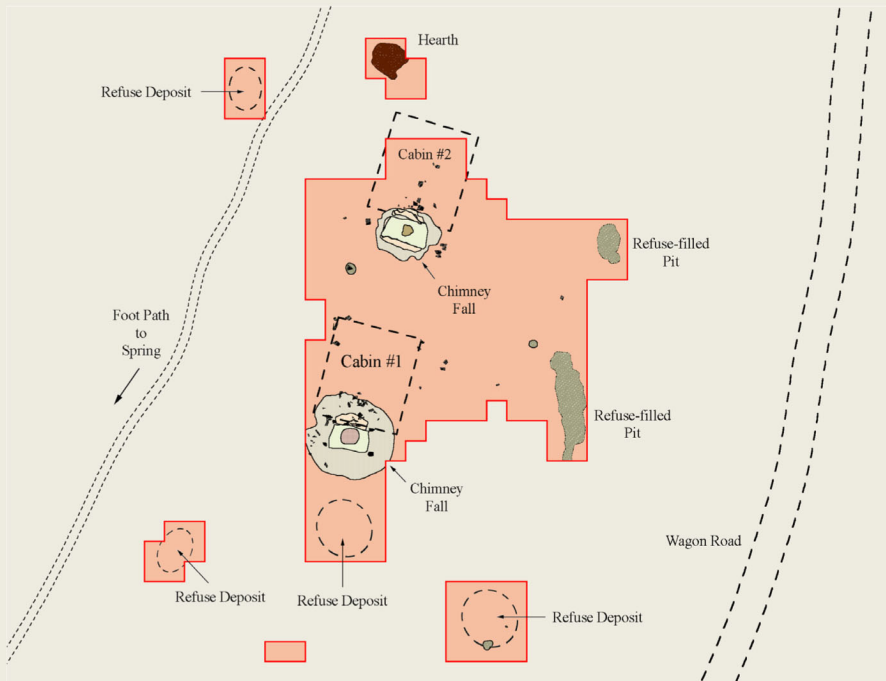


# North Carolina Archaeology



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# **AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CATAWBA PROJECT**

**by**

**R. P. Stephen Davis, Jr. and Brett H. Riggs**

## **Abstract**

In 2001, the UNC Research Laboratories of Archaeology began the Catawba Project, an extension of the 20-year Siouan Project that seeks to trace the evolution of native societies of the Carolina piedmont through the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Re-analysis of documentary sources and re-evaluation of Catawba settlement patterns have led researchers to a series of settlements occupied sequentially between c.1750 and 1820, a critical period of group coalescence that gave rise to the modern Catawba Nation. Recent archaeological investigations at Old Town (c. 1770–1780), the Bowers site (c. 1800–1820), and New Town (c. 1781–1818) provide initial glimpses into the transformations of Catawba material culture through the late Colonial, Revolutionary, and Federal periods.

In 2001, the University of North Carolina's Research Laboratories of Archaeology launched the Catawba Project, a program that seeks to trace the evolution of native societies in the Carolina piedmont through the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This project is an outgrowth of UNC's Siouan Project, which investigated the archaeological records of Siouan-speaking native communities, including the Sara, Shakori, Sissipahaw, and Occaneechi, that lived in piedmont North Carolina during the late precontact and early contact periods (Dickens, Ward, and Davis 1987; Ward and Davis 1988, 1991, 1993). By 1715, European-introduced diseases, Iroquois raiding, and Indian-Colonial wars had ravaged the native peoples of the piedmont and forced many of these small groups to abandon their homelands and take refuge among the more powerful and protected Kadapau, Esaw, Sugeree, and Wateree tribes along Catawba River of upper South Carolina (Hudson 1970; Merrell 1989; Williams 1930) (Figure 1). Through a dramatic process of coalescence, the emerging Catawba Nation forged these diverse native communities into a military powerhouse that exerted disproportionate political influence across the colonial South. The Catawba Project aims to illuminate the emergence of the modern Catawba Nation in the early eighteenth century,



