and their Seneca overlords (DeMallie 2004:296). The Iroquois Confederacy claimed complete control over the region, and domination over multiple tribes such as the Conestoga, Conoy, Delaware, Nanticoke, and some bands of Shawnee. The Iroquois counted these groups as quasi-tributary nations. At settlements like Shamokin, the Iroquois placed Seneca or Cayuga chiefs to monitor the affairs of the coalescent communities; some of these Iroquoian leaders appear in colonial-era documents as “half-king,” in reference to their League affiliation and agent-like status at “conquered” Indian towns.

By 1748, the Shamokin Saponi-Tutelo moved farther up the Susquehanna and founded the village of Skogari. This village remained occupied for the next twenty years. Called Tedarigh-roone by the Iroquois, these northern settlements of Saponi-Tutelo were formally adopted by the League in 1753, with the Cayuga as sponsors. Other settlements of northern Saponi-Tutelo bands included a 1760 residence at Tioga Point and across

the river on the East Branch of the Susquehanna River. Several years later, the combined male population of the Tutelo, Saponi, Nanticoke, and Conoy was estimated to be 200; another report from 1770 stated the Tutelo among the Iroquois numbered seventy-eight (NYCD 7:582-584; Schaffer 1942:xiv). By 1771, most New York Saponi-Tutelo moved closer to the Cayuga settlements, establishing a main village called Toderighrono. The New York Saponi-Tutelo split during the American Revolution, with some ending up at Buffalo Creek, others on the Seneca River at the Cayuga reservation, and eventually most on the Six Nations reserve in Ontario. Details of the northern Tutelo Revolutionary-era narrative, their continued incorporation into the Iroquois Confederacy, and their nineteenth-century history can be found in Hale (1883), DeMallie (2004), Mooney (1894), Schaffer (1942), and Speck (1935). Speck and Herzog’s Tutelo Spirit Adoption Ceremony (1935) is the most extensive ethnographic account of the remaining Saponi-Tutelo in Ontario.

#### *The Saponi in Virginia-Carolina, 1740-1775*

Following the 1740 northern relocation of the Saponi-Tutelo, multiple references attest to the presence of Saponi remaining in the Virginia-Carolina piedmont. Eleven Indian men were brought to the courthouse in Orange County, VA and charged with “terrifying one Lawrence Strouthier and on suspicion of stealing hogs.” While not identified specifically as Saponi, one of the 1742 accused men was named “Charles Griffin,” clearly an honorific for the much beloved Christanna schoolmaster that instructed the Saponi a generation earlier. The other names mentioned in the document, such as “Capt. Tom,” “Manincassa,” and “Little Jack,” demonstrate a combination of Siouan monikers and English labels were in use by this time (Orange County Register of Deeds, 1741-1743). The same phenomenon of increasing English language and name use was present at the Nottoway Indian Town in Southampton County, VA, the Pamunkey Indian Town in King William County, VA, and the Tuscarora Town in Bertie County, NC.

During the years 1743-1747 Virginia Governor Gooch reported to the British Colonial Office that the “Saponies and other petty nations associated with them...are retired out of Virginia to the Cattabaws,” but that by 1748 some Saponi had returned to Virginia. In 1752 and 1754 the Indian Trader William Eaton listed over thirty Saponi residing in Granville County, NC [modern Franklin, Person, Warren, and Vance counties]. It is unclear whether Gooch references Eaton’s Saponi settlement, or another. Moravian missionaries near contemporary Winston-Salem, NC reported in 1756 that a group of Indians they identified as “Cherokee” came “from the fort near Haw River.” The Haw River is far from the Cherokee settlements of the period, and thus at least one researcher has argued that the “fort” was a palisaded village, occupied by Siouan speakers (Hazel 1991:12).

A separate Saponi group appears to have accepted the 1730s invitation from the local Iroquoians to dwell with them, or at least some members elected this option. Several Saponi warriors joined the Meherrin, Nottoway, and Tuscarora during the French and Indian War, indicating a possible 1757 residence with either the Nottoway or Tuscarora in Virginia or North Carolina. At a trial in Edenton, NC in 1758 William Eaton was called upon to act as an interpreter for an Indian named James Strewsberry, who was accused of a murder committed in Chowan County. Eaton only spoke Saponi and English, so his work as an interpreter served Strewsberry in Siouan (White 1980:81). Based on the murder location, Strewsberry was likely one of the Saponi who had settled at the neighboring Tuscarora Indian Town.

Governor Dobbs of North Carolina wrote the Lord Commissioners in London concerning the remaining Indians within his colony, as part of an annual circular response. Dobbs stated in 1761 that “the only tribes or remains of tribes of Indians residing in this province are the Tuskerora, Sapona, Meherin, and Maramuskito Indians...the Saponas and Meherrin have about 20 [fighting men] each...the first 3 are situated in the middle of the colony upon and near the Roanoke.” Dobbs concluded by

stating the Saponi and other Indians “live chiefly by hunting and are in perfect friendship with the inhabitants” (White 1980:82). In agreement with Dobbs, but possibly identifying another settlement in Virginia, Lt. Governor Francis Fauquier wrote the Lords of Trade and Plantation two years later, “There are some of the Nottoways, Meherrins, Tuscaroras, and Saponys who tho’ they live in peace in the midst of us, lead in great measures the lives of wild Indians” (Reese 1981:1017). Possibly this group lived in the environs of their old Virginia towns, near “Sappony Creek” or “Sappony Church” off the Appomattox River in Dinwiddie County, or toward the Meherrin and Roanoke rivers in modern day Mecklenburg or Lunenburg counties (NCHC 2011:168). Like the settlement identified by Eaton, the Indian trade and relationships with Indian traders likely influenced some Saponi decisions. In 1764 Superintendent for the Southern Indian Department, John Stuart, confirmed the “Saponys” were settled “In Virginia.” He estimated that along with the Nottoway, the combined force could provide “60 Gun-Men” (AHR 1915:825).

From the following discussion and review of documentary sources, it is clear that twenty-five years after a band of Saponi-Tutelo relocated to Pennsylvania and New York, several other Saponi groups were situated c.1765 in North Carolina and Virginia: some among the Tuscarora, others in old Granville County, and yet others in Southside, VA. One scholar concludes the Saponi “broke into at least three and possibly five tribal factions.” At least one 1774 document mentioned a band in conjunction with the Catawba, both receiving presents from Carolina or Virginia representatives (Everett 1999:394; CSRNC XXII:866). Again, it is unclear whether this Saponi band were residents of Virginia, Carolina, or yet another group living with the Catawba. However, James Adair, whose work was published in 1775, wrote, “In Virginia, resides the remnant of an Indian tribe, who call themselves Sepone” (2005:115), providing support for one or more Virginia Saponi settlements.

Multiple contemporary Virginia and North Carolina Indian communities claim descent from

these late eighteenth-century Saponi bands (NCHC 2011), although the data lack specific familial names and clarity of affiliation (Everett 1999:394-396; Hazel 1991:10). Anthropologist John Swanton suggested in 1946 that the Saponi were “still represented by a body of ‘Croatan Indians’ in Person County.” North Carolina historian Douglas Rights tentatively concurred, “A remnant of Indians remains in Person County, once part of Granville... There is a possibility that a few Saponi remained here” (Swanton 1946:178; Rights 1947:114). Sociologist William Harlen Gilbert made a similar proclamation in 1948, “These Person County Indi-

ans may be descendants of a small band of Saponi Indians” (421). The Indian Settlement straddling the High Plains border country of North Carolina and Virginia, in Person and Halifax counties respectively, have thus had the longest contemporary affiliation with the “Saponi” designation, although the community was legislatively recognized by North Carolina as the “Person County Indians” over a century ago. In 2003 the state legislature of North Carolina designated the Indians “previously recognized” in 1913 as “the Indians of Person County” as “officially recognized as the Sappony” (SL 2003-87 HB 355).

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## CHAPTER THREE

### THE HIGH PLAINS INDIAN SETTLEMENT, c.1775-1875

#### *The Indian Settlement*

Ancestral surnames of the contemporary High Plains Indian community began appearing in the historical records of the region as early as the mid-eighteenth century. Indian Traders and frontiersmen, such as William Eaton, Robert Hix, and John Stewart established small communities around their settlements, such as the cluster of patents and homes that emerged in proximity to old Fort Christanna. The Stewart and Epps families of the contemporary Sappony trace their surnames to individuals associated with the Indian trading path in Dinwiddie County, in proximity to Sappony Creek and Sappony Church. Other community members can identify probable ancestors among the Flat Rock Creek settlement along the Meherrin River in Luneburg and Mecklenburg Counties (NCHC 2011:168). A 1752 titheable list for Mecklenburg County includes the surnames Epps, Talley, Martin, Coleman, and Johnson – names all later associated with the High Plains area (Elliot 1983:101, 104). As early as the 1750s, the Talley family had frontier representation in Halifax County, Virginia (Dodson 1998:98), and the Epps family was in Mecklenburg by 1760. By the end of the American Revolution, the Epps and Talley families were well established in Halifax County (Wells and Opperman 2006:12; Schreiner-Yantis 1987:88).

Regarding the tenure of the “Indian Settlement” on the “high plains” of Halifax and Person counties, Euro-American commenters related the community to have either preexisted or paced colonial settlement of the region: “these people have lived in the rolling hills and high plains northeast of

Roxboro for countless generations. No one knows how long” (MacCaughely 1948). There are seven surnames of the contemporary High Plains community: Coleman, Epps, Johnson, Martin, Shepherd, Stewart [Steward, Steaurt, Stuart], and Talley. These names are however not exclusive to the Sappony, but have shown a remarkable consistency of association for over two hundred years. According to tribal historians, the Flat Rock Creek settlement, early Halifax and Person frontiersmen, and Indian traders contributed to the surname usage and ancestry of the High Plains community. Situated along the Hyco River, Bluewing Creek, and Mayo Creek, the High Plains “Indian settlement” is in the same geography of traditional Saponi-Tutelo occupation, to include the area Ned Bearskin guided William Byrd through in 1727 (see Figure 2). Some suggest it was not until after the American Revolution, in which the Sappony served amongst the Carolina and Virginia regiments, that Sappony people began purchasing land. With the infusion of cash from wartime service and other wage labor, a gradual but steady land base was established on the border country of Halifax and Person counties (NCHC 2011:168, 177; Wells and Opperman 2006:12).

Coalescence of Indian peoples in High Plains resulted in a tight-knit community of intermarriage, labor pooling, and mutual interests. The disparate piedmont elements of the “Saponi” during the colonial era – amalgamated from multiple remnant Native populations at Christanna and among the Catawba – formed in this specific instance a rural and isolated agricultural community. However, probable colonial era intermarriage with Indian traders and frontiersmen significantly impacted the

emergent community's cultural milieu. The experience of the American Revolution and the War of 1812, in which Saponi men were integrated in service with White and free Black counterparts, likely also impacted returning veterans' perspectives on the "new order" of things in America. The same was true for other former tributaries; some removed from the region [i.e. the Bertie County Tuscarora relocated to New York], others fully embraced new religious ideology [i.e. the Catawba and Pamunkey became overwhelmingly Baptist], and still others replicated the farm structures of the Virginians [i.e. the Nottoway excelled at cotton, corn, orchard, and swine production]. Like other Native communities in the region to the east of High Plains, such as the Nottoway and Pamunkey, the Saponi community of practice was an acculturated "Indian Settlement." Long associations with the market economy of the Indian trade and colonial-era contract labor, familiarity with the tributary and legal system of the Virginia-Carolinas, and repeated exposure to Christianity at places like Christanna and the Braxferton Indian School transformed the internal Saponi cultural and organizational dynamics. Proselytization and missionary efforts from multiple Christian dominations in the region further influenced Saponi belief systems, as did the likely intermarriage with the Christian families that transferred surnames into the Saponi community (cf. Atkins Spivey 2017; Green and Plane 2010; Woodard 2013).

#### *High Plains Demography, Farming, and Labor*

Based on the extant documents, High Plains Indian labor practices in the first decades of the nineteenth century demonstrate a significant shift in Saponi subsistence during the transition from the colonial period to era of the early Republic. No longer acting as hunters or guides for the Indian trade, Native men became invested in the emerging agricultural economy of the High Plains region. Individual family farms were established in Person and Halifax counties, with some members of the community acting as laborers and domestics for neighboring White households. Piedmont cash cropping focused on corn and tobacco, and Saponi lands

and labor contributed to the region's production. After 1800, the Saponi residences in the High Plains neighborhood increased, indicating a period of stability and growth for the community (NCHC 2011:168; Wells and Opperman 2006:11-13).

In Halifax County, where possibly one quarter to one third of the Indian Settlement was situated, the 1830 census illustrates the emerging demographic character of the community. The "Free Colored Persons" of the county were categorized together in the census, on the final pages of the returns. These individuals composed a heterogeneous non-White population, some Indian, some Black, and others of multiple ancestries. The Black population represented individuals descended from Africans, some of whom were free from the earliest decades of colonization, and others who were manumitted former slaves. No distinction was made in the 1830 census of these divergent experiences, only the divisions among "White," "Free Colored Persons," and "Slaves." The White population totaled 12,915 individuals, the number of enslaved was enumerated at 16,537. Of the High Plains Indian Settlement surnames, Table 1 illustrates the portion of the community that fell in Halifax County, Virginia.

Most of the Stuart and Epps families were contiguous in the 1830 returns, indicating residential blocks of Indian families conjoined in kinship, farming, and labor. The majority of the families were young, most adults below the age of thirty-five, with a few female matriarchs. While completely transitioned to English language and surname use, names here and elsewhere, such as "Bird Shepherd," "Buck Johnson," and "Green Martin," recall an earlier period where names like "Captain Tom," "Little Jack," and "Blind Tom" were regular Saponi monikers. This small population segment of the "Free Colored Persons" equaled approximately 12% of the overall enumerated 590 Free Colored individuals within this category. With regards to the surnames of the Indian Settlement, the community represented less than .03% of the total Halifax population (C1830). Based on the Halifax portion of the Indian Settlement, estimated to be one quarter

Head of Household	Males					Females					Total
	-9	10-23	24-35	36-54	55-	-9	10-23	24-35	36-54	55-	
John Epps	1	3			1	3	1	2	1	1	13
Peter Epps	2		1			2		1			6
William Epps	2	2	1			1		1			7
Buck Johnson					1					1	2
Bird Shepherd	2	2	1			3	3		1		12
Burwell Stuart	1		1			2	1	1			6
David Stuart	1	1	1				2	1			6
Mathew Stuart			1								1
Robert Stuart	1	1				1	1		1		5
Sally Stuart			1								1
William Stuart		1	2				1				4
William Stuart	1		1			2		1			5
											68

TABLE 1. INDIAN SETTLEMENT HOUSEHOLDS IN THE 1830 CENSUS FOR HALIFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA.

to one third of the total population, possibly 200-300 Sappony lived on the High Plains of Halifax and Person counties during this era.

William Epps, who was about twenty-nine in 1830, provides an example of an individual household head, whose life spanned the majority of the nineteenth century. Born in 1801, William Epps' Halifax 1820 household neighbored three other Epps family members [John, George, and Catherine], as well as the allied family of "Bird Sheppard." Two members of William's family were engaged in agriculture, which was the same for the other kindred households, except Catherine who had three. Two males in the William Epps home were under fourteen; William was under twenty-six, as was an adult female, presumably his wife. All were labeled in one column as "Free Colored Peoples" and in another notation "FN," meaning Free Negro (C1820). Here, it should be noted that Virginia census takers rarely used "Indian" on census documents of the era, and instead classed all non-White peoples, including Indians, as "Free Colored," "Free Negro," "Negro," or on later returns, "Mulatto." This was true even on state Indian reservations such as those of the Pamunkey and Nottoway (cf. Forbes 1993; Richardson 2016; Rountree 1990; Woodard 2013).

By 1830 William Epps had increased his household to seven, and was joined in neighborly residence by other Epps, Johnson, and Stuart families. The 1840 census takers again counted William neighboring the Shepherd family, and living in proximity to Rebecca Epps and Thomas Stewart. William's household had increased to nine, and four members of the family were contributing labor to agriculture. In 1850, when U.S. Census returns were more detailed, it is revealed that William Epps' was a rather prosperous "planter," more than the majority population of unpropertied Blacks and Whites, unpropertied Indians, and all of the enslaved peoples. Epps owned \$2000 worth of farmland, outstripping his immediate fellow planters – landowners who were all White. Most neighboring White planters had \$200-500 values of acreage each, but one neighbor Barton Link, owned \$1050 in real estate. How Epps came to be in possession of so much acreage is not immediately clear, but recalling that Epps family members were some of the first White planters in the county, one could speculate that Indian William Epps inherited or received land through kinship or descent from one of those early unions. Epps was listed as "Mulatto" in the 1850 return, adding strength to an Indian-White interpretation of origin. Neighboring William was James Epps, who had no property but lived in and

headed a separate household. Described as a “planter,” rather than a laborer, James Epps was twenty years junior to William, suggesting a close kinship. Of the neighboring propertied heads of households on the 1850 census page of Halifax’s Southern District, only the Epps were identified as being illiterate (C1830-1850).

The approximately dozen years between 1850 and the American Civil War were prosperous times for the Epps family of the Indian Settlement. The late Antebellum was a period of increase for multiple Native communities, including those on Virginia reservations (cf. Woodard 2013). William Epps increased his landholdings during this era, and owned \$5900 in acreage in 1860. In comparison, Richard Watkins – a neighboring White plantation owner – owned a staggering \$47,500 in real estate, which dwarfed Epps’ smallholding farm. Epps still controlled more acreage by nearly half compared to his other adjacent White neighbor, headed by “Bart Link,” who had increased his real estate from \$1050 in 1850 to \$3100 in 1860. A significant difference between the Indian and White planters, however, was that Watkins and Link both owned enslaved peoples; Epps did not. Link owned nine slaves, four of which were coerced laborers over ten years of age. Slave ownership drastically raised the value of Link’s personal property ownership; Epps had an estimated \$1800 in portable personal property without any slaves, whereas Link was recorded as having \$7950 in personal estate. Richard Watkins had seventy-three enslaved people, ranging from six months to sixty years of age. Watkins employed an overseer, John E. Meadows, to manage the coerced laborers. He also hired and kept a live-in teacher, John W. White, to instruct his large household of school-age children. Meadows’ daughter benefitted from White’s instruction as well. Neither Epps nor Link’s children received any schooling during the same era. Watkins’ personal property worth was estimated at \$137,385 in the years before the Civil War (C1860; SS1860).

By no means an elite, William Epps’ farm was profitable, and he shared his knowledge and

modest wealth with his family and tribesmen. Son Nathaniel Epps raised a family adjacent to William, alongside kinsman James Epps. By 1860 Nathaniel had a family of eight, and owned \$100 in personal property; James controlled \$500. Based on patterns of labor pooling, William Epps provided the opportunity for farming to a number of related families, and Epps, Johnsons, Shepherds, and Stewarts worked the land on the Virginia side of the Indian Settlement at High Plains. No doubt the Person County side of the community’s imaginary divide did the same, less than a mile away. What made the Epps experience different was that he was propertied, and better off than most High Plains Indian families before the Civil War (C1860).

In an example of the Indian farming of the period, William Epps planted 362 acres in 1859, had 150 acres in unimproved property, and about \$75 worth of farming implements. He owned five horses, two milch cows, eight working oxen, and eight other cattle. Epps had an impressive passel of fifty pigs, and the total of his livestock was valued at \$650. Crops in the field yielded 130 bushels of wheat, 525 bushels of Indian corn, 280 bushels of oats, and 8100 lbs. of tobacco. While many of Epps’ figures were less than the neighboring Whites, he out produced both Watkins and Link by about 3000 lbs. of tobacco, as well as Link in Indian corn and wheat, likely owing to the needs of a larger passel of swine. Epps raised twenty bushels of Irish potatoes for market, as well as 300 bushels of sweet potatoes, 400 lbs. of butter, 100 lbs. of honey, and ten lbs. of beeswax. The value of Epps’ home manufacture was worth \$48, and the total value of animals culled was \$211 – which were likely hogs for hams, bacon, and lard (1860 AG). From these figures and categories, a portrait of the William Epps antebellum farm operation may be gleaned. Of particular note is the full integration of the Indian Settlement into the market economy, and clear proficiency in Euro-American style farming and livestock practices. Epps was prosperous and emerged as a midcentury Indian community leader. Regardless of some stratigraphy in the cross section of Indian household economies, the cul-

tural orientation and life ways of Epps' example was fully embraced by the rest of the Sappony.

### *Christianity and Church Organization*

Christianity among the High Plains Indians likely came in waves, such as through the years of influence at Fort Christanna. Proximity to Christian meetinghouses surely impacted the Native community, whether by overtures from parishioners, recruitment by itinerant preachers, or marriage-mate families from the colonial population. While it is unclear precisely when the community became influenced by backcountry Baptists, the Sappony conversion to this denomination was part of a wider trend in the region's indigenous communities during the mid eighteenth century (Moretti-Langholtz 2002). As early as 1801 Sappony family surnames, whether lineal ancestors or collateral kin, were among the congregants of Bethel Hill Baptist Church (NCHC 2011:169).

The first Indian meetinghouse was constructed on land controlled by a Sappony leader, and the Indian Settlement utilized the log cabin sanctuary starting in about 1830. The church, however informally organized, began serving as a Christian burial ground for the Indian community. This cemetery is one of the oldest in High Plains, and the site remains known among the Sappony today as the "old old cemetery" (Wells and Opperman 2006:10, 14; Woodard Field Notes 2015, 2017). Near about 1850, another Indian meetinghouse was formed, named Christ Church, and considered by some community members as the "first true church building for worship." Meeting notes from Bethel Hill Baptist Church refer to "Eppesus" as one of the regional "churches" or congregations of "lay members." Records indicate that prior to the end of the Civil War, a "commity" regularly met at "Wm. Eppses" and that it was a recognized "arm of Bethel Church at Blue Wing" (Bethel Hill Meeting Notes 1862-1866:28, 33).

By the late 1870s, the prominent William Epps of the Indian Settlement donated land for the religious and educational needs of the community.

A record of the "church lot" appears in the 1877 Halifax County Land Book, and was held in trust by fellow High Plains resident Robert Steward, et al. The 1875 and 1876 Halifax land books do not mention the two-acre lot, suggesting the land was first informally exchanged within the community (NCHC 2011:170; Wells and Opperman 2006:14; Woodard Field Notes 2015). By March of 1878 William Epps had officially transferred the two acres to "Robert S. Stewart, D.W. Epps, John H. Martin, Green Martin, and James Coleman, trustee's...for Mayo Chapel." The deed, recorded in 1879, stated that on the parcel of land "a church has been built" and that the land was "also for the purpose of building thereon a school house in which children of the congregation of the said Baptist Church may be educated" (DB 66:587).

The more refined structure of timber frame and featheredge clapboard was named Christ Church at Mayo Chapel. By 1881 Halifax court records describe the parcel as "Mayo Chappell," indicating a revision from that of "church lot." Accounts disagree about the whether the 1850 meetinghouse of Christ Church and the 1878 Christ Church at Mayo Chapel were simply the same congregation or possibly the same structure (Figure 5). The courthouse land records suggest the former, but tribal materials indicate an 1879 "addition was added to Mayo Chapel," potentially suggesting the latter. Possibly this addition was the planned schoolhouse mentioned in the 1878 deed. However, marked internments in the associated Indian graveyard of Christ Church at Mayo Chapel date to 1880 (Figure 6), strengthening the interpretation of an 1878 construction of the church (NCHC 2011:161, 169-170; Wells and Opperman 2006:10, 14; Woodard Field Notes 2015).

The Christ Church at Mayo Chapel was built by the community, with materials, labor, and land provided by the associated families. Early records of the congregation show much collaboration and social participation in the upkeep and management of the church (Woodard Field Notes 2015). Expenses for painting the church, the salary for a pastor, and the cost of accouterments such as a public spittoon were carried by the community. Formal organization of the church as a shared

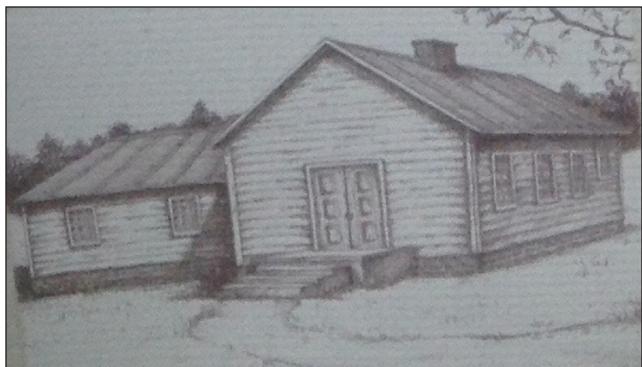


Figure 5. An artist's interpretation of the c.1878 Christ Church at Mayo Chapel, based on the oral history of the meetinghouse and school. Source: Sappony Tribe.



Figure 6. Christ Church at Mayo Chapel Cemetery. The cemetery dates to c.1880 and continues to be an active burial location for the tribe. Source: Woodard Field Notes 2015.

location of common interaction and religious ceremony anchored the ritual space as the cornerstone of the community's social configuration. A list of rules and regulations were part of the Indian Settlement's congregation, and the governing representatives of the constituent families enforced the code. All community members were required to attend church and all of the associated civic meetings. A roll call for male heads of households was made each meeting, and absences had to be approved by the governing church body. The church rules dictated not only religious matters, but also economic relationships, how business would be handled in the church and community, and a formal regulation of normative social behavior (NCHC 2011:161). Thus, in many ways the church took on the mantle of political organization, reinforced leadership roles in the settlement, and possibly modified or replaced earlier forms of leadership configurations – such as the Christanna council of twelve. The church served as the only formal space for all members of the group to collectively meet, acting as a community religious, political, and social institution.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE SAPPONY, c.1880-1940

#### *Early Education*

Some accounts suggest Indian children from High Plains periodically attended White schools prior to the Civil War (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016), with a “fair number of them going to the Bethel Hill School” (Mathis 1964:34). However, racial tensions associated with the outcome of the Civil War created a strict code of affiliation during Reconstruction and in Jim Crow’s South. The Indians were then “not permitted to attend the white schools and would have been obliged to go to the colored schools if they had wished to attend free schools” (*ibid*). The Indian Settlement refused to attend Black schools, Freedmen’s Schools, or any free schools for emancipated slaves; High Plains residents sufficed for some time without education (C1870; Woodard Field Notes 2015).

According to tribal sources, the 1878 Christ Church at Mayo Chapel had an informal school, which was set out as a parameter by William Epps when he donated the land to the “schoolhouse as well as the church” (DB 66:587). Epps was a supporter of education in the community, and likely saw the social and economic benefits of teaching Indian children to read and write (NCHC 2011:159). Despite his own socio-economic success, Epps was reported to have been illiterate. Some members of the Indian Settlement were literate, and others semi-literate, as demonstrated by the 1860-1870 census returns. In Epps’ neighborhood, his son Sydney Epps afforded some instruction for his children, as those that were ages ten to eighteen could all read, as could neighbor Mary Talley (C1870). By 1880, the Mayo Chapel School had some impact on the community, as several Indian households reported limited literacy and some children “attended school

within the Census year.” Notably, William Epps’ grandchildren Richard, Rebecca, Katie, Jasper, and Rowan were all reported to be “at school” (C1880).

In 1888 a White resident of the Bethel Hill community, Smith Humphries, helped organize a petition in Person County to locally recognize the Indian Settlement’s need for separate schooling. The petition, with support from High Plains Indian residents, sought to furnish the Sappony with a school paid for by county taxes. The County agreed to pay for a teacher, if the community could supplement the resources needed to construct the school. Band member Green Martin gave two acres of land for the new school, “all of the logs,” and “furnished everything.” The county assisted with purchasing proper windows. The first teacher of the school was Henry Tuck, “who proved to be a fine teacher and had a large school.” As late as the 1940s, former students remembered him fondly. Tuck was followed by James Humphries, who later became a minister, and passed the High Plains teaching on to his brothers W.B. and J.Y. Humphries; all were sons of the petition organizer Smith Humphries (Mathis 1964:34).

At some point in the 1890s the school was moved farther east, closer to the Halifax line, and thus mostly central to the community. Ditrion and Mary Epps provided land for this new school, as space was needed for the increasing settlement (see Figure 3). Thereafter, a local teacher Sam Martin ran the small one-room schoolhouse. For a few years Indian teachers trained at Pembroke College in Robeson County serviced the High Plains School. Other White teachers from the late nineteenth century included W.H. Mullins, Henry Lamb, and John Link (Mathis 1964:34; NCHC 2011:159). Combined

with local support, the Sappony shared in the responsibility and resourcing needs of the community's education. Through fellowship and kin reciprocity, and an emerging ethos of service, the High Plains Indian families donated, funded, built, and organized their own education institutions for the betterment of their people.

Outside interest in the High Plains Indians was responsible for some opportunities afforded the community. One individual, Rev. J.L. Beam [another source says J.A. Beam], became close with members of the settlement as the minister of the Indian Church. He arranged for funding a frame building on the small lot of the older log schoolhouse. Grateful and prayerful, many Sappony men contributed their labor and skills, and participated in the raising of this structure, completed in 1904. A colleague of Beam, the Rev. Dr. P.H. Fontaine, also had taken an interest in the community. Fontaine "served many of the churches around Virgili-na in the latter part of the 19th and early part of the 20th centuries," and knew the High Plains people for nearly twenty years. Fontaine was "locally considered a gentlemen of much culture and literary attainment." Reporting in a Woodsdale, NC newspaper, Fontaine described the educational efforts at the Indian Settlement in glowing terms of progress, "They have a large school, with two teachers, and a flourishing church and Sunday School, with a white minister as pastor [Beam]" (Mathis 1964:32-34; Nunn 1937:28; Woodard Field Notes 2015).

#### *The Village of Christie*

Founded as a company in 1882, the Atlantic & Danville Railway operated in Virginia and North Carolina (Figures 2-3). Construction of the railway began in 1883, and the line reached its Danville terminus in 1889; the mainline opened with direct shipping to Portsmouth in 1890. That year, a small frame train depot was built on the High Plains of Halifax County. The stop became known as "Christie" and the name first appeared in county records in 1892 as "Cristie" (DB84:291). The 1892-1895 county land books listed properties and values "at

the A.D. Railway" and "Christie," including White property owners named Franklin, Hardy, Ragland, and Robertson. Several structures emerged at the depot during this period, including family homes, a general store, and a Methodist Church with a parsonage. Businesses in Christie 1893-1894 included general merchants, a liquor dealer, a lumber dealer and sawmill, and a hide tanner. John P. Ragland was the minister at the Christie Methodist Church, and lived in the parsonage. Prior to 1895 Caleb J. Robertson established his home and general store at Christie, taking over the mercantile business from one of the earlier merchants. By 1898 a post office was founded, with James A. Robertson as postmaster. That year the *State Gazetteer* named Christie merchants H.A. Whitt as a coach and wagon builder, C.J. Robertson & Co. as a general merchant [Christie Store], E.L. Eans & Co. as a general merchant, W.B. Link as a liquor dealer and merchant, J.R. Franklin as a lumber dealer and miller, and two tanners, J.B. Overby and William Salmon (Wells and Opperman 2006:18-19). The town of Christie became a center for commerce and supply in the remote and rural high plains west of Virgili-na, VA and north of Roxboro, NC. The Indian Settlement was already situated in this geography, with the Christ Church at Mayo Chapel and the High Plains Indian School less than a mile away. Christie was founded as a consequence of the railroad depot, but the High Plains Indian community was already present.

According to one oral tradition, the Christie merchant and resident Caleb J. Robertson named his house "Christie" "after the daughter [reported to be named 'Christie Anna'] of the Methodist minister" John P. Ragland (Wells and Opperman 2006:18). Robertson's land tenure in the village dated to 1893 and 1895, creating an interpretive challenge for this tradition when compared against the appearance of "Cristie" in courthouse documents as early as 1892 (DB84:291). Moreover, census records from 1870, 1880, and 1900 do not show a daughter by that name in Ragland's household. However, the Christie Methodist Church was organized in 1893, with Ragland as the first minister (Wells and Opperman 2006:19).

Another tradition about the origins of the Christie name comes from the Saponi affiliation with old Fort Christanna in Brunswick County. For many years during the eighteenth century, the coalescent groups at the fort were known collectively as “Saponie” as well as the “Christanna Indians” (NYCD 5:671-672). At least some considered the Christanna Indians to be Christian Indians (DeMallie 2004:294). Dr. Rev. P.H. Fontaine, writing over a hundred years ago, stated “The oldest people about here [Christie] say their parents told them that these Indians had been living there a long time, and that some of them served in the American Army during the Revolutionary War.” Fontaine, who knew the White and Indian community well, basically describes the oral history memories of c.1900, when faint murmurs of the eighteenth century still came forward to be deciphered. He continued, “Col. William Byrd, in his history of the dividing line between Va. and N.C. speaks of this Indian settlement, and tells of the surveying party camping among them one night.” Obviously Fontaine is referring to the Saponi, Byrd’s visits to Fort Christanna, and Bear-skin’s guide through the Hyco River area. Thus, the respected Fontaine alludes to the Christie Indian Settlement as the Christanna Indians, also known as the Saponi or Sappony. Fontaine’s statement strengthens the claim by contemporary tribal members that the village name Christie, remembered by White residents as named for “Christi Anna,” is actually a reference to the Christanna Indians or the Christie Indian Settlement. A tribal elder remarked over a decade ago that, “the name Christie is considered part of our tribal identity as Sappony Indians” (Mathis 1964:32; NCHC 2011:157; Wells and Opperman 2006:7).