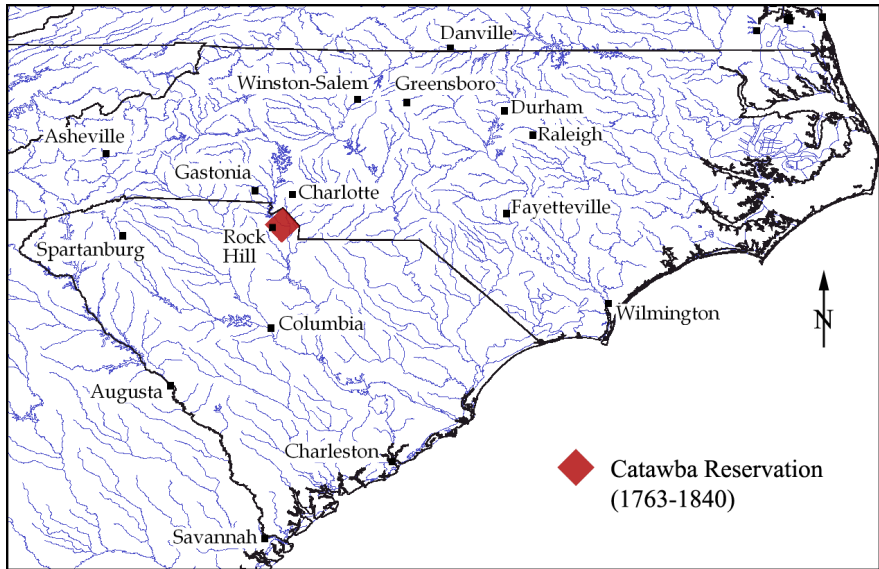


Figure 1. Map of North and South Carolina showing the location of the old Catawba Reservation (1763–1840).

and to document the creative adaptations that have enabled the endurance of the Catawba people in their ancient homeland.

### Historical Overview

The Catawba Project examines the native experience from the late seventeenth century, when Virginians and South Carolinians began to engage the Catawbas in regular trade (Cumming 1958; Wright 1966), until the cession of Catawba reservation lands in 1840. This span can be divided into six periods, each characterized by distinctive political, economic, and cultural trends. During the early English Contact period (c. 1675–1715), explorers and traders from Virginia and South Carolina first entered the Catawba valley and encountered a large native population comprised of Sugerees, Esaws, Kadapaus, Waxhaws, and others. John Lawson, who traveled through the Catawba-Wateree valley in 1701, remarked that the Esaw were “a very large Nation containing many thousand People” and that the Sugaree occupied “a great many Towns and Settlements” (Lefler 1967:46, 49). The English colonies quickly developed strong trade relations with the Catawba Nation and established a

## INTRODUCTION TO THE CATAWBA PROJECT

century-long military alliance that held firm until the American Revolution.

The Coalescent period (1716–1759) opened with the Yamassee War of 1715, which radically altered the native landscape of the Carolinas and drove many additional groups to seek shelter among the Catawba (Merrell 1989). During this period, the Catawba/Esaw settlements swelled with refugee groups who established themselves as distinct towns under the Catawba aegis. As James Adair observed:

About the year 1743, their nation consisted of almost 400 warriors, of above twenty different dialects. I shall mention a few of the national names of those, who make up this mixed language;—the *Katahba*, is the standard, or court-dialect—the *Wataree*, who make up a large town; *Eeno*, *Chewah*, now *Chowan*, *Cangaree*, *Nachee*, *Yamasee*, *Coosah*, &c. [Williams 1930:235–236]

Under Catawba leadership, this coalition guarded the Great Trading Path and formed South Carolina's bulwark against the French and their native allies. Catawba warriors fought alongside the English and Anglo-Americans throughout the Seven Years War, but in 1759, warriors returning from Fort Dusquesne brought smallpox into the Catawba Nation, and within months more than half of the Catawbas and their allied tribes perished (Williams 1930). This marks the beginning of the Late Colonial period (1760–1775), a time of consolidation and decline for the Catawba. The distinct identities of the multiple tribal groups that formed the nation collapsed and the survivors, now known simply as Catawbas, moved downriver in 1760 to Pine Tree Hill (at modern-day Camden, South Carolina). They assisted the English in the Anglo-Cherokee war of 1760–1761 and then moved back upriver in 1761 to establish two new towns in the Waxhaw Old Fields, seven miles south of their old towns along the Trading Path. With the 1760 Treaty of Pine Tree Hill, the Catawba Nation had relinquished claim to an expansive territory in North and South Carolina in return for guaranteed title to a 15-square mile tract around their old towns (Merrell 1989:197–198). The nation accepted this reduced boundary to secure Crown protection for their core homeland, which was threatened by Scots-Irish and German settlers who flooded down the Great Wagon Road (formerly the Great Trading Path) into South Carolina during the mid-eighteenth century.

At the outset of the Revolutionary period (1776–1781), the Catawba Nation, which then numbered only about 600 individuals, resided in a single town near Twelve Mile Creek. In 1775, the Catawbas broke their long alliance with Britain and cast their lot with the Americans. Catawba soldiers served with South Carolina troops throughout the war, and their

reservation provided sanctuary for harried American forces in the Carolina backcountry. As “the Patriot Indians,” the Catawbas guaranteed their continued rights and privileges in post-colonial South Carolina, and the newly constituted state recognized the Catawba reservation lands.

In the post-Revolutionary Federal period (1781–1820), the remnants of the Catawba Nation formed a single community in the uplands above the Waxhaw Old Fields. Here, Catawba families survived through a mix of subsistence farming and hunting, supplemented with cash income from cottage industries and land rents. John Smyth, who visited the community in 1784, noted:

The Indian women...cultivate the soil, as well as perform the common menial domestic services; the sole occupation of the men being war, hunting, fishing, fowling, and smoaking tobacco. [Smyth 1784:193]

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Catawbas had leased most of their reserved lands to white planters, and rent payments became an essential part of the Catawba economy. In 1791 Rev. Thomas Coke noted that:

They possess a quantity of land, fifteen miles square, on the river Catawba. A very small part of this land they cultivate themselves: a much larger part they let out in long leases to the white people (Coke 1792:11–12).

Robert Mills (1826) observed:

The remains of this nation now occupy a territory 15 miles square. These lands are almost all leased out to white settlers, for 99 years, renewable, at the rate of from 15 to \$20 per annum for each plantation, of about 300 acres. The annual income from these lands is estimated to amount to about \$5000. This sum prudently managed, would suffice to support the whole nation, (now composed of about 30 families) comfortably. Yet these wretched Indians live in a state of abject poverty....

Catawba potters supplemented their lease incomes with commercial sales of handmade pottery to Anglo-American and African-American customers (Baker 1972; Blumer 2004). Itinerant Catawba potters peddled their wares in the backcountry as early as 1772 (Merrell 1989:211), and Gilmore Simms (1856) notes a well-developed during the early nineteenth century in which Catawbas took their wares as far away as Charleston.

[I]t was the custom of the Catawba Indians...to come down, at certain seasons, from their far homes in the interior, to the seaboard, bringing to Charleston a little stock of earthen pots and pans, skins, and other small matters, which they bartered in the city for such commodities as were craved by their tastes, or

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needed by their condition.... Their productions had their value to the citizens, and for many purposes, were considered by most of the worthy housewives of the past generation to be far superior to any other. [Simms 1856:122]

Despite a secure economic base, Catawba population spiraled downward during the early nineteenth century due to disease and chronic alcohol abuse. In 1815, Calvin Jones observed:

Nation declining. During the war had 40 or 50 warriors in service. Now not more than 30 in the nation.... Women have but few children, many none. Children die – all suffer from too much whisky and too little bread. In 40 years probably extinct. [Jones 1815]

In 1826, Robert Mills stated: “The Catawba Indians are now reduced, from habits of indolence and inebriation, to very few; their number does not exceed 110 of every age....”

By 1820, the Catawbas abandoned their last settlement on the east side of the Catawba River in favor of a community on the west bank where the present Catawba reservation is located. For the next two decades, the Catawba Nation maintained a measure of political, economic, and cultural independence in their native territory, but whites interpreted their waning numbers and declining economy as evidence of impending extinction. In 1840, a few Catawba leaders were cajoled into ceding their reserved lands to South Carolina for a small cash payment and the promise of a new reserve near or among the Eastern Cherokees. However, North Carolina rebuffed these attempts to resettle the Catawbas in the mountains. By 1845, the Catawbas were denationalized and dispossessed of their lands, reduced from “the Patriot Indians” to landless “free persons of color” who were forced to wander as itinerant potters and day-laborers through an increasingly race conscious and strident South. Their persistence and ultimate florescence as the Catawba Nation during the twentieth century confounded predictions of their inevitable disappearance. The survival of the modern nation on ancestral Catawba lands is testament to the strength of this community and its inexorable connection to place.

### Research Goals and Strategies

This general historical outline of the Catawba experience over the century and a half prior to 1840 has been ably synthesized by a number of scholars (e.g., Brown 1966; Hudson 1970; Merrell 1989; Rudes et al. 2004), who have drawn evidence largely from British and American documentary sources. The UNC Catawba Project employs these historical syntheses (and their documentary sources) as points of departure,