#### *North Carolina State Recognition, 1911*

With the success of the local school administration efforts and continued recognition of the Sappony community’s needs for political, social, and religious support and advocacy, Rev. Dr. Fontaine and Rev. Beam orchestrated a proposal to the North Carolina state legislature. The Indians of Robeson County had been formally recog-

nized by the state of North Carolina as “Croatan Indians” and afforded legal status separate from African Americans. Fontaine and Beam argued the same status should be conferred to the Indian Settlement in Person County. The recognition would solidify their separate Indian school system, including state funding. Moreover, the status would afford separate facilities for hospital care, mental health, incarceration, and any state-sponsored program (Nunn 1937:29-30).

Broadly, White Carolinians identified acculturated Indians in their midst as related to the narrative of the famous Lost Colony, based on the phenotypical appearance and the shared social practices of many Carolina Indian communities. While some communities had their own origin stories and folklore about their peoples, the dominant society applied popular monikers such as “Croatan” and “Cherokee” to various Carolina groups. Other narratives simply identified the communities as “Indian,” and used a family name or descriptor to describe the specific group. Such was the case for the Indians in Virginia known as the “Adamstown Indians,” “Bear Mountain Indians,” those living at “Indian Neck,” or at the “Indian Settlement.” Locally, the High Plains community had picked up the moniker “Cubans,” which likely spoke to residents’ appearance to outsiders as much as their association with growing tobacco. The appellations “Croatan” and “Cuban” were external names applied to the Indian community by the dominant society; they were not self-referential. However, some of these stories were internalized by members of the Indian Settlement, repeated, and used as a shorthand explanation to outsiders about “who we are” – particularly during the Reconstruction and Jim Crow eras.

After years of familiarity and study, Rev. Dr. P.H. Fontaine firmly believed the High Plains community to be of Indian and White descent, and to be remnants of the “Indian settlement” written about and visited by William Byrd II – the Christanna or Saponi Indians. Fontaine argued strongly and convincingly for their acknowledgement. However, he recognized the colloquial identification of the group:

"There is around Christie, Virginia, a race of people, commonly called 'Cubans.' They number about 350, some living in N.C. and some in Virginia. They have all the characteristics of the Indian race, prominent noses, rough cheek bones, small hands and small feet, high instep. They are a lighter color than the Cherokee Indians....They look like the Robeson County Indians, who are acknowledged to be descendants of the early Croatan Indians...There are several other settlements of this race in N.C. Their name in the North Carolina code is 'Croatan Indians'" (Mathis 1964:32).

In this statement, Rev. Fontaine repeats the local lore name of "Cubans," compares the High Plains Indians to the largest and best-known Indian tribes in the region – the Cherokee and Robeson County Indians – and admits the legal code required that recognized Indians in the state that were not Cherokee, be identified as "Croatan." As an accommodation of sorts, the 1911 act of the Carolina Assembly recognized the "Cubans" or "Croatan Indians" of Person County, and stated they "shall be known and designated as the Indians of Person County." This legislative act provided educational funding, legal status, and political standing for the Person County Indians throughout the Jim Crow and segregation eras, and remained the official state designation for the community until 2003 (NCHC 2011:176, 178; Nunn 1937:29-30).

#### *Demography and Jim Crow*

According to Rev. Fontaine there were about 350 individuals in the Indian Settlement c.1900, and this figure appears to have remained a group average for the first half of the twentieth century. A school census taken in 1936 revealed 346 Indians in High Plains, composing seventy-six families. At that time, tribal accounting of the community was nearly the same, enumerating 336 Saponi with about 100 living in Halifax County. Tax records of this era from both Person and Halifax counted forty-nine households with personal property, twenty-five of which owned their land,

sixteen of whom were in Virginia (Nunn 1937:16, 44-45). Virginia Indian advocate James R. Coates made a census of the community in 1942, listing 322 individuals. Of these, there were seventy-two adult males, sixty-eight adult females, composing fifty-nine endogamous couples. In addition to these, seven widows / widowers had a deceased High Plains spouse, and there were four exogamous marriages of Saponi women who had married either a White man [three] or an Indian [one] from outside the tribe. Coates counted 182 children among the Indian Settlement households (Coates Papers, 1833-1947). A few years later sociologist William Harlen Gilbert published his monograph on the "Surviving Indian Groups in the Eastern United States," and counted the "Person County Indians [who] may be descendants of a small band of Saponi Indians" at "about 400 persons" (Gilbert 1946:421). The *Durham Morning Herald* ran a newspaper article on the community in 1948, in which it reported there were seventy families among 350 Indians (MacCaughely 1948). From the Virginia Indian School files, a 1951 census of the Indian Settlement counted 387 individuals, with seventeen homeowners among the group (DOE Indian School Files, 1936-1967).

In contrast to the reports from ministers, school officials, and sociologists, during the same era the U.S. Census Bureau recorded zero Indians for Halifax and Person County in 1910. After state acknowledgement in 1911, the census of 1920 reported 183 Indians in High Plains, increased to 185 in 1930 (Nunn 1937:16). Thus, the Saponi were underreported during Jim Crow, a time when segregation and a binary system of "White" and "Colored" prevailed in the dominant society. Sociologist Louise Nunn described the situation as thus, "the very low census listing of the Indians in Halifax County, Virginia, may be explained by an official campaign of the Virginia State Bureau of Vital Statistics since 1923 to stamp out all separate Indian classifications" (1937:17). Locally, High Plains residents were listed as "Indian" in court records, licenses, registrations, and tax books, and the legal designation from North Carolina was recognized in Halifax (Figure 7). Nunn reported

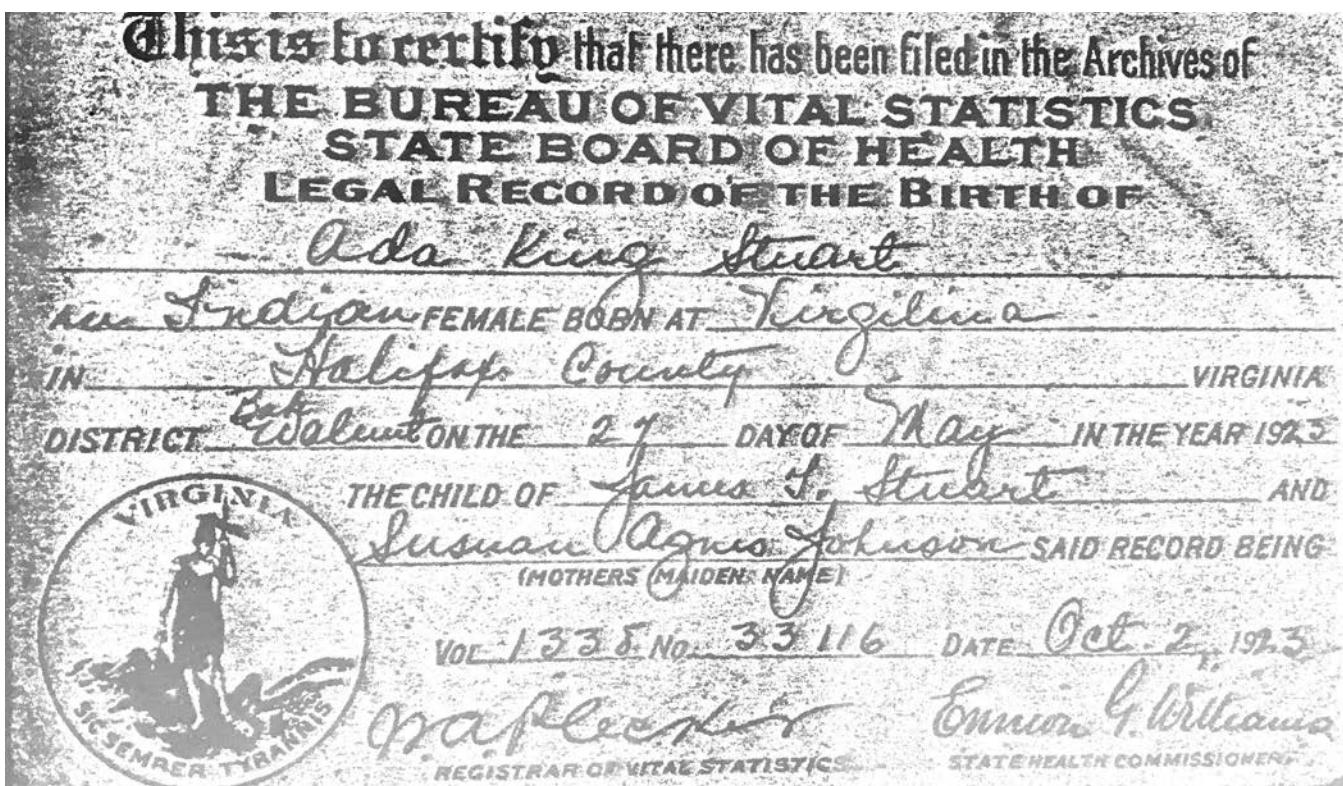
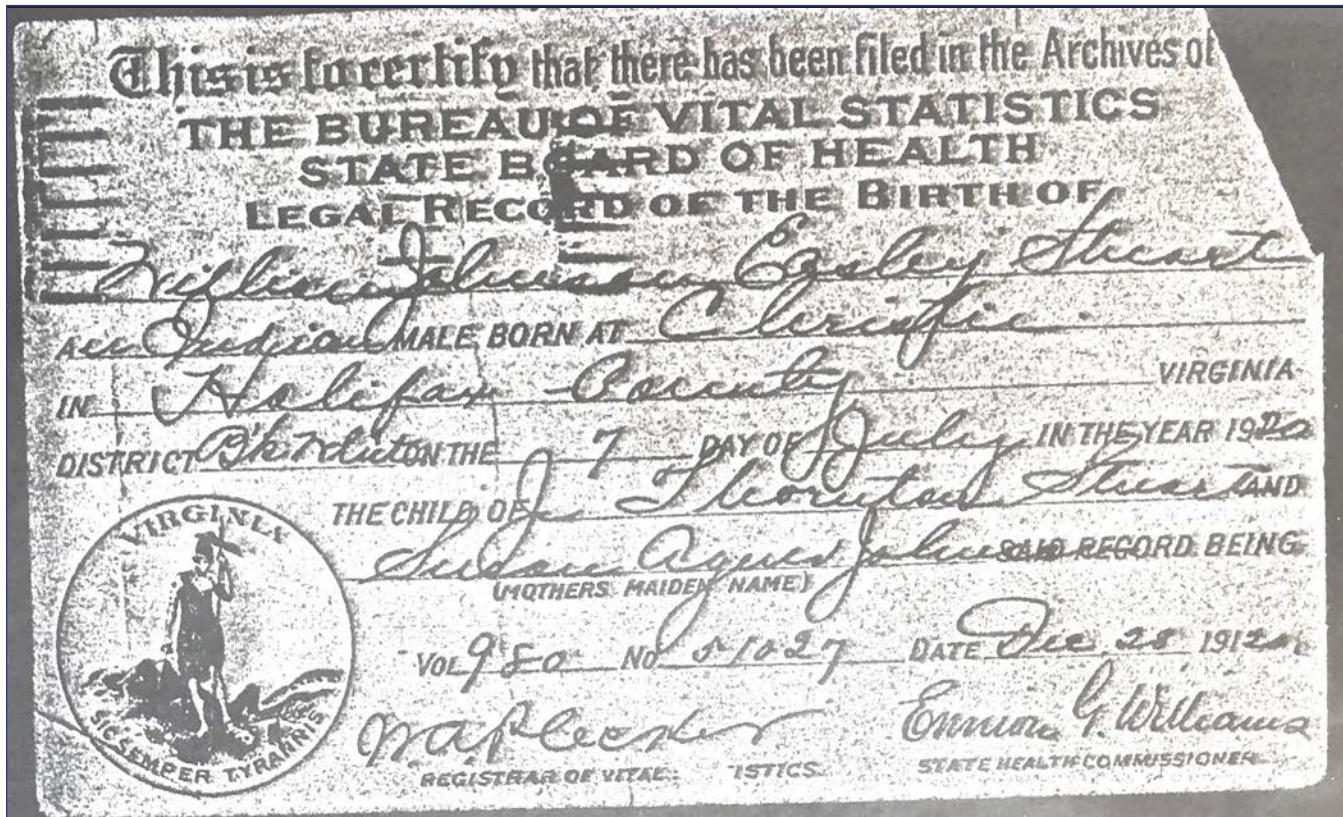


Figure 7. Virginia-issued Indian identification cards for William Stuart, 1920, born in Christie, Halifax County, Virginia, and Ada Stuart, 1923, born in Virgilina, Halifax County, children of James Thornton Stuart and Susan Agnes Johnson. The cards are signed by Walter Plecker, Registrar of Vital Statistics. Source: James Coates Papers 1833-1947, Library of Virginia.

that the “effort of the Bureau of Vital Statistics to reduce the Halifax County section of the Person County group of Indians...has not been adhered to by the local authorities...who list tax records, court offences, marriages, birth, and death certificates, and so forth as Indian” (1937:31).

As an outcome of this local recognition, during the Segregation era the Indian Settlement was afforded “white privileges when no separate accommodations are provided.” High Plains Indians voted, and were reportedly Republican until 1932, when the group swung toward the Democrats. Fewer Indians voted however than their White counterparts, due to a two-dollar poll tax and illiteracy as a disqualifier. Other Segregation-era social allowances included eating in White cafes, riding in the White-only coaches on the train, and attending White movies. During the First World War, the Sappony served in the local White companies (Nunn 1937:33-34). The most important local recognition for the community, however, was the 1911 and 1913 Indian school funding from North Carolina and Virginia, respectively. The status of a separate school for the community and an all-Indian school board situated the community as distinct from Whites and Blacks.

### *Economics and Households*

The Sappony lived as small farmers and tenants during the first half of the twentieth century, and due to the isolated rural location and lower economics of the community, outsiders sometimes remarked that their lifeway was antiquated, “culturally backward,” “living as their ancestors did,” and seemed more in the nineteenth century than twentieth. “The visitor is impressed with an odd feeling of being projected back to the nineteenth century,” with the High Plains Indians’ character most like a “frontier community” (Nunn 1937:71). As tenant farmers, using older methods of agriculture and relying on a single cash crop, the Indian Settlement’s economic condition differed little from their poor White and Black counterparts. According to data collected in the mid 1930s, there were twenty-four landowners out of the seventy-five families. Parcels

ranged in size from three to 223 acres, with a total of 1802 acres owned by Indian families. Few of the families owned adequate land to be fully self-sufficient, and some of the community were completely propertyless. Of the taxable personal property, the Sappony paid taxes on cars, farm equipment, guns, livestock, mules, sewing machines, and wagons. Most members of the group worked as tenant farmers with yearly leases, and some of the propertied families also worked tenancy. White farm owners mostly supplied the farm tools and equipment to the Indian tenants. Nunn reported that none of the Sappony were hired as farm laborers during the 1930s. Several men worked for a dairy, two at the local sawmill, and two more on the railroad, but no one owned a business (1937:38, 46).

Sharecropping among the Sappony was common, but provided little ability to financially get ahead. “If the [land] owner furnished the mule and the horse...the tools and the animals, half of what you sold [at market] went back to the [land] owner.” “You would start paying half of what you made to the landowner until you could buy back your equipment. It would take several years to do so.” If the Indian farmer owned the horse and the team, he would only pay one quarter to the landowner. “But if the [land] owner owned all the tools and the team, the [land] owner got half.” Some sharecroppers did not buy their fertilizer. As part of the rental agreement, the fertilizer was shipped in by railway and paid for by the landowner. Other sharecroppers paid for half of the amount of the fertilizer, but each Indian farmer bought their own seed. One tribal member narrated the landlord and tenant situation, with regards to debt and poor crop performance:

“If you didn’t do well you owed it back to the guy that supplied the fertilizer, or the horses...you owed that back to him. But you sold the tobacco in South Boston. You got a check, and you went directly to the man you borrowed from, and gave him one quarter [of the money]. If you owed, he’d take it out of your fourth [profit]. I never heard it happen in this community, but [in an] adjoining

community like Virgilina, where they sold the horses... But see, what would happen when they sold the tobacco, they would go to pay for the mule and they would say, ‘no, you had a bad year.’ Then you’d go to pay last year, then they’d say, ‘well now we’re gonna repossess the mule.’ So you ended up deeper in the hole. You stayed obligated. That’s what made it hard to survive, to get ahead” (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016).

Another recollection stated the economics in terms of social control, “they [the landowners] wanted you to pay all the time, but they wanted you to still owe them.” Thus, it was difficult for some Sappony to navigate cyclical debt and lack of personal property and real estate. Labor pooling was one strategy for increased productivity. Collateral and consanguineal kin “teamed up” to create a “substantial work force.” One family remembered twenty-one children between two families working the fields during the agricultural cycle. Others related working on neighboring Indian farms as needed, without formal compensation. “This community helped each other. That was the way of survival, helping your neighbor.” “We used to go around and just, everything was almost like somebody helped each other,” “by accommodation...do one good deed for another. As far as means of exchange, nothing was there. Nobody had anything to give, so you didn’t get anything. It was all done with goodwill.” “Pretty much within the community... we helped everybody” (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016).

The major crop of the community continued to be tobacco, as well as corn. Almost every family planted a home vegetable garden, with pole beans, potatoes, and tomatoes being most popular. These vegetables were canned and stored for the winter. Few, if any, families grew fruit trees or had grape arbors, although wild berry picking was common. Gathered fruit was sold, and also canned or dried. Nearly every household had several chickens for poultry and eggs, and some families raised one or two pigs; several families had cows.

“We had our own cows, own milk, and we churned that milk and made butter. And I mean in a nice beautiful package with a little slit down the middle”

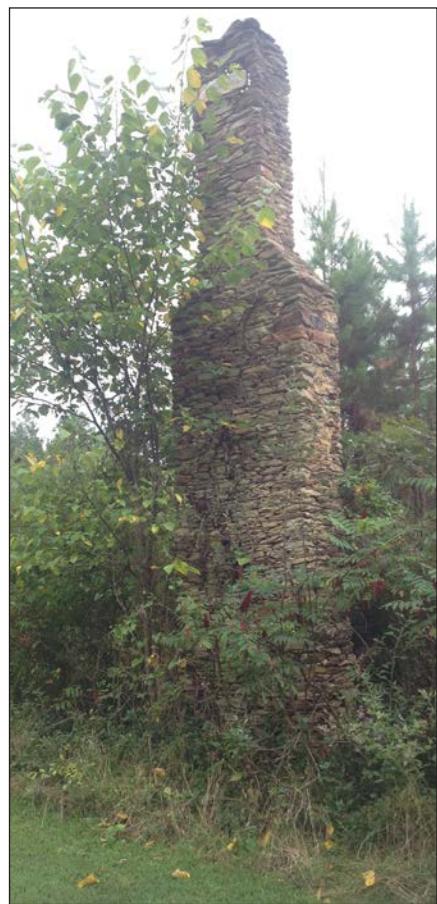
“You had to work it twice. As soon as you churned the milk and got the butter, you’d get as much milk out of the butter as you could, and you would wait to the next day and you’d rework that butter and get the rest of the milk out of it...so it would be firm”

Hunting birds, deer, possum, rabbits, squirrels, or turkeys supplemented the regular diet of chicken or fat back pork. Some game meat was canned. Fishing was done in the spring, by gig and lantern, without bait and tackle – a practice uncommon among other rural groups. Creek catch included frogs. Nunn reported that no one Indian family provided near half of their subsistence needs from the family farm alone, and in fact, sold butter, eggs, and vegetables when they could be spared. Elders reported in oral history interviews that “that they could never eat the good parts of the meat – they had to be traded...ham had to be sold [or] traded.” “Most people raised their own vegetables, meat, and eggs. They would take these products to Christie to exchange for sugar, coffee, oatmeal,” “salt, pepper,” “flour, etc.” (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016; Nunn 1937:46, 71).

Men, women, and children worked the tobacco fields, planting as much acreage as possible of the single cash crop. The labor pool also assisted in topping, suckering, tying, curing, and grading the tobacco. Mules were used to haul and plow, as there were no tractors or trucks. Mule wagons served as local Indian transportation, whether for taking produce to market, or taking families to church. In 1936 there were a total of ten cars owned among the seventy households, 1925-1935 model Fords and Chevrolets. Tribal members recall “pulling the car behind horses when they couldn’t afford fuel.” Among most residents, very little cash was used, or even seen during the year. An extensive credit system was maintained through the General Store in Christie, until the tobacco came in and was sold.



Figure 8. Sappony family in the Indian Settlement of Person County, c.1948. Note the handmade attire of the women, work clothes of the men, and the hewn-log construction style of the family home. Source: State, XVI (February 12, 1949):3, in Perdue (1985).



Figures 9 and 10. Christie, Virginia-Carolina remains of Sappony sharecropper cabins, hewn-log construction, and flagstone chimneys. Source: Woodard Field Notes 2015.



Figure 11. Sappony frame house with porch, c.1948, near Christie, Virginia. According to sociologist Louise Nunn, this painted clapboard frame house was one of only two in the community c.1936. Source: MacCaughelty (1948).

Upon the sale of the tobacco, the Sappony balanced their accounts and paid their accumulated bills (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016; Nunn 1937:47).

After selling the tobacco in the fall, some Sappony would “go into the woods and cut pulp wood” “and cedar too” “till the spring of the year...you would cut that [wood] and have an income through the winter months.” Farmers turned woodsmen would load their mule wagons and take the pulp trees to the Christie railroad depot. The Christie general store manager would ensure a flatcar or boxcar was available to load the wood and ship it out, eventually to a paper mill in Hopewell. “Pulp

wood was an economic, transportation thing...people would collect pulp wood here, collect it, [and] sell it all over” (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016).

Corn and wheat were also grown in quantity, but typically not for sale. “Those who farmed wheat could take it to the mill, store it there, and have portions milled into flour upon request. Storage fees were taken out of the wheat.” In the 1930s and 1940s, the gristmill in Christie was used to provide coarse meal for chicken, horse, and mule feed. One of the Sappony men, Tommy Martin, operated the mill during this era. Another High Plains farmer, James Coleman, had a molasses mill, and grew cane

to make “molasses for other people...he grew molasses cane for the community” (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016).

The Depression era was difficult on all communities in Halifax and Person counties. Some Sappony applied for relief, and others worked W.P.A. projects. The County Welfare Board reported that the Indians looked after each other’s needs more so than the other racial groups, that the Indians as a whole required less individual relief, and of those that received assistance, they got off the relief rolls sooner than either the Whites or Blacks (Nunn 1937:48). These latter remarks were likely as a result of the strong reciprocity of the Sappony kinship networks and the expected labor pooling of related families. Despite political gains in the first decade of the century, the Sappony had collectively grown poorer during the following twenty-five years. This decline was attributed to the division of land into smaller parcels as the previous generation died, and the loss of some property to White farmers. Of those that lost land, the families usually stayed on the tracts as tenants and sharecroppers (*ibid*).

Indian homes of the period were comparable to others of their socio-economic class; the houses were small, usually unpainted, and constructed as cabins of the hewn and / or notched log variety. The roofs were split shingle or tin (Figures 8-10). The interiors were plastered, with an occasional home entirely covered in newspaper or magazine pages. Only two frame houses were reported among the Sappony in 1936, and two houses had porches (Figure 11). The organization of the space was usually one room downstairs and a half-story room above. Kitchens were typically built on the rear. A stone fireplace heated the living space, and the rooms usually had few windows. Kerosene lamps were used to light the darkened interior spaces, and the front door was frequently left open, except in inclement weather. The floors of the homes were wide plank, and usually painted, but without mats or rugs. Each living space contained one or two double beds with headboards, covered with sheets and pillowcases, and handmade quilts. The upstairs bedding was either feather or straw tick. Some homes

had sewing machines, but none had a radio. Chairs were of the straight back variety with woven rush seats, which joined tables where present. Water was obtained from a well, or in cases where there was a nearby stream, with dipper and bucket from the creek. The stone fireplaces were used for cooking, about half of the families had stoves, some of which were homemade from oil drums. A family of six to twelve lived, ate, and slept in the provided space (SHP 2011:13; Nunn 1937:49-50).

Interiors were sparsely decorated, mostly consisting of calendars, magazine pictures, religious scenes, or wedding photos. Some houses had curtains, but there were no screens on the doors or windows. Musical instruments, or guns, if owned, were hung on the walls. Mason jars with canned vegetables could be found on shelves, the mantel, or under the beds. Potted plants were found in many homes. At Christmas time, evergreen trees were brought in and “gayly decorated...[with] paper garlands, Christmas bells, and paper wreaths” (Nunn 1937:51). No houses had electricity until the mid 1940s, and some remained without indoor plumbing until the 1980s (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016).

Adjacent to the house, an open shed or pole barn served to store farm tools, and another provided shelter for livestock. The houses were unornamented on the exterior, stood about two feet off the ground, with wooden stoops for the front step. No grass or fencing, and usually no flowers, shrubbery or landscaping was reported around Sappony homes. A winter supply of wood was piled up beside the house. Only three houses were recorded as being painted on the exterior in 1936. Despite the somewhat stark or drab appearance, the homes were kept exceedingly clean and neat (Nunn 1937:50-52).

The large families lived together in close quarters, with sparse interiors, similar to what was reported by John Fontaine two hundred years earlier at Christanna. The father was “conspicuously the head of the household” with the mother taking a secondary, but not subservient, role in decision-making (Nunn 1937:53). The pattern of descent was bi-

lateral, which was unchanged in organization from earlier times, despite the complete adoption of English kinship terms (cf. Speck and Herzog 1942). Elderly women were revered, respected, and frequently consulted. The women and children worked the share cropping, but also the chores of the home and household upkeep. Most of the clothing for the women and children was homemade, consisting of wash dresses for the females and bib overalls for the boys. Sunbonnets were worn all year, stockings and shoes were worn in the winter, but barefoot was common for the women and children in the summer months (Nunn 1937:53).

Community members recalled female family members making the clothes, although boys assisted. One male elder remarked, “she made the bonnets...[but] I remember cutting the cardboard to make the stays...like mule blinds!” Others commented these bonnets were worn “because the sun was so bright and they were outside all day. Nobody went outside without hats and gloves.” The men wore overalls at home and on the farm, but owned ready-made suits for church wear. The “men were buying shirts from the store, but dresses were made at home. My mother sewed all the time...made a lot of clothes, aprons, etc.” The dresses and quilts of the households were constructed from various materials, including worn out articles, clothe purchased from Roxboro, and feed bags or packaging materials from Christie (Figure 8). A favorite pattern was a plaid associated with packaged flour. When the “flour truck [would] go past the house...they would take off to the store and pick out which sack they wanted to buy so they could make a pretty dress or shirt out of the bag, out of that design on the bag of feed. They wanted to be the first to get to the store to choose” (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016).

The quilts were patchwork, and made in great numbers by the High Plains women. Nunn recorded her impression of the women’s work:

“These quilts are quite artistic, sometimes having original patterns and sometimes in such standard patterns as the Log Cabin and Sun Burst designs. The quilts show a feeling for

originality in color and design, as well as fairly good workmanship. The women are proud of their quilts and like to have them praised. A little crocheting and embroidery work is done by the older women” (1937:53-54).

According to tribal sources, the women sewed at night throughout the year on individual quilting pieces. When sewn, the women gathered at one home and had a quilting party in the fall or winter. They moved from house to house, finishing families’ quilts in time for the colder weather (SHP 2011:12).

#### *Community Institutions and Socio-political Organization*

Prior to the Second World War, the Sappony were formally organized under several institutions that had roles, in part, to engage the bureaucracy of the dominant society. Internally, there were organized fraternal groups with characteristic sexual division of members, which acted as sodalities. A kin-based leadership structure was in place, which in some instances crosscut both the internal and external institutions.

Reports from the late nineteenth through mid twentieth centuries describe the Indian Settlement as very cohesive and communal. The functions of the church, sodalities, and school strengthened these characteristics, which were more fully structured around kinship and reciprocity. Outside observers described the group as “clannish” and “more social among themselves,” which had as much to do with in-group affiliation and mutual aid, as maintaining group boundaries and the legal status of the Indian community during the Segregation era. Local residents recognized the Sappony as the “best organized and most cooperative [group] in the county.” Internal disputes within the tribe were resolved and settled among themselves, and the “group presents a united front.” Despite some economic stratification, there was no recognition of class distinctions among Indian residents of High Plains, and “there seems to be no family group or individual not wholeheartedly accepted by the whole community” (Nunn 1937:56, 71, 73, 75).

Public-facing institutions included the Indian School Board and the Sunday school officers and teachers. The School Board consisted of three Indian men from Halifax and Person counties, who served two-year terms. These individuals controlled the decision-making for the High Plains School, and worked in concert with the Person County Board of Education who appointed the representatives. The community endorsement of the men resulted in the county appointments, and while Person County technically made the designations, the Indian Settlement put forward their community leaders for the positions. The Indian School Board also engaged Halifax County Schools, and the Virginia Department of Education (DOE Indian School Files, 1936-1967; Nunn 1937:65-67).

The Sunday school officers and teachers were controlled exclusively by the membership of Christ Church at Mayo Chapel, which was independent and unaffiliated with a church congress. The church was mostly an internal institution, but played a key role in public civic and political life. Ministers to the congregation included Rev. J.L. Beam, Rev. P.H. Fontaine, Rev. Jordan, and Rev. Gooch – all White men – who at times acted as both shepherds and advocates for the community. Politically, the White preachers verified the Indian Settlement's moral character, belief in Christian ideology, and devotion to a charitable, earnest, and godly way of life. They regularly ministered the community, in blocks of fifteen to twenty-five years, and knew the residents better than most any other outsider. Moreover, as in the case of Beam and Fontaine, the ministers acted on behalf of the community with Jim Crow era government institutions such as the legislature, and local and state divisions of education. The Sunday school officers and teachers worked in collaboration with the minister, but actually managed the church and completely ran the activities of scripture reading, prayer, and instruction three-quarters of the time. Thus, the leadership body of the church membership most fully formed the institution's organization, with a somewhat titular head of a minister (Mathis 1964:32-34; Nunn 1937:68-69; Woodard Field Notes 2015).

At least two sodalities existed among the Saponi during the mid-twentieth century. The Indian women organized a group called the Ladies Aid Society in connection with the church. The roles of the society were charitable: cleaning and repairing the church, assisting the needy and sick of the Indian Settlement, and raising money for foreign Christian missions. Hosting box suppers and picnics accomplished the latter activity, such as during the Christmas season. The activities of the Aid Society reinforced female social bonds, and while church oriented, was civically minded beyond the congregation and individual families; they considered needs of High Plains as a community. Less data are available about the men's fraternity. Nunn reported there was a "Secret Lodge," mentioned within her discussion of recreational activities among the men of the Indian Settlement. The church was inferred as the meeting location of the men's organization. This information was confirmed during oral history interviews in 2015-2017, in relationship to both Mayo Chapel and Calvary Baptist, the latter being the tribe's post-1946 church. The "Men's Lodge" also owned land as a corporate group, and may have had some affiliation with the trustees created to develop both church properties, "the men's lodge did own land over where Calvary Baptist is located." The group was active as a leadership body earlier than 1877, when they acted as trustees for Mayo Chapel (DB 66:587). It is probable that the male leadership of the community also crosscut the Secret Lodge, the church, and the School Board. Other reports from the community's oral history indicate the men's lodge acted as a labor-pooling unit, and a resource-sharing group – such as for tools and limited finances (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016; Nunn 1937:69, 71; Woodard Field Notes 2015, 2017).

Crosscutting the School Board, Sunday school officials, and likely the Secret Lodge, was the "head man" of the Saponi, who carried the title of "Kingfisher." In the 1930s, this individual was Jesse Martin, who was both Superintendent of the Sunday school and a member of the School Board. By the 1950s, this position had shifted to Will Lee Stewart, who acted as Chairman for the

Indian District School Board. Despite the official outward-facing titles, the Sappony headmen acted as mediators for the community, leading by example and persuasion rather than domination. Their leadership emerged from their deliberative, often quiet and subtle demeanor, recognized by the community as respectable and admirable. Nunn observed Martin's "attitude of non-aggression and lack of assertiveness" which was "reflected in the attitude of the entire community." Tribal leaders, such as Martin, took the lead on resolving internal strife and dealing with outside relations for the group. In a typical form for traditional leaders of this category, Martin "exercises his influence in...an inconspicuous manner...[with] subtle yet conscious efforts" (1937:73).

Martin's demeanor and position of influence and advocacy was consistent with tribal leaders of earlier eras, such as that of "Colonel" William Epps in the nineteenth century, Tawhee Soka of the eighteenth century, and Mastegonoe of the seventeenth century. In the earlier leadership configuration, a council of great men represented the kinship divisions or constituent membership of the band, such as the council of twelve at Fort Christanna and the "headman" who signed treaties alongside the "young Saponi King." A similarly kin-based organization emerged, or was modified, amongst the Sappony of the High Plains.

Among the residents of the Indian Settlement, seven families represented by patronymic surnames form the contributing body of leadership figures. In the latter part of the twentieth century, the governing body of the Sappony is organized around council representation from each

of the seven family lineages. Patronymic surnames are crossed by multiple lineages of intermarriage, so that family representatives are tracked by lineages, not by current surnames of a single generation of descent or marriage. In this way, the Sappony lineages acted similarly to name groups, rather than exogamous unilineal clans. As the Indian Settlement is bilateral in kinship, council representatives may draw on multiple lineages to advocate for one of the family council positions. This format is confirmed in the available documents from the midcentury, where married names are tracked against affines' patronymic surnames in Coates' 1942 tribal census, and three [Johnson, Martin, and Stewart] of the seven families appear as the Indian School Board in the 1950s. As early as the 1870s, court documents demonstrate the combination of patronymic lineage heads acting as a corporate body; the five trustees of Mayo Chapel included the Coleman, Epps, Martin [two], and Stewart family headmen. The referencing of seven lineages is consistent as an organizing principle for the community, at least for the past 140 years, and may be best reflected among internal documents of the tribe. The church graveyards' burial organization around patronymic lineage segments lends strength to this analysis, although female matriarchs tend to be grouped with the male lineage of their spouses. As of the early 2000s, and observed in 2015, a tribal chair and chief man lead the Sappony council of seven families. In addition, "an executive committee including a secretary and financial officer help with the daily business of the tribe" (Coates Papers, 1833-1947; DOE Indian School Files, 1936-1967; NCHC 2011:154; Wells and Opperman 2005; Woodard Field Notes 2015).