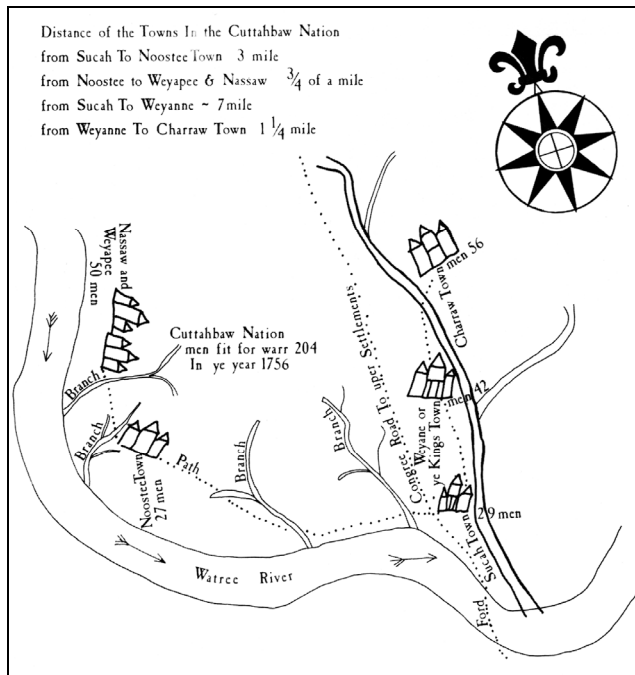


Figure 2. Map of the Catawba Nation drawn by John Evans in 1756. Courtesy of the University of North Carolina Press.

frameworks within which to develop and use archaeological evidence to address issues of cultural process, change, and continuity in the evolution of Catawba Indian society. Specifically, the Catawba Project aims to use the archaeological record to: (1) document and explicate material evidence of the processes of Catawba coalescence and ethnogenesis; (2) identify and document the material evidence of Catawba adaptations and accommodations to rapid and extreme changes in cultural and sociopolitical landscapes during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; and (3) compare and contrast the Catawba material record with those of southeastern peer groups to illustrate divergent adaptive responses to European and American encroachment.

Investigation of these themes proceeds with a temporally sequential approach to the Catawba archaeological record. The Catawba Project has first examined the records of more recent occupations to which detailed documentary controls apply, as a means to identify and characterize Catawba material culture after the presumed convergence of the Catawbas and their client groups. Once such baseline characterizations of Catawba material culture are established, investigations of Coalescent period sites

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Figure 3. Portion of Samuel Wyly's 1763 map of the Catawba reservation boundary, showing a Catawba town and English fort along Twelve Mile Creek and a Catawba town near the mouth of King's Creek.

will examine the material records of the diverse communities that merged to form the modern Catawba Nation. Thereafter, the project will investigate English Contact period sites to document Catawba/Esaw culture prior to the influx of refugees.

Re-analysis of documentary sources and re-evaluation of Catawba settlement patterns have allowed Catawba Project researchers to identify a series of eight town sites occupied sequentially between about 1750 and 1818. Historical maps indicate that the Catawba were situated primarily along Catawba River in York County prior to about 1760, and in adjacent Lancaster County between about 1760 and 1820. To date, researchers have identified archaeological evidence of four of the five towns depicted on the John Evans map of 1756 (Figure 2) —Sucah Town, Weyane or King's Town, Charraw Town, and Noostee —arrayed along the Great Trading Path near the Catawba River. Several cabin sites associated with the southernmost town depicted by Samuel Wyly in 1763 near the mouth of Twelvemile Creek also have been located (Figure 3). Three later Catawba sites on the east side of Catawba River in Lancaster County have

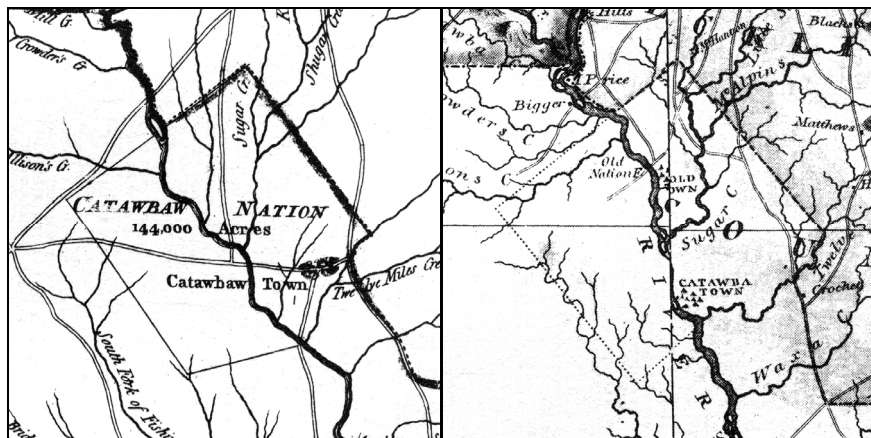


Figure 4. Maps of the Catawba Nation drawn by Henry Mouzon in 1775 (left) and Jonathan Price and John Strother in 1808 (right).

also been identified and partially excavated. Initial investigations at the Old Town, Bowers, and New Town sites provide glimpses into the transformations of Catawba material life during the late Colonial, Revolutionary, and Federal periods.

### Catawba Old Town

Archaeological records of late Colonial and Revolutionary period occupations are represented at Old Town, a dispersed village site named for the adjacent stream “Old Town Branch” depicted on an 1843 land plat. This site is believed to be a part of the single “Catawba Town” indicated on the 1775 Mouzon map and the 1781 Stuart map (Figure 4). This may also be the location of the more northerly settlement depicted on Wyly’s 1763 plat of the Catawba reservation (see Figure 3).

Old Town is situated along ancient terrace remnants that flank the Catawba River valley, in an area known as King’s Bottoms or Waxhaw Old Fields. Limited reconnaissance at Old Town has identified at least five widely dispersed cabin loci. A UNC field school investigated one of these cabin seats in 2003, excavating 28 m<sup>2</sup> to expose two deep, rectangular cellar pits, two shallow, rectangular pits, two circular pits, and a probable extended burial pit (Figures 5 and 6). The edge of another possible burial also was detected, but neither burial was excavated. The cellar pits are likely sub-floor storage facilities beneath cribbed log structures (Figures 7 and 8). Such structures are indicated in Catawba documentary record as early as 1759 (Merrell 1989:188), and the absence

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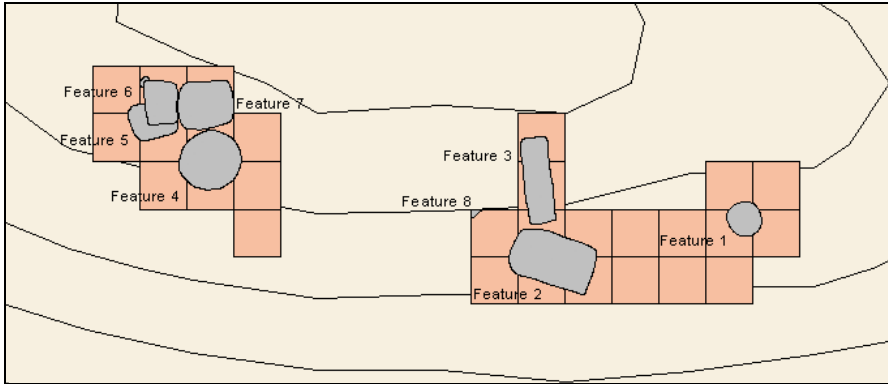


Figure 5. Map of archaeological excavations at Old Town, showing features and one-meter excavation units.

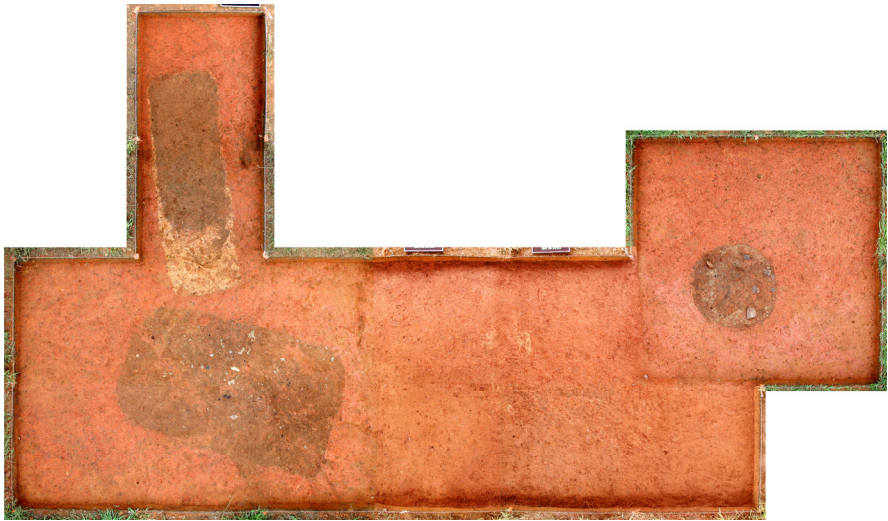


Figure 6. Photographic mosaic of the excavation block at Old Town containing Feature 1 (shallow circular pit) (far right), Feature 2 (cabin cellar pit) (bottom left), and Feature 3 (probable grave) (top left). Excavation measures 7 m by 4 m.

of architectural postholes (associated with earlier earth-fast structures), together with the incidence of highly formal rectangular storage pits (characteristic of late Colonial period Anglo-American cabins), suggests that the Catawbans had adopted this introduced building pattern at Old Town.