Figures 12 and 13. The High Plains Indian School, c.1930 (top) and after the 1949 renovation and addition (bottom). Note the extended roofline and the third chimney in the bottom image. Source: Saponny Tribe.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SAPPONY SITES of SIGNIFICANCE, c.1880-1970

#### *The High Plains Indian School*

As an outcome of the 1911 Carolina legislation formally recognizing the Indian Settlement, the High Plains Indian School was funded, and construction began on an addition to the 1904 school (Mathis 1964:34). The state paid the salary of the teacher, as well as for the books; the community provided for the addition and a playground (NCHC 2011:170). As a third of the Indian students lived in Virginia, the Commonwealth agreed in 1913 to provide proportionate funding for educating children living on the Halifax County side of the community (Wells and Opperman 2006:10). The General Assembly annually continued funding one of the teacher salaries thereafter, along with teachers at the Mattaponi and Pamunkey Indian reservations. By 1922, the Virginia Indian education budget was divided “for maintenance of schools for the Mattaponi and Pamunkey Indians, not exceeding [\$]2,500.00” and “for the maintenance of schools for the Cuban tribe of Indians in Halifax county [\$]800.00” (Acts of the General Assembly 1922:269, 322).

During the tenure of “superintendent” Mrs. J.A. Beam, a larger structure (Figure 12) was completed for the High Plains Indian School (Mathis 1964:34). A 1925 document from the Virginia Indian School Files stated that a motion was resolved for Halifax County “to contribute \$1500.00 toward the erection of an Indian School near the State line between this County and North Carolina provided the State of North Carolina contributes a like sum and the [Indian] patrons donate \$700.00 or more with which fund said school is to be built and furnished...RESOLVED: That this Board pay one-

half of the expenses of said school for the ensuing year.” Twenty-five years later, the counties continued to recognize joint ownership and funding of the school. In addition to contributing to teacher salaries, during this latter period, Halifax paid “a flat sum of \$225.00 per year for transportation of its pupils” across the state line, which was accomplished by one bus that made the rounds in both counties in the mornings and afternoons. In these later years, Wingate Epps drove the bus for a period of time from the Virginia side (DOE Indian School Files, 1936-1967; Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016).

Reports from High Plains in the 1930s indicate the school regularly operated seven grades, with the higher classes as needed; by the time the boys were of high school age, many of them had taken work on the family farms and girls married in their mid-teens. As of 1935, the school term was increased from six months to eight, three teachers were employed, and 116 students were enrolled. The school budget was estimated at \$2000 annually, with Virginia contributing \$600 (Nunn 1937:66-67).

In the late 1940s, the school was thriving and well attended (Figures 13-14). According to E.L. Wehrenberg, principal of the school for seventeen years, the school was commonly known as “The Indian School. Only Indian children may attend. Parents in the section always have been anxious for their children to be well-educated, and by and large see to it that their boys and girls regularly attend.” The exception to this attendance came during the spring planting season, and the fall harvest, when pupils were apt to stay home to help with farm work. The school building consisted of four



Figure 14. High Plains Indian School students and teachers, 1948.



Figure 15. The archaeological site of the High Plains School with North Carolina state historical marker. The house and associated structures date post 1972. Sources: MacCaughelty (1948); Woodard Field Notes 2015

classrooms, in which four teachers and principal taught ten grades for a total of 106 students. The building had no indoor plumbing prior to this era, and water was brought indoors with a bucket and dipper from a well pump. Several outhouses served the facility for toilets. The school had no lunch area or gym, and the library consisted of one shelf hung in a classroom. For an auditorium, two classrooms with folding doors were opened to form a larger space. The heating for the High Plains School was by coal stoves, and there were two chimneys to the original building. The old schoolhouse, formerly on the same grounds, was dismantled by the community men, and reused elsewhere for domestic structures (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016; MacCaugherty 1948).

During the 1949 legislative session, North Carolina and Virginia jointly funded an addition to the Indian School, each paying approximately half of the \$4000 in capital outlay. The addition increased the school to six classrooms and accommodated the upper grades of an emerging high school. “The addition...was one large room with a small storage room. The partition in this room has been moved so as to divide the large room...in half, thus creating two classrooms instead of one.” An additional chimney and porch entrance were also added. The enrollment during the 1950 school year was 108, with seventy-one students coming from North Carolina and thirty-seven from Virginia (Table 2). A year later, the student body was nearly the same with 114, sixty-nine from Carolina and forty-five from

Virginia; the population was reported to be stable, with the fluctuation deemed “typical...over the last few years” (DOE Indian School Files, 1936-1967).

In response to the school’s growth and needs for continued high school classes of 11th and 12th grades, a survey of the Indian School was completed by the Person County Board of Education during the winter of 1951. This report was then shared with the joint committee from Halifax County and the Indian School Board. Mr. R.L. Lacey, Superintendent of Halifax County Schools, thereafter requested a joint meeting of both state departments of education to review the Indian School in the late spring of 1951. By July, Virginia and North Carolina officials convened alongside the local Indian School Board to discuss the school’s needs and future improvements (Figure 16). During this era, the Indian School Board consisted of Saponi residents from Halifax and Person counties. According to a report filed after one meeting, “Halifax County exercises no control over the school. It is under the control of a local Indian School Board composed of three members appointed for two-year terms by the County Board of Education of Person County, North Carolina.” The local committee in 1951 consisted of W.L. Stewart of Mayo, and W.R. Johnson and Lambert Martin from Virgilina, although both Johnson and Martin lived in Person County (DOE Indian School Files, 1936-1967).

Among the concerns and interests articulated by the counties and Indian community through these meetings in 1951, were the facility’s lack of adequate water systems and indoor toilets, and the request for an addition of a multi-purpose room to serve as a gymnasium and auditorium. The high school curriculum was deemed “limited,” and adding a class in typing would improve the overall coursework. Halifax indicated its continued support of the school with a “per capita arrangement,” and all parties agreed that “the site and building has been jointly owned by Halifax County, Virginia, and Person County, North Carolina, over a long period of time...[and that] Halifax County pays [the] salary of one teacher, and pays one-half costs of major repairs and equipment,” in addition to the half share of transportation costs. As part of the

Year	Elementary	High	Total
1942-43	100		100
1943-44	92		92
1944-45			
1945-46	97		97
1946-47	105		105
1947-48	105		105
1948-49	93	21	114
1949-50	90	16	106
1950-51	83	25	108
1951-52	84	30	114

Table 2. Total school population from both counties, 1942-52.

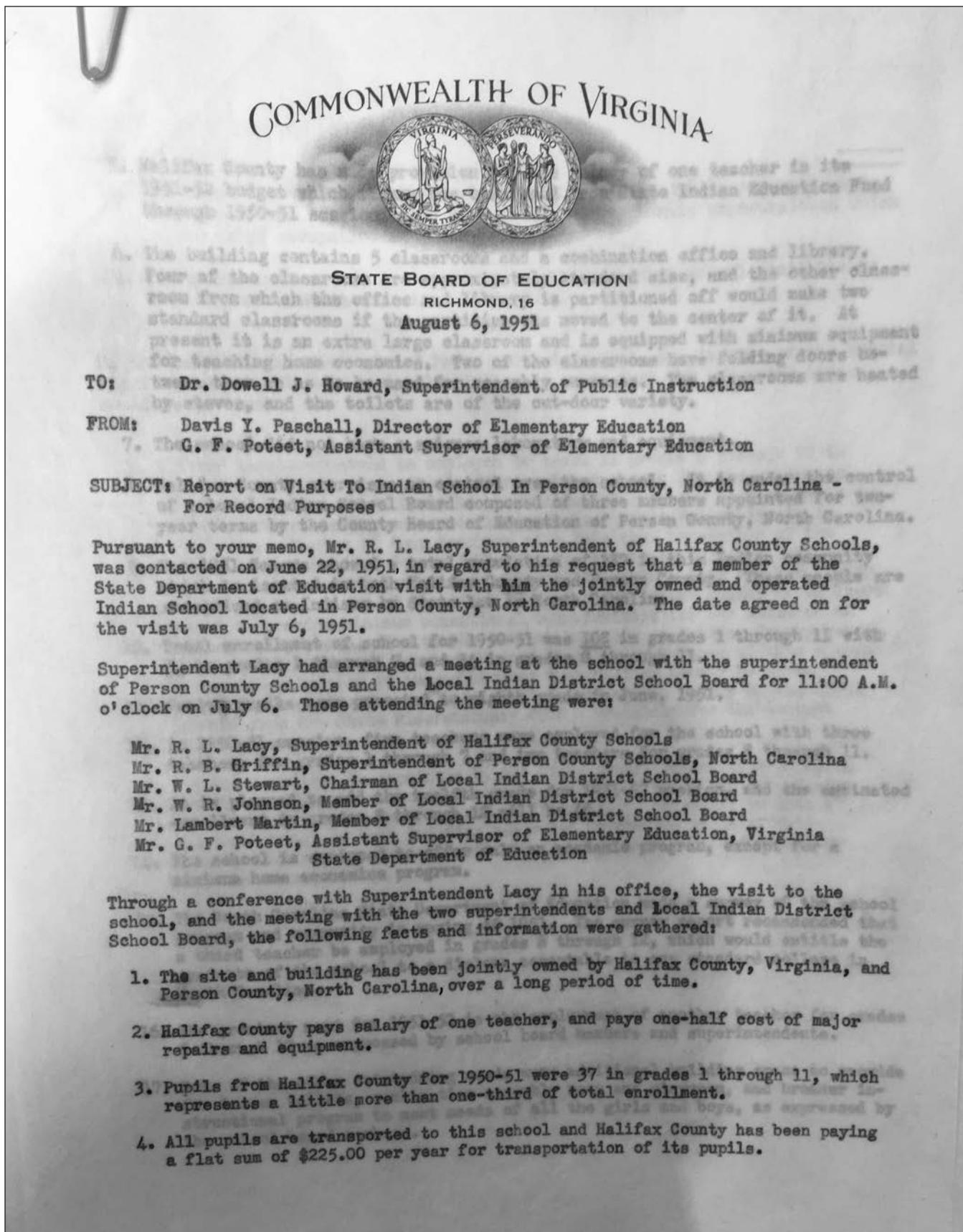


Figure 16. Report from a 1951 joint meeting of Halifax County Schools, Virginia, Person County Schools, North Carolina, the Virginia Department of Education, and the Sappony "Local Indian District School Board." Source: Department of Education Indian School Files, 1936-1967, Library of Virginia.

recommendations of the 1951 joint committee, a “third teacher should be employed to teach in grades 8 through 12 in order to provide a school offering broad enough for the graduates to earn a diploma which would be acceptable for entrance to a standard college.” Under the per capita agreement, Person County paid for four teachers with less than two-thirds of the enrollment, and Halifax only covered one position with more than one-third of the students. “Since many of the Indians are tenant farmers there has been some shifting of families” and the “population trend for the past few years in this Indian community has been toward the Virginia side because of better farming opportunities which is the chief occupation of these people.” The recommendation was for Halifax to cover the sixth teacher. However, due to the “extreme hardship” of the “tri-racial situation” of three school systems, the committee recommended “favorable consideration for special [Virginia] State aid on the salary of the sixth teacher from the State Discretionary Fund.” The cost for one “Halifax County teacher’s salary” from Virginia’s Report of Indian Education Fund, 1951-52 was “1500.00” (DOE Indian School Files, 1936-1967).

As of 1951 the High Plains High School teachers were three: Mr. Perkins, Mrs. Poindexter, and Mr. Pulliam. Perkins carried 11th-12th grade Sociology and Economics, General Business, 10th grade English II, 10th-11th grade Geography, and 8th grade N.C. History. Mrs. Poindexter offered 9th-10th grade General Science, World History, 10th-12th grade Home Economics II & III, and 8th-9th grade Mathematics. Pulliam covered 8th-9th grade English, Health and Physical Education, 11th-12th grade English, and 10th-11th grade Spanish. These three teachers provided the instruction for approximately thirty students, while two lower-school teachers instructed nearly eighty more. According to tribal sources “There are rich memories about beloved teachers, plays performed...and the many lessons learned. The school was unique – it was for Indians only, those of the High Plains community...educated together in this small school” (DOE Indian School Files, 1936-1967; NCHC 2011:160).

There were some challenges and success with the growing High Plains School. By 1953 five females were the first graduates of the High Plains High School. They had attended a version of the high school at the community’s Calvary Baptist Church, until the additional rooms were added to High Plains in 1949. Indoor plumbing was added in the mid 1950s. A petition for Federal aid to the high school failed, and the division of state funds for higher-grade education proved to be difficult. A larger, better-funded Indian school was proposed, in the “interest [of] providing adequate schooling for the Indians.” However, if a new school or resources were not forthcoming “they will probably be sent to one of the three [Person] county high schools” (Sansbury 1953). On the eve of integration in the early 1960s, the segregated school system in Person County faltered under social and economic pressures. In 1962 Person County school officials voted to move the high school Indian students to the White-only Bethel Hill High School; the request came from the Indian School Board, “prompted by a desire to provide better education for the Indians by enrolling them in a larger high school.” The action was “unexpected,” and left Halifax County officials “searching for answers to several questions,” including the Virginia use of the High Plains School and whether Virginia high school students would or could be transferred as well. That year, there were thirty-eight Halifax students at the Indian school, of approximately eighty-seven total. Commenting on the issue, the *Richmond Times Dispatch* newspaper stated in April of 1962, “If High Plains school is to be closed, and the Virginia pupils cannot continue schooling in North Carolina the Halifax county board will be left, at least temporarily, without a place at which the Indian children can attend classes” (DOE Indian School Files, 1936-1967).

Ultimately, the High Plains School was closed by the fall of 1962, and Indian children were sent to the formerly White-only schools in the area. All of the High Plains students went to the Carolina schools, including those on the Virginia side of the line, until Halifax desegregated. One tribal member recalled the North Carolina bus “came over to Virginia to pick up students. [There was a]

weekly rotation of times, since the bus had to make such big rounds – you would be on the early bus one week, late the next week” (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016). Schools were still segregated at this time, but the integration of Indian students was the beginning of the end for Carolina segregated education; Indian high school students were transferred to Bethel Hill High School (Mathis 1964:34). These actions were part of wider currents in American politics of the era, including the watershed 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that ended public segregation. According to tribal sources “the quality of the education may have improved by this change, but all [tribal members] are certain that the closing of the school took away a beloved institution in the community. From its beginning to its closing, the Indian School at High Plains supported the strong sense of family ties and community among the Saponi people” (NCHC 2011:161). The school operated for eighty-four years, nearly fifty of which were supported by North Carolina and Virginia’s state legislative and executive branches. The High Plains Indian School was thus the only Indian school in the segregated South to be legally and financially supported by two states. The end of segregation and the integration of Indian students into public schools had the unintended consequence of interrupting, or making ambiguous, the long state relationship Halifax and Person county Indians had with the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Today, the High Plains School is an archaeological site (see Figure 15). After the 1962 closing, the building fell into disrepair. The state offered it for public auction in the early 1970s, and tribal member Claude Martin, Jr. purchased the vacant structure. After ten years of neglect by the county, Martin dismantled the building in 1971-1972. Afterward, he built a home on the site, which continues to be occupied by his family. Portions of the old school building were used in the building materials for several Indian homes, including the nearby Jim Coleman house. The state of North Carolina erected a highway historical marker at the old school site in 1999 (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016; Woodard Field Notes 2017).

### *Christ Church at Mayo Chapel and Calvary Baptist Church*

Described by sociologist Louise Nunn in 1936, the Indian Settlement continued to make the Mayo Chapel “the cultural and social center of the community.” Nunn further remarked, “Everyone participates in the activities, and most of the community life outside of the home revolves around the church.” She observed the church as providing a regulatory and moral structure for normative behavior “since standing in the community depends largely on participation in church affairs.” The church also acted as a “unifying” institution “for the entire group, and also offers considerable opportunity for individual expression.” Politically and socially, “nearly all community problems are settled through the church and it is the most vital force in the community” (1937:69-70).

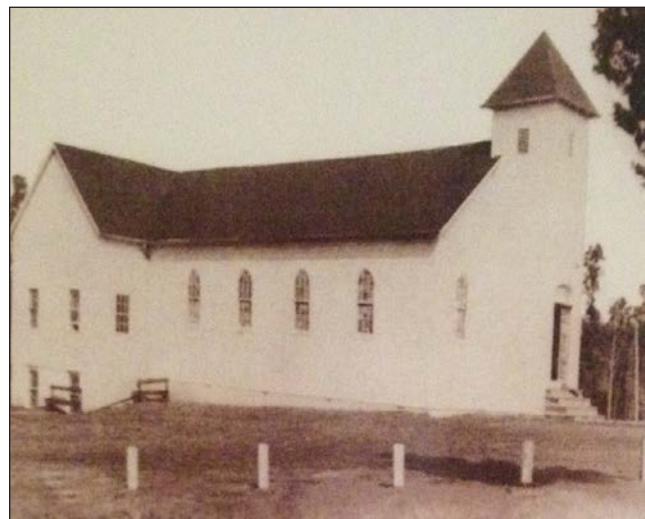
In the mid-1930s, the small white frame church hosted 250 out of 340 Indians as members (see Figure 5). The institution was independent, and did not belong to any regional conference of churches, relying completely on community tithing to operate. The White minister’s salary was \$250 annually, and the community raised another \$50 per year for missions. Nunn reported that services were held once a month; Sunday school was weekly, the sanctuary contained an organ and hymnals, and Baptisms were by immersion in the creek. Other commenters stated that the Indian Settlement was “the best paying and most religious congregation” known, to “have record attendance,” with “considerable singing,” and “one of the largest bills for Sunday school literature in the county.” The group was widely regarded for “their unusual religious zeal. They quote scripture constantly and apply Bible precepts to their daily lives” (Nunn 1936:57, 69).

After serving the community for nearly seventy years, Christ Church at Mayo Chapel was replaced by Calvary Baptist Church as the center of Saponi religious, political, and social life (Figures 17-18). Accounts differ on how the decision was reached to erect a new church, or why the church was moved from Mayo Chapel, which was about

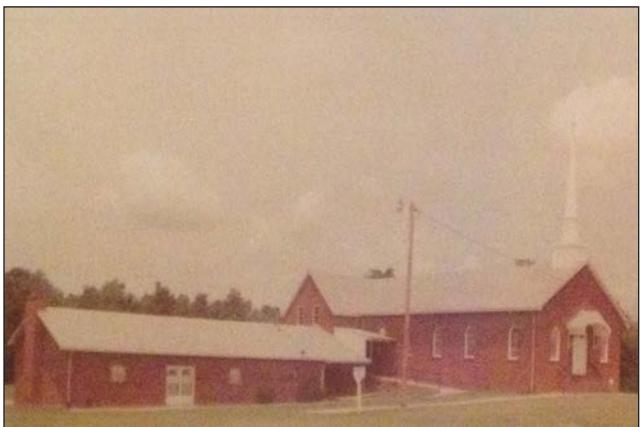
a half mile from Christie, Virginia, to a new location one and a half miles down the road across the Carolina line. After Calvary Baptist was constructed, some reports indicate the old church was dismantled and reused in the way that the old Indian School was recycled (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016). Others suggest Mayo Chapel was burned after the new church was erected (Wells and Opperman 2005:14; Woodard Field Notes 2015). A 1953 U.S.G.S. topographic map shows a structure at the site of the Mayo Chapel, but that identification was not repeated in the updated 1968 map, indicating the church was gone by that time (Wells and Opperman 2005:14). According to several tribal leaders, the Mayo Chapel was burned in an attempt to quell potential division concerning the founding of a new church:

“Some shy away from our history...but it shows how the [headmen] put the community first. It’s also a testament to the leadership...that the church represented the leadership of the people, that there was a common choice [to burn the church] because we didn’t want to be divided in our community or in our leadership” (Woodard Field Notes 2017).

The High Plains community raised over \$6000 for a new church building and related interior furniture. Between March and July of 1946 the Saponi constructed the wooden framed and white-painted structure, with the majority of labor coming from the community. By 1948, the church in its new location was thriving, with excellent participation in Sunday services and tithing, and over a 100 attendees at the weekly Sunday school. The local Whites considered the Saponi to be “good Baptists, they attend their own church regularly” and “as always, its minister is a white man” (MacCaughely 1948). High Plains residents still recall the early days of Calvary, when as children they would ride “to church in the back of a wagon with brothers, sisters, and other relatives they picked up on the way[,] with quilts piled high atop them in winter to keep the snow off and ward the chill away during the wagon ride to church” (NCHC 2011:169).



Figures 17 and 18. Calvary Baptist Church: 1946 wooden frame construction (top). Third-quarter 20th century brick overlay and renovation (bottom). Note the modified roofline incorporated the steeple. Source: Saponi Tribe



Figures 19 and 20. Calvary Baptist Church after the 1972 addition of the fellowship hall and new steeple (top). A cross-section of Sappony families are well represented in both Mayo Chapel and Calvary cemeteries, and both locations are active burial locales for the tribe. Sources: Sappony Tribe; Woodard Field Notes 2015.

The church, as in times past, served the community for more than just a place of worship. Tribal elders recall the “church was the governing body for the community” and others state it more frankly, “It was the community...everybody belonged to the church.” The church leveled economic or other social distinctions among the Indian residents of the High Plains settlement, “that [was] the only place everybody [could] go and do the same thing.” Other institutions were connected to the church, such as the Indian School, which used the space for the high school classes in the late 1940s. Due to the space restrictions at the High Plains School, the community “had to go to church for graduation,” and used the building as an auditorium. Residents recalled, “99% of the Indian people went to that Church and school,” and the two were intertwined in community activities; both institutions were the only places where all the people “met up” and acted in auxiliary capacities as “a social meeting place” (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2015-2016).

While the church provided opportunities for expression, particularly in prayer and song, it also was the central location for community-wide leisure. “Following services, members gathered at each other’s homes for meals. Adults shared news while children played until late in the day.” As with the Mayo Chapel, during one period in the year, the community gathered at Calvary “to express faith and renew as a people” (NCHC 2011:169). Church revivals were seen as a time of joyfulness and conviviality, where everyone came together as a group. “The community did get a vacation, the whole community, [about] a week [or at least] 3 days a year...Revival at church.” Elders fondly recalled the, “vacation for the whole community, to go to the revival at church in the afternoon, 1 to 3 o’clock. On Sunday everybody would bring food to church to start the revival, and everyone would eat and rejoice.” Prayer was part of these large social gatherings, particularly as group affirmations that provided continuing solidarity. The members would “pray and have a good time, pray for it to rain, pray for it not to rain.” The communal acts and spiritual fellowship were “part of [our] survival” (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016).

The new church at Calvary Baptist also began internments at the sanctuary, creating a burial ground to supplement the Mayo Chapel lands (Figure 20). Burials continue at both locations through the present time, mainly based on kinship proximity. The burial grounds crosscut the community and all families are represented in the graveyards (Woodard Field Notes 2015). In 1972 a fellowship hall was added to Calvary “to continue the tradition of gatherings at the church.” The church received a brick overlay in the latter part of the century and a new steeple (Figures 18-19). The church continues to be the center of the Indian Settlement and “a focal point of the community” (NCHC 2011:169).

Visits to church services and fellowship activities in 2015 underscored the importance of the congregational aspects of the institution. All segments of the Saponi community were represented, including layers of socio-economic diversity, all age grades, and rural and urban members – some of whom returned for “homecoming” activities (Figure 21). The church remains a place of moral and ethical instruction, with elements of politics and decorum framed by tribal agendas, family-based affiliations, and Christian fellowship. While a tribal center has been organized in Virginia, just two miles

away, the church can be interpreted as the symbolic center of the community; administrative business and tribal gatherings may take place as the tribal center, but the church congregation acts as the institutional core of the community. This stated, the church and tribal center are populated by Saponi, who as a body, make up the community connectivity – the facilities are mechanisms by which peoplehood are enacted, reaffirmed, and continually transferred. Repeatedly during the 2015-2016 field visits, the Saponi articulated the importance of the seven family groups, which act in both church fellowship and tribal organization. Thus the people and their kinship can be identified as the underlying relationships and structures that motivate, reinforce, and represent the physical institutions of the church and tribal center; (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016; Woodard Field Notes 2015).

Today, the physical church structure remains covered in brick over the 1946 wooden frame with a wooden interior, and a composite roof. The building materials of the 1972 fellowship hall date to that period’s construction. There is a large parking lot surrounding the church, and the community cemetery is to the rear of the structure (Woodard Field Notes 2015).



Figure 21. Saponi homecoming service at Calvary Baptist Church. Source: Woodard Field Notes 2015.



Figure 22. The architectural remains of Christ Church at Mayo Chapel. Source: Woodard Field Notes 2015.

Less than one and one half miles from Calvary in North Carolina are the remains of the old Christ Church at Mayo Chapel in Virginia (Figure 22). Concrete steps and a brick memorial plaza are the remaining above ground architectural features; the footprint of the building, and associated historical resources, are archaeological (Figures 23-24). A large community cemetery dominates the old chapel lot, which remains an active interment space for the community. It is composed of unmarked fieldstones, hand inscribed flagstones, and contemporary gravestones, the oldest of which dates to 1880 (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016; Woodard Field Notes 2015).

Near the Mayo Chapel steps and graveyard, less than one mile away in the woods along a dirt road leading west from Mayo Chapel, is an historic graveyard associated with the Epps family (Figures 25-27). It dates at least to the mid nineteenth century, and is purported to be the homestead of Saponi headman Colonel William Epps. Not all graves are marked, but the cemetery is slightly ele-

vated above grade. Headstones and footstones are hand inscribed flagstones, or unmarked fieldstones, with few formally cut gravestones. The archaeological remains of a structure are suspected at this location, whether of domestic or congregational orientation. Both older graveyards are composed of the Indian families, surnames consistent with those of the community, and both properties are community controlled (Woodard Field Notes 2015, 2017).

#### *The Christie Store*

Built in 1891 when the hamlet of Christie, Virginia was organized, the Christie General Store served the Indian Settlement for over seventy years (Figure 3 and 28-29). The store is regarded by the Saponi as part of their cultural identity, and alongside the church and school, a valued symbol of their community. In addition to its function as a source for general merchandise, the store acted as a community social space, and the only place where Indian farmers could receive credit. In later years, the store was managed by a tribal member, and as such, was



Figures 23 and 24. Christ Church at Mayo Chapel Cemetery. The cemetery dates to c.1880 and continues to be used by the tribe (left). A 2015 field visit to the Christ Church at Mayo Chapel memorial with Sappony tribal members; Lead Ethnographer Dr. Stephanie Hasselbacher stands at left, facing camera (right). Source: Woodard Field Notes 2015.



Figure 25 (above). Nineteenth-century Epps family homestead and cemetery near Mayo Creek. The raised grade appears man made, whether architectural or solely related to the graveyard; the marked graves are scattered throughout the site. Source: Woodard Field Notes 2015.

Figure 26 (right). Nineteenth-century Epps family homestead and cemetery near Mayo Creek. Not all flagstones were legible, but most show engraving. Source: Woodard Field Notes 2015.



Figure 27. Detail of engraved headstone of Nancy Epps, with the date of Dec. 17, 1863, Epps family homestead and cemetery near Mayo Creek. Source: Woodard Field Notes 2015.

the only business of its kind in High Plains (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016; Wells and Opperman 2006:1).

John R. Franklin appears to have been the original owner of the Christie Store. Franklin purchased land adjacent to the Atlantic & Danville Railroad in 1891, and by 1892, Franklin's property was improved by \$600. Through the 1890s, Franklin was listed in the State Gazetteer as a lumber dealer in Christie. Eugene Nash Hardy purchased the 10-acre parcel from Franklin in 1892. Hardy operated a general store in South Boston, and may have rented the mercantile property to one of the Christie merchants; Hardy was not listed in the Gazetteer among the several businessmen of Christie. By 1893 Hardy sold one acre of the parcel to J.A. Robertson et al. for the Methodist Union Chapel. In 1895 the Hardy family sold their remaining Christie property to siblings Sue J. Robertson and Caleb J. Robertson. The Robertsons and their heirs would control the Chris-

tie tract and general store for the next one hundred years (DB 82:247, 84:291, 86:238, 85:330, 87:403; Wells and Opperman 2006:2-3).

An 1890 inventory account entered by Eugene Nash Hardy in Halifax County for his mercantile business may characterize the types of products sold at stores such as Hardy owned in Christie and South Boston. Table 3. summarizes the scope of Hardy's merchandise. Based on Saponny oral history, Hardy's inventory is reasonably similar to what Caleb Robertson sold at the Christie Store.

Caleb Robertson operated the Christie General Store until his death in 1925. In period documents, Robertson was described as an entrepreneur, landowner, farmer, county magistrate, and businessman. He managed the store and dealt in agricultural supplies and implements, fertilizer, lumber, and operated a corn and flourmill, and a gristmill. Robertson was also the prominent citizen and "local white



Figure 28. The Christie General Store, 2005. Source: Wells and Opperman (2006).



Figure 29. The Christie General Store, 2015. Structural damage and roof failure can be seen in the comparative photos. Source: Woodard Field Notes 2015.

<u>CLOTHING &amp; ACCESSORIES</u>	<u>HOUSEHOLD GOODS</u>	<u>FOOD PRODUCTS</u>		<u>TOBACCO PRODUCTS</u>
Boots	Prize Boxes	Salt	Flour	Sweet Aroma cigars
Shoes	Flasks	Starch	Lard	Cuban Puff cigars
Shoestrings	Chairs	Coffee	Sugar	Pigeon Wing tobacco
Shoe polish	Brooms	Cheese	Oyster crackers	Little Nannie tobacco
Shirts	Matches	Tomatoes	Canned meat	Dills Best tobacco
Pants	Soap	Mustard	Canned greens	Gusta tobacco
Jackets	Lye	Jelly	Vinegar	
Pocket books	Blacking	Syrup	Preserves	
Watches	Paper Bag	Rice	Ginger cakes	
	Tumblers	Tea rolls	Jaw Breakers	
			Gherkins (pickles)	

Table 3. Inventory of merchant E.N. Hardy of Christie and South Boston, c.1890 (DB82:260).

farmer who used Indian labor" (Mathis 1964:144-145; Wells and Opperman 2006:4). At Robertson's death, his sister Sue assumed control of the Christie mercantile endeavors (WB42:133). At her death in 1939, Robertson devised her Christie holdings to her niece Evelyn Bray Barrett of Richmond (Wells and Opperman 2006:5).

Sappony oral history interviews recount the transfer of property from the Robertson line to the Barrett, and the Barrett family owning significant property in the Christie area. The Barretts also controlled the fertilizer dealership for the community, shipped in by rail to the Christie Store. "The Barretts inherited the land from the Robertsons," and Sappony farmers paid the Barretts directly for fertilizer. "Sometimes the [Christie] store [manager] might buy some fertilizer from the Barretts and sell it," but the Barretts ran "the dealership. Fertilizer would come in on boxcar loads, and we'd have to wheel it off, one bag at a time, 200 pounds a bag... the Barretts had that dealership. They had that so they could supply – they owned a lot of land around here – so they could supply their tenants with the fertilizer." One elderly Sappony sharecropper recalled arrangements with the Barrett family, "Evelyn Barrett...I rented from her for thirty years. She owned 5000 acres. About 1000 over by where I lived, and others...Halifax, South Boston." Another elder remarked, "Gregory Barrett owned a lot of the land in the surrounding area, [and was] landlord to several sharecropping families." Thus Sappony

sharecropped Barrett land, bought Barrett fertilizer, and purchased goods at the Christie Store – technically also owned by the Barrett family and rented to a manager (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016).

Sam Callaway is remembered by community elders as the store manager at Christie, as well as a resident in the adjacent Callaway House. Callaway's tenure as storekeeper began prior to 1936, although he was neither storeowner nor landowner in Christie. By 1940 Callaway was agent for the Atlantic and Danville Railroad, and postmaster by 1950. According to the Sappony, he may have been a relative of the Robertson / Barrett family, either through descent or marriage. Callaway and his wife likely assumed operations of the Christie Store sometime between his appointment as Director of the Dan River Farmer's Mutual Fire Insurance Company in 1925 and his mention in Nunn's 1936 report as the "white storekeeper at Christie, Virginia, where the Indians trade" (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016; Mathis 1964:144; Nunn 1937:37; Wells and Opperman 2006:5, 17).

The Sappony relationship to the Barretts, Sam Callaway, and the Christie Store is complex, and layered over many years in Jim Crow Virginia-Carolina. Callaway was remembered as "reserved," "not very sociable," and somewhat "slow" to action, but with a measured approach to Indian dealings and a respectable degree of business character. Excerpts of Sappony oral history of Callaway and his interac-

tions with the Indian Settlement reveal his mercantile and credit relationship to the community:

"Sam and Norma Callaway [ran] the store, they were some kind of relation to the Robertsons."

"[Callaway] gave us credit...If he knew you, and had seen you in that store before, he would give you credit. Simply on your name, you didn't have to sign [any]thing."

"As [to] the value of the store to the community, there was no comparison to when Sam Callaway had it. If it hadn't have been for him, we'd have to go all the way to Roxboro or South Boston...or Virgilina...there weren't that many stores in Virgilina then."

"I remember Mr. Callaway always saying, whatever they didn't have, come back the next day...I'll have that tomorrow. [I] wondered where he would get it from overnight?"