The excavated pit features yielded a substantial assemblage of Catawba ceramic vessel and tobacco pipe fragments, as well as diverse





Figure 7. Excavating Feature 2, a cabin cellar pit at Old Town.



Figure 8. Feature 7, a cabin cellar pit at Old Town, with south half excavated. Note the iron hoe at the left side of the pit.

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Figure 9. Catawba earthenware pottery from Old Town.

array of commercially manufactured goods (Figures 9 and 10). Most of the Catawba vessels are exceptionally well-made renditions of English ceramic forms. Plates, cups, bowls, and pans exhibit smudged and highly burnished or polished surfaces, and some vessels have hand-painted designs—a trait that occurs more commonly in later contexts at New Town and the Bowers site. Bowls with well-defined foot rings and octagonal plate rims indicate efforts to replicate English wares in detail. These



Figure 10. European artifacts and Catawba pipes from Old Town.

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European-styled wares may represent early Catawba attempts to cater to the tastes and needs of British colonial customers in the Carolina backcountry. The burnished Catawba elbow pipes (Figure 10) may also be an element of this early ceramic trade. Evidence from late Colonial period contexts at Camden (Lewis 1976) and Cambridge (Baker 1972), South Carolina, substantiate this trade.

Commercial goods recovered from Old Town include: kaolin pipe stems; fragments of white, salt-glazed stoneware teacups and a soft-paste porcelain punch bowl; brass tacks, cones, and rolled tubes; bottle glass (including a case gin bottle); three triangular silver nose bangles; more than 1,700 glass beads; French gunflints, lead shot and sprue; wrought nails; and numerous other iron artifacts. While some of these goods may derive from itinerant English traders, many probably came directly from stores such as Joseph Kershaw's trading house at Camden or from Charleston, where the Catawbas visited on a regular basis.

Four coins recovered from the largest cellar all appear to be British coins from the reign of George III, and one bears a legible date of 1769. These coins, along with the remainder of the commercially manufactured materials recovered from Old Town, are consistent with an occupation on the eve of the American Revolution, and it appears likely that the site was abandoned by 1780, when the entire Catawba Nation withdrew to Virginia to escape the invading British army of Lord Cornwallis.

### The Bowers Site

The Federal period Bowers site was occupied a generation later than Old Town. This single cabin seat, situated atop a high ridge flanking the Catawba alluvial valley, was probably part of a small community called Turkey-head identified by Robert Mills in 1826 (based upon 1820 data) (Mills 1826:115). The site was initially identified during a reconnaissance in 1970 (Davis et. al 1970) that recovered an iron hoe and fragments of distinctive nineteenth-century earthenware pottery directly comparable to River Burnished (Ferguson 1990) and Catawba (Wheaton et al. 1983) types. Shovel testing sampling at the Bowers site in 2002 defined a small (500 m<sup>2</sup>) site extent, and identified a rectangular cellar pit aligned parallel to a Federal period roadbed (Figure 11). Excavation of this substructure cellar recovered more than 2,000 artifacts, including Catawba burnished pottery (representing plates, pans, bowls, jars, and a cup), English pearlware and creamware sherds, Catawba clay pipe fragments, glass bottle and stemware fragments, brass buttons, lead shot, an iron snaffle bit, and glass beads (Figure 12). Like the Catawba ceramic wares from Old





Figure 11. Excavating the cabin cellar pit (Feature 1) at the Bowers site.



Figure 12. Artifacts from the Bowers cellar pit: Catawba earthenware pottery (top left); English pearlware sherds (top right); glass beads, lead shot, and brass wire clothing fasteners (bottom left); and glass bottle, vial, and stemware fragments (bottom right).

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Town, the Bowers pottery is dominated by adopted English forms, and this well-made ware probably served table functions identical to the pearlware and creamware plates, cups, and bowls found at the site. Other materials recovered from the Bowers cellar pit indicate access to a broad range of consumer goods, with selections of manufactured goods focused on dining and drinking, clothing, and personal ornamentation.

The worn and highly fragmented character of this collection, together with the inclusion of abundant gravels and Archaic period lithic artifacts in the cellar deposits, suggests that most of this material was cleaned from the site surface and dumped into the cellar after its abandonment as a storage facility. English ceramic wares and other associated materials indicate a site occupation during the first two decades of the nineteenth century, presumably predating William Hutchinson's lease of the property sometime before 1820 (Mills 1826). Three other cabin seats identified nearby may represent the remainder of the Turkey-head community.