"Saved receipts from Christie store from 1924, went with a dozen eggs, got a gallon of kerosene. Kept the receipt for 75 years."

"I remember going there also back in the 30s and 40s. We used to go there to trade. We used to carry eggs there to buy our groceries. You'd trade them for the things you needed. We also sold our hams and chickens there. What you didn't trade in the day you went there, he'd give you a due bill. He didn't give you money back, he gave you a due bill, and you'd go back and trade that due bill for what you needed. [He had] sugar, flour, [and] coffee. We'd also carry chickens there, [and] turkeys. You'd carry chickens there and we'd trade them in, and he'd always give us a due bill."

"[Callaway] would keep the chickens outside the store in little crates...Mr. Callaway would buy the chickens and put them in crate outside the door...I remember that well."

"We didn't have gas or oil...your horse was your gas! Daddy used to go down to Mr. Calla-

way's [and], in the summers he'd have to charge his groceries. Mr. Callaway kept tabs on it, and go back in the fall of the year when he sold his tobacco and pay for it."

"We'd take hams to Sam Callaway, but most of the hams were taken to Roxboro, because you got more money for them."

"He sold detergents. He sold everything because no one had cars to go off...[Callaway] had lye soap...it came in a small box with a red figure."

"Mom would send me to the store to get whatever we needed. I could probably go fifteen times a day, for real. This was not every day. I'd go get a bottle of bleach. Alright, 'now go get beef.' Later on that afternoon, 'go get daddy a pouch of tobacco'...having to go to store so many times a day, that sticks out" (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016).

Sam Callaway operated the Christie Store and provided most of the mercantile needs of the community. Importantly, Callaway provided extensive credit to the Indian Settlement, and was trusted more by the Indian farmers than other storekeepers that were only one, two, or three miles away. Some suggest the Christie Store was the only place in which Indian farmers could receive credit, and farm loans were unheard of until after the Second World War.

In 2015-2016 anthropologist Stephanie Hasselbacher conducted multiple field interviews with the Sappony tribal members concerning the relationship of the community to the Christie Store. Hasselbacher indicates "economic dependency and credit" emerged as a major theme in the ethnographic notes concerning the Sappony and the Christie Store. When asked why they frequented the Christie Store, the majority of interviewees stated that it was the place where they could buy on credit throughout the spring and summer, their fall tobacco harvests pending. The community was, at least while the Christie Store was operating, subsisting on a farm economy. Offhand estimates

<u>CLOTHING &amp; ACCESSORIES</u>	<u>HOUSEHOLD GOODS</u>	<u>FOOD PRODUCTS</u>		<u>FARM PRODUCTS</u>
Denim coats	Gasoline	Sugar	Ham	Feed meal
Overalls	Kerosene	Coffee	Cookies	Hay
Shirts	Oil	Oatmeal	Candy	Seed, tobacco seed
Work shoes	Tobacco Chew	Moon Pies	Butter	Plow points
Tennis shoes	Brooms	Cheese	Baby formula	Plow lines
Kids shoes	Ammunition	Flour	Cereal	Harnesses
Underwear	Detergent	Salt	Rice	Fertilizer (proxy)
Hats	Rubbing alcohol	Pepper	RC Cola	Bridles
	Medical supplies	Chickens	Pepsi Cola	
	Ice (proxy)	Coca-cola	Canned goods	
	Lye soap	Eggs	Kool-Aid	
	Bleach	Beef	Peanuts	

Table 4. Sappony oral history of the Christie Store inventory, c.1930-1960.

indicate 90-95% of Sappony families were farming in the 1940s, down to well below 50% by the 1960s. At the Christie Store, unlike other local establishments, community members could buy on credit or exchange goods such as eggs, chickens, and ham to meet their needs. In addition to groceries, the store carried some small tools needed for farming – not heavy equipment or large tools – but plough points and work clothes, for example. Local people depended on the Christie Store for grocery staples such as coffee, flour [the sacks would become cloth for dresses into the 1950s], fuel, oatmeal, and sugar (Hasselbacher Field notes 2016).

The credit Christie Store manager Sam Callaway provided was one of the few sources that met the consumption needs of the community. Most farmers “buy on time or credit, harvest pending.” The Christie Store operated “on time” and used “due bills,” meaning community members could purchase things throughout the summer on credit [farm bills] and pay when the crops came in during the fall. While the extension of credit was considered a kindness, it meant that Indian farmers couldn’t go anywhere else, and it was very difficult to save up money for land or other needs. Rarely, Callaway provided cash loans, but of those that he did, he let the term extend for long periods of time, “as long as people kept paying something toward the loan.” Credit accounts, as well as the few loans,

required extensive relationship building and trust. Sappony people saw the Christie Store as the place where they were known, trust was reciprocated, and both parties were acknowledged for their integrity. Community elders reflected on the credit system extended to the Sappony by Sam Callaway through the management of the Christie Store:

“The best place to go if you needed to work on credit? The only place I know! If you had money or if you didn’t, you could still get it... especially if you were a farmer. They [the Callaways] knew the people, too. They knew the people in the area, and knew they were honest people...and [knew we were] going to pay [Callaway] first. You didn’t go buy anything until you paid your bill. That’s what you did. Our younger generation is coming on, and they want to hear. Now they know, we tell them. We had to go there because there was no other way.”

“The importance of the Christie Store for the community was economics. That’s where we had to buy food and products and everything. That’s what the store meant to this community...[it was the] center of the community.”

“[Indian] people built themselves around the local store. If something would have hap-

pened to the store, like a fire, it would have been real hard on the people living around there, because so much business was done on the credit. [We] would have had nowhere to shop, especially the farmers, and a lot of them had to wait till the fall to pay their bills. The majority of the farmers didn't even own the land, so they couldn't go to the bank and get a loan, so they had to charge and wait for the crop." (ibid).

Sappony tribal elders continued their recollections, with attention to the Christie Store's meaning to the Indian Settlement and the importance of the merchant to the community:

"[The Christie Store] was special because it grew up with people in the area, people in the area started it. It was where a person could take and get credit for wheat/tobacco if he were a farmer. It really helped farmers and public workers who needed credit. We all trusted each other"

"I thought it was a wonderful store for the community. I thought [Callaway] did great things for the community. I remember my dad would send me with a dozen eggs down there and get a five-pound bag of sugar. If we didn't have enough eggs to barter with, I would simply tell him [Callaway] who I was, and he would put it on a ticket until my dad sold tobacco. Then [father] would go pay off that whole ticket when he sold his first tobacco...I think [Callaway], for the entire community, he was probably one of the only stores in that vicinity who would deal with our race of people and treat us as human beings, and give us credit simply on our name. All you had to do was say 'I'm such-and-such son, and he asked me to put this on a ticket, and he would pay you at the end of the year,' and [Callaway] would do that."

"At Christie Store, is a good place where good things happened...food on our table, fertilizer

in the ground for our crops, hay in the barn for the cows so we could have milk – all economic. That's why it's so important – we couldn't go other places and get it, you know? We had to get gas. We had a very good guy that owned the store. We had to charge, we didn't have the money. That's economics. Christie Store is really the community. It was the community, it is. That's the way I would like to see it stay. Because the fact is, what it did for us long ago. The kids now just see it's a structure. They go to McDonald's, now, that's a structure. But for us, it was a NEED. To serve the community, there was a need for us to get what we needed to survive. It was a survival place." (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016).

From the above selected quotes, it is clear Indian sharecroppers viewed the Christie Store as a particular institution in their community, one based on trust, provisioning need, and as a locale of vital economic resource. In terms of consumption, Sappony oral history relates the types of products supplied and purchased on credit during the second quarter of the twentieth century. Table 4. lists merchandise mentioned by Sappony elders during 2015-2016 interviews with the research team, and may be taken as an ethnographic approximate of a Christie Store inventory. Based on the repeated mention of "groceries" in the interviews, the oral history inventory is likely under representative of the goods sold by Callaway. Of the items listed, Indian residents traded the food products of butter, chickens, eggs, and ham in exchange for sugar, kerosene, flour, etc. Thus, the Sappony contributed to the stock of the Christie Store, which entered into the wider economy.

There were other economic functions of the Christie Store, particularly during Mr. Callaway's tenure, c.1930-1964, and the site acted as an economic center apart from its role as a general store. Callaway was the postmaster, the depot agent, and an informal source of cash, somewhat like a banker (Figure 30). It is worth noting that, at one point, a non-Native man ran a clock and watch repair business on the second floor of the store. Also, earlier

in the twentieth century, a Saponny man gave haircuts at the site. Clearly the Christie Store's role as an economic hub was not limited to the sale of general merchandise on its own books.

Though Mr. Callaway did not deal in the buying and selling of fertilizer, pulpwood, ice, and cattle through the store itself, the location was a major transportation hub for such markets. Public workers and local people on social security would receive their checks and take them straight to the Christie Store to cash them – the cash was often spent immediately to pay off a bill or acquire merchandise at Christie. One Saponny elder recalled, “On Fridays and Saturdays, there would be a big crowd. Those were the big times. Fridays would be shopping night for the public workers, because they were getting a check.”

“When I got older, I started working at the store...very few people could say that they worked at the Christie Store...And this was on Friday nights, because the locals would work either on the railroad or the sawmill or the farm, but mostly the ‘public workers’ would get a paycheck on Friday, they’d come to the store on Friday night with the grocery list, whatever they needed for the week. We’d have to get the order up. Of course, Callaway at the time owned the business, and if he needed something on the other side of the store, he’d call it out to me and I’d go get it. Write it up, but it in a box. Add it up, charge it. Very rarely did you pay for it... the community depended on the store for supplies, for whatever they needed. They did a lot of trading as well...pretty fond memories. Very rarely would we get paid cash, except on those Friday nights. And he paid me 15 cents a night.” (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016).

The Christie train depot was across from the store and “a lot products came in on train. Hay, seed, fertilizer, etc.” The train came twice a day, “2 am and...10 or 12 in the morning. [Another] came around 3:15 in the evening...the mail train.” “Back then a lot of people drove wagons and horses, and

when they heard a train coming, here comes everybody out of the store to keep all the horses and mules from running away! They never got used to it. Never did.” The mail train and the ice truck would service the site, and members of the community would come to the store to receive their mail and purchase ice. A fond recollection of a gathered group of elders was that ice was sometimes used by the Saponny to make “freezer ice cream.”

“You know the ice truck used to come by, and that was the only place it would run. Later on it would run through the community, but at that time it only stopped at Christie Store and [we would] get our ice. You had a wrap it up in a quilt of some sort so it wouldn’t melt before you [could] get back to the house. Take it home, put it in a box, put the milk in there, because we didn’t have refrigerators.”

“You had an ice box.”

“Sometimes we’d beat it up and make freezer ice cream. Now that was a big treat.”

“Dad had a three-gallon freezer, and boy, when he’d freeze that up, we had some ice cream! We’d get two-three families together, [and] make a freezer full of ice cream” (*ibid*).

The train depot was the site where members of the Saponny community would bring their cattle to be weighed and transported to Norfolk for sale. Other rural stops had similar arrangements for livestock transportation to the larger markets of the urban centers. Saponny farmers remember bringing cattle to the Christie depot:

“They’d weigh your calves down at the store, at the depot...”

“Right below the store there...50-60 yards down below the store. [The train was] moving calves down to the stock market. [We] kept the heifers, sold the bulls! Raised another cow.”

“[We] sold them down in Norfolk. There was

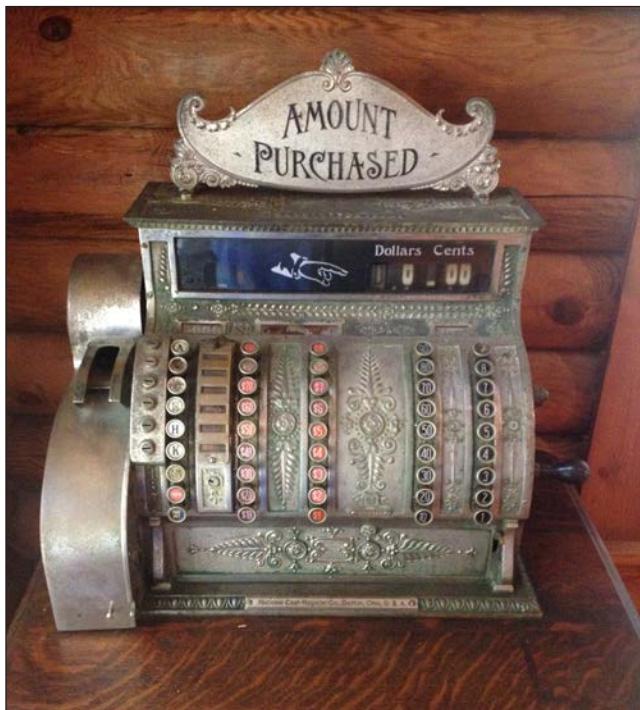


Figure 30. Historical cash register from the Christie General Store on display in the Sappony Tribal Center. Source: Woodard Field Notes 2015.

a [stock market] down there, they bought them...It would be two-three days before you got your check." (*ibid*).

As the depot agent, Mr. Callaway would pay young men in the community to organize boxcars full of seed when they arrived at the Christie depot – seed for shipping from anywhere to Virgilina to South Boston, Virginia to Oklahoma to California. Throughout the winter, outside of the tobacco-growing season, when members of the community would cut pulpwood for sale, the transportation for the wood was also organized through Mr. Callaway as the depot agent.

Another important theme revealed during the 2015-2016 interviews was the social role of the store as a meeting place for Sappony people. The majority of interviewees highlighted the role of the church as the dominant social center for the Indian Settlement, but also reported that the men and boys of the community would gather at the store. The men would sit by the stove, and engage in talk and activities like knife sharpening. The boys would play

ball, marbles, horseshoes, and attempt to listen in on the community gossip. Women and girls would come on errands if necessary, but the preference would be to send a man or a boy – who would then sometimes stay at the store to socialize. In general, the men would say that they did not go to the store specifically to socialize, but it was inevitable if there were another person from the community present. At least two older men commented on the importance of the store for learning what was going on in the community and who was up to what – and those conversations' place in keeping people of the Indian community in line (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016). This last element is a fairly common characteristic of small communities, where public shame and gossip act as aspects of social control and regulate asocial behavior.

Older residents recalled the Christie Store as a place of community confluence, where mercantile needs, business dealings, kindred labor, and social space intersected. “[Indian] people would just come to visit at the store...it was a bunch of farmers sitting around a coal stove. [The store was] a gathering place – three, four, five men every night – sitting around talking. I remember one man would come every night but he’d only ever buy one Coca-Cola – he’d come to socialize.” However, other members characterized the store social activities as secondary to the economic role of the institution. “[We came] to the store, buying groceries...getting needs for the farmers. IT wasn’t...a social meeting place – we did that at the church. We got to survive through the store [and] then we would socialize at the store. We couldn’t go to the movies, so we [would] meet to tell the stories of who lived, who died, so on...” Interlocutors agreed that c.1930-1970 Sappony men mostly did not go to the store to socialize, but once there, that was what generally happened.

“Christie Store holds a lot of memories for me because it was probably as a child the only place I ever had an opportunity to go with my folks. I remember going with my grandparents, not my parents, we got in the one-horse wagon, go through the woods, go get some flour or some sugar for my grandma.



Figure 31. Signage from the Christie Store's last operator, Cloyd Martin, Sr., when the establishment was known as "Martin's Grocery," c.1965. Source: Woodard Field Notes 2015.

You gotta understand, if anybody came by, you were never in a hurry. Stop and chat."

"I don't know a lot about other nationalities, but Native Americans are big socializers. We're not talking about people personally, but we are social people. I don't know if African Americans, [or] White people are...I know how we are. You got to understand. You don't go there to socialize, but if [someone] drives by, we are gonna socialize."

"Sometimes they would have the urge to get a Coke or bag of peanuts, and while they were there, other people would come in, and that's when the socializing part would come in."

"[The store was] a gathering place for men to sit around and tell farm stories. It was unique in that way...everybody knew everybody. We all trusted each other" (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016).

Sam Callaway died in 1964, and near this time Cloyd Martin, Sr. became the storekeeper at Christie. The business became known as "Martin's Grocery," even though most community members continued to call it "the Christie Store." As Martin was Saponi, this was a significant moment in High Plains, as the business changed hands from White management to Indian management (Figure 31). By 1968 the Virginia Department of Transportation had also made substantive changes to the roadway configuration around Christie. Route 96 was re-aligned to run north of the hamlet, and Route 740 was significantly straightened. The A. & D. Railroad abandoned the Christie depot, moving it to Clarksville, Mecklenburg County. The trains "stopped running" and the "track [was] all pulled up" during the early 1960s (Wells and Opperman 2006:17, 21; Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016). These infrastructural changes significantly impacted the hamlet of Christie, as the depot and transportation hub had been the source of the village's origin. The Indian Settlement remained, but the wider economy was shifting away from farming, toward wage labor, and increased urban migration in search of education and jobs.

"I feel like it meant something when a Saponi person took over. People were really supportive. But the community had already started to change. Operating a country store...business was declining. All of them started closing around the same time."

"Back in the early days, a lot of people rode a mule/horse/wagon to the store. They couldn't go to Virgilina or South Boston to shop. By the mid-late twentieth century, folks could travel more readily. They'd shop big merchandise... business started decreasing at Christie. People didn't need it like they used to. People still came to visit at the store...sit down there and talk."

"Most everyone had went off and got jobs in public work. Weren't as many farmers."

"Yeah, most of us went from the farm, you know, got jobs in the plants or the city" (Hasselbacher Field Notes 2016).

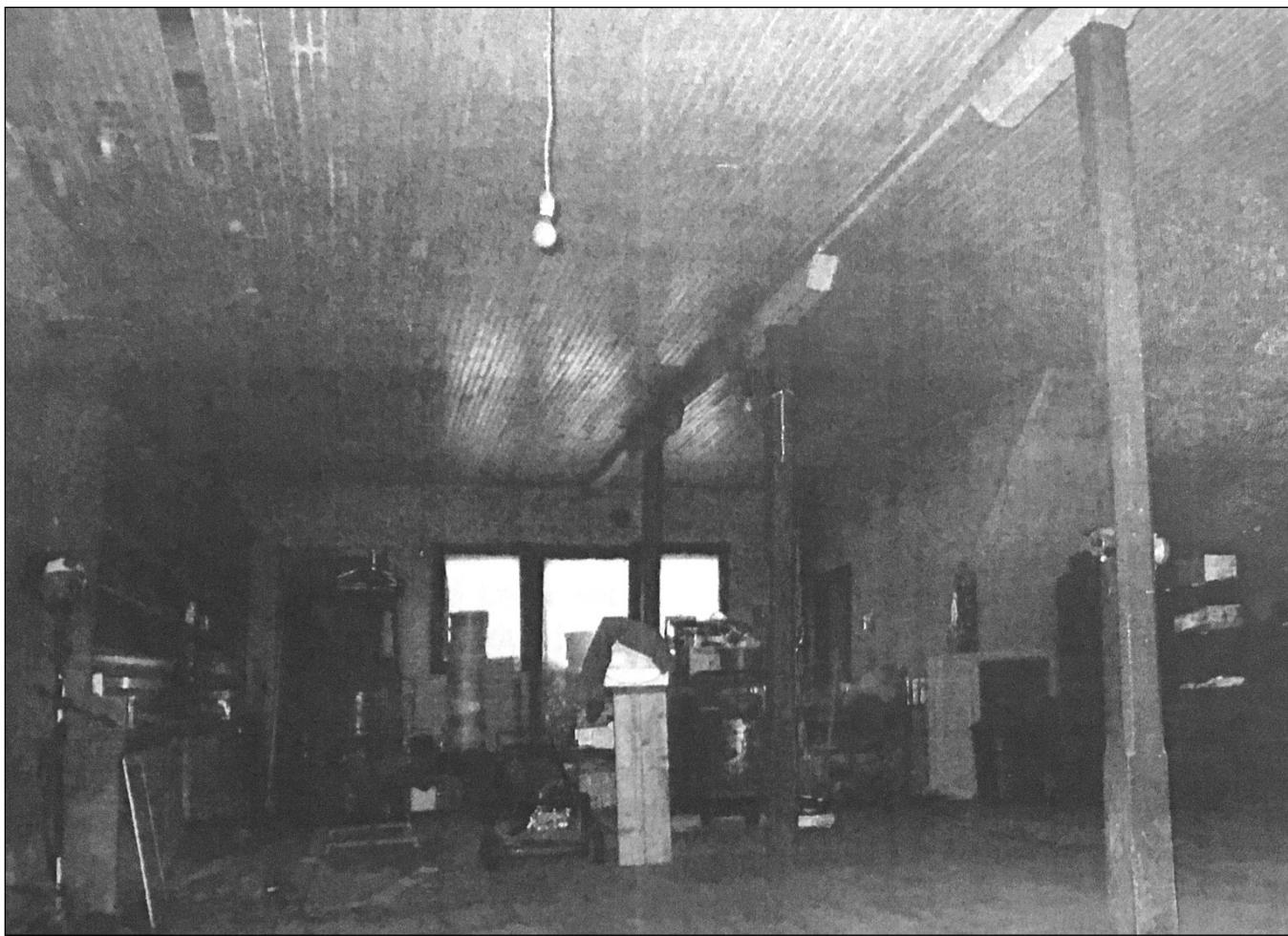


Figure 32. Christie General Store interior, 2005. Source: Wells and Opperman (2006).

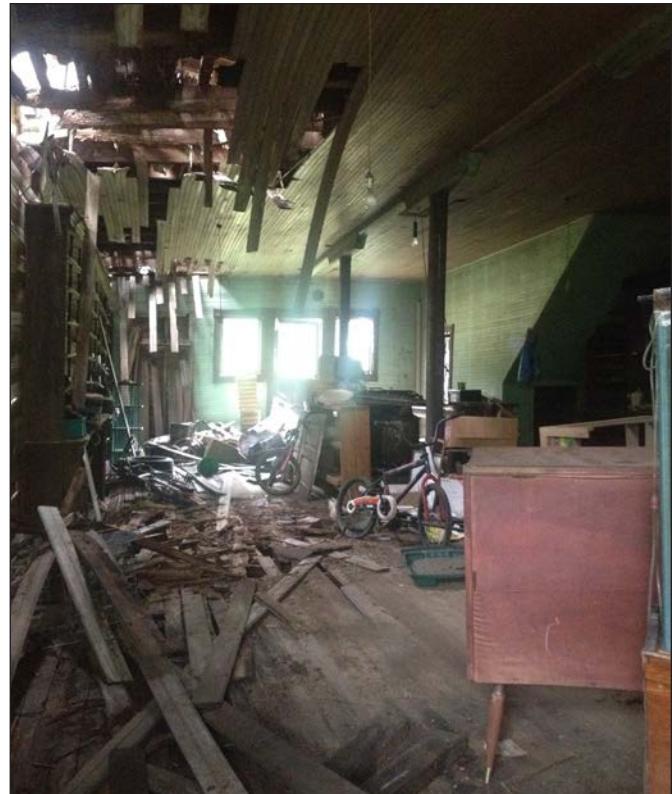
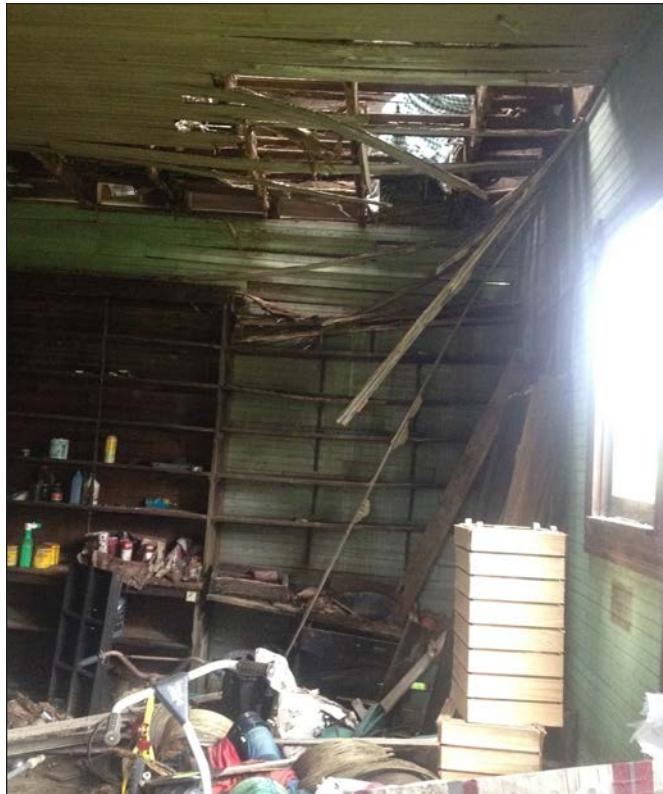
In spite of the broader economy turning away from local general stores to larger chains in the city, the Christie Store enjoyed a brief upsurge in business when the Martins took over. Most interviewees reported that Sappony people would gather at the store almost every night, even when it was no longer their primary source of groceries and general merchandise.

"Everybody still went! Go get a drink and talk. Socialize. Bought some things. You would still buy things. Still expensive to go to and from town every day. Not everybody had a license."

There were other nearby places to shop, but the Indian families tended not to frequent those establishments. Some suggested they might stop for a loaf of bread, but never frequented

the other country stores. "Well you could [shop elsewhere], but that [Martin's Grocery] was the only place you felt comfortable. You could charge stuff. Some stores around here didn't allow you to charge things" (*ibid*). Just as more community members owned cars and worked in wage labor jobs instead of farming, larger stores in town [like Food Town] were able to offer goods at a lower price by the 1960s. Some say the Martins closed the store in the last years of the decade, others say it stayed open until c.1970.

"Most of the farmers...quit farming, had children that finished school, went elsewhere to find better jobs. The store was missed, but not that much because at that time, convenience stores were popping up all around."



Figures 33, 34, 35 and 36. Christie General Store interior, 2015, showing deterioration of the interior bead board ceiling and walls due to water damage from the failing roof (top left). Note the frame remains mostly intact at present, but the hole in the roof is devastating the structure's integrity (top right). The rear of the structure (bottom left) is the most sound. The roof of the front facade (bottom right) has more damage. Source: Woodard Field Notes 2015.



Figures 37 and 38. Christie General Store, 2015: Areas where there are holes in the roof (left) and missing exterior clapboard (right) show the most damage. Source: Woodard Field Notes 2015.

"People were going into town more...the groceries in town were cheaper. He [Martin] got smaller amounts and he paid more money. The main thing was the frozen food, stuff like that. Stuff they [Martin] didn't have."

"The [Christie] store operated when they didn't have transportation...people didn't go to town. Once people got cars, getting where they could go to town, they'd go to the supermarkets [that] started opening. Get groceries cheaper. Christie Store saved us when we had to have it, though."

"[The Martins] were getting on in age and it got where, at the end, most of the people – even if a person still farmed – they also had public jobs and money and transportation to shop elsewhere."

"Things had changed. But right up until it closed, Sappony people would come and sit at night" (ibid).

In summary, the Sappony oral history of the Christie Store focused on themes of 1) economics and dependency – the relationship of the store to extensive farm credit for household consumption needs; 2) the Christie hub of economic activity beyond the mercantile store, through the train depot for the import and export of Sappony goods; 3) the store as a place of social interaction and exchange; 4) Native ownership of the business, but a change in Sappony lifeways from farming to wage labor and increased mobility. The Sappony provided the following conclusion, in regards to Christie and the general store:

"The Christie Store takes its name from what used to be known as the town of Christie, long considered the heart of the High Plains Indian Settlement. Since the post office closed a few decades ago, the town of Christie was no longer considered an official town. However, the name and location remain a part of our community."

For over two hundred years, our community relied on growing tobacco as our main form of

economic subsistence. Some members farmed their own land, while many others worked on large White-owned farms. Each year families relied on income generated from the tobacco harvest to pay debts incurred during the rest of the year. Our Indian community, as a result of the segregationist southern policies, found it very difficult or impossible to establish credit in the nearby towns. In many ways, the [Christie] store resembled the ‘company towns.’ This store became the only place that our Indian people could obtain credit that was so desperately needed given the nature of the income cycle of farming.

The store also took on the important role of a community-gathering place. Many evenings were passed by tribal members sitting on the porch drinking a soda and telling stories or catching up on what was going on in the community. These memories have made the store a valued symbol of the community. It remains valuable beyond its aging wooden structure as a community center” (Wells and Opperman 2006:7).

The Virginia Department of Historic Resources and the Department of Transportation surveyed the store building in 2005-2006, and assigned the historical resource number VDHR 041-5281. From the subsequent preliminary 2006 report, the authors describe the building:

“The Christie Store is a two-story frame store building, with a traditional retail hall configuration, and a one-story front porch that shelters glass display windows and a recessed doorway. The building has a gable roof with standing-seam metal roofing; the front parapet has

an ornamental semi-circular hood and a circular panel with an advertising sign. The building has sawn weatherboard siding secured with cut nails. All visible timbers are circular sawn.

A longitudinal file of chamfered wooden piers bisects the first floor retail hall. The walls and ceiling are sheathed in beaded board. An enclosed stairway is at the right rear (northeast) corner of the building. Several counters and built-in shelving systems remain in the building. The porch has been rebuilt in concrete and flagstone; otherwise, the building retains a high degree of historic integrity” (Wells and Opperman 2006:1-2).

Since the 2006 VDHR/VDOT report, the structural integrity of the Christie Store building has deteriorated significantly. Field visits to the store in 2015 and 2016 revealed considerable water damage at near tipping point for structure loss (Figures 32-38). The major source of deterioration is the failing of the metal roof, which has allowed rainwater to rot portions of the second and first floors. Sunlight now shines through the roof in several locations, and a large hole exists in the middle of the structure where a portion of the second floor has collapsed onto the first floor. A portion of ceiling and wall of beaded board have also collapsed, with the wooden frame likely to fail next. A section of the built-in cabinet has also been impacted by the exposure to water. The midsection of the structure is sagging at the foundation line, as a result of the water damage. The front parapet has become destabilized as the standing-seam metal roofing failed and the wooden roof beneath is losing integrity. The exterior weatherboard is mostly intact, but losing sections where rainwater is undermining the building frame. As of 2017 the property is owned by a third party.

## CHAPTER SIX

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### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The *Sites of Significance* report identifies multiple Sappony heritage resources located within the geography of Christie, straddling Halifax County, Virginia and Person County, North Carolina. Each property is within one and one half miles proximity. In Virginia, they include the standing Christie Store [VDHR 041-5281], the archaeological remains of the Christ Church at Mayo Chapel and the associated Indian cemetery, and the archaeological remains of a nineteenth-century Epps family compound and graveyard. In North Carolina the sites include the archaeological remains of the High Plains Indian School, and the Calvary Baptist Church and the associated Sappony cemetery. Scattered amongst this close geography are other historic structures related to tobacco, such as drying sheds, and the homes of local merchants such as the Robertson House [VDHR 041-5275]. However based on the ethnographic data, the Christie Store, the High Plains School, and the churches are the most historically important to the Indian Settlement of the Sappony. One recommendation of the research team is for VDHR to liaison with North Carolina's branch of historic resources to consider a joint-state district nomination of the Sappony sites (Figure 3).

The potential for future research on the Indian Settlement is substantive. The community's nineteenth- and twentieth-century documentary record remains mostly under researched and unpublished. The archaeological resources of the community have also not been documented, and no excavations of historical Sappony sites have occurred. These resources are not endangered. The Sappony's living memory of the era before 1950 is waning more quickly, however. Community mem-

ories about sharecropping, tobacco growing, and the farming culture are fading. The oral history of Segregation and the Indian School is currently more stable, at least for the later years prior to 1962. A second recommendation is for further research, whether archival, archaeological, ethnographic, or preferably, a combination of methodologies. Further fieldwork and time spent collecting ethnographic data would preserve these oral histories, and by linking them to cultural resources, ensure the collections would be utilized for the benefit of the community and of the Commonwealth.

The Christie Store is severely compromised architecturally, if not completely unsalvageable. At very least, a stabilized roof would prevent further deterioration and water damage. However, that is the responsibility of the property owner, and as of 2017 a third party owned the site. A significant financial resource or charity would be required to change ownership of the property from the current landowner to the Sappony. As stated, the Sappony are interested in the preservation, restoration, and stewardship of the property, but do not have the financial resources to acquire it. Truly, the Christie Store property is most valuable to the Indians of the High Plains, the value of which is not one of money, but rather of heritage. This inequity and imbalance needs further consideration and attention, as most subjugated or colonized communities lack both the ownership of historical sites of significance to their people, and because of the historical processes of colonization, they also lack the financial resources to retain, reacquire, or purchase properties historically significant to their communities.

Based on the evidence presented, it is the opinion of the research team that the Saponi-affiliated Christie properties are worthy of consideration for nomination to the state and national registry of historic places, and meet the objectives set forth by the *Underrepresented Communities* grant and VDHR's *Continuity Within Change: Virginia Indians*

*National Register Project*. The research report, *Sites of Significance in the High Plains Indian Settlement: Saponi Churches, Schools, and Christie General Store*, provides the supporting materials necessary for nominating historical Saponi sites, should VDHR be able to secure third party and / or tribal agreement for the properties described herein.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AG	Agricultural Schedule [U.S. Federal]
AHR	American Historical Review
C	Census [U.S. Federal]
CMHS	Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society
CSRNC	Colonial and State Records of North Carolina
EJCCV	Executive Journals of the Council of Colonial Virginia
DB	Deed Book [County]
NCHC	North Carolina Humanities Council
NYCD	New York Colonial Documents
SHP	Sappony Heritage Program
SS	Slave Schedule [U.S. Federal]
WB	Will Book [County]

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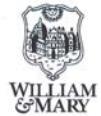
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