### Catawba New Town

Contemporary with the Bowers site is the site of New Town, the primary settlement of the Catawba Indian Nation from the close of the American Revolution until 1818. This site was originally documented in 1935 by Isabelle Baker, then a student at Queens College in Charlotte, who interviewed former Catawba chief Samuel Blue. Blue conducted Baker to the site of New Town and described the community from his mother's recollection. Baker recounted the visit in a letter to UNC archaeologist Joffre Coe, and related Blue's description of New Town:

Most of the village was on a hillside sloping toward the river.... The houses were something like log cabins. In size they were about twelve by sixteen feet. The walls were shoulder high and built of logs. The roofs, also of logs, were gabled. The logs were covered with rough boards and the cracks daubed with mud. The huts had dirt floors. Very few had either fireplace or chimney. In those which did the fireplace was made with rocks and the chimney of wood. [Baker 1935]

Early travelers' accounts offer similar perspectives on the character of New Town. In 1791, Methodist Bishop Thomas Coke (1792:11) preached at New Town, and observed "Their Nation is reduced to a very small number, and [they] chiefly live in a little town, which in England would be only called a village." Elkanah Watson (Watson 1856), who visited the community in 1785, noted that Catawba families lived in log houses and cabins, which Coke (1792:12) found "not uncomfortable—far superior to

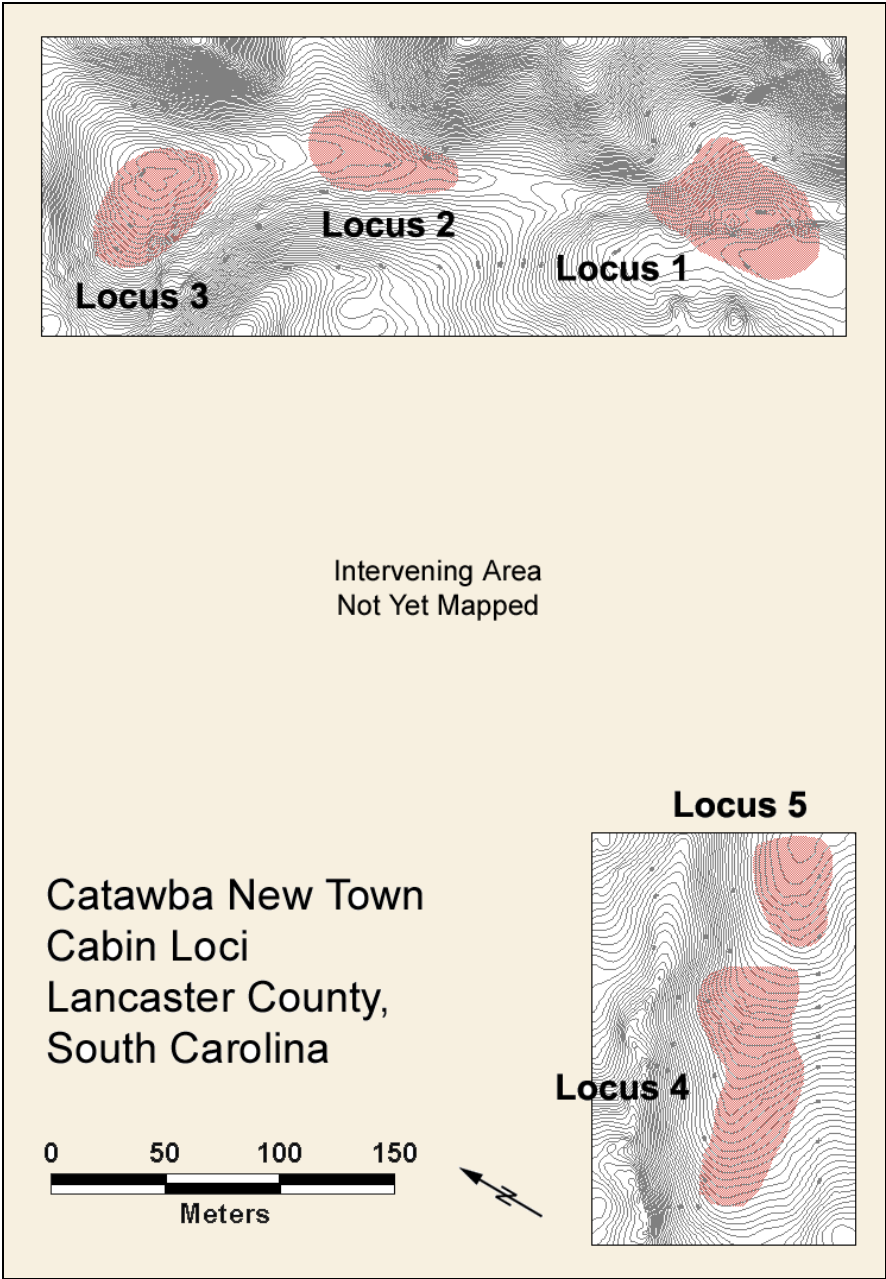


Figure 13. Map of New Town showing identified cabin loci.

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the mud-houses in which the poorest of the people in Ireland dwell.” Calvin Jones (1815) described New Town as “6 or 8 houses facing an oblong square.” George Blackburn, a visitor in 1816, described one of the New Town hamlets as “a little village consisting of four families” (Mills 1826:112).

In her 1935 letter to Coe, Baker noted that potsherds and other artifacts were evident along a portion of a farm road that ran through the wooded site of New Town. She provided a rough sketch map of the site of New Town depicting the access road and other points of reference, and comparison with modern topographic maps indicated that the same access road is still actively used. A 2002 reconnaissance of the site followed this access road and identified a cluster of tiny Catawba potsherds and pearlware fragments exposed along the road bank. This area, now designated Locus 1, proved to be a cabin seat at the northeastern edge of New Town. Since that time, five cabin loci in two separate hamlets have been identified in the northern and central parts of the town (Figure 13). Each of these five loci represents one or more cribbed log dwellings, associated structures, peripheral middens, and discrete trash dumps. These cabin seats are archaeologically manifest as scatters of Catawba and English pottery, cut and wrought nails, and numerous commercially manufactured items such as buttons, thimbles, and kettle fragments. These artifact clusters have been identified through a combination of pedestrian reconnaissance and metal detector survey, a low-tech remote sensing technique that is exceptionally effective due to the ubiquity of Federal period metal artifacts in these contexts. Point provenience assigned to metal artifacts assures close spatial control with high-resolution definition of site boundaries and internal site structure.

### *Cabin Locus 1*

The least well preserved portion of the site is Locus 1, located atop a ridge which drops off steeply toward the north. This area, which has been logged and shallowly plowed, is estimated to cover about 2,900 m<sup>2</sup>. Surface exposures around the periphery of Locus 1 yielded more than 100 diagnostic Catawba sherds, as well as numerous fragments of pearlware, all indicative of an early nineteenth-century occupation. Soil auger sampling at one-meter intervals over an 850 m<sup>2</sup> area has identified four shallow, midden-filled features within Locus 1. Systematic metal detector survey over a 2,000 m<sup>2</sup> area recovered 135 Federal period artifacts, including numerous wrought nails, cast iron vessel fragments, lead shot, buttons, snaffle bits, a thimble, and a Jew’s harp (Figures 14 and 15). The



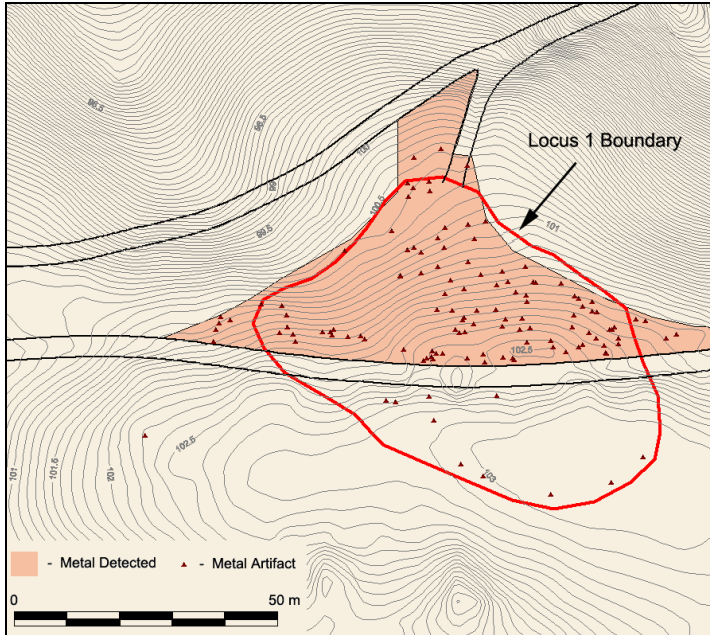


Figure 14. Map of Locus 1 showing results of metal detector survey.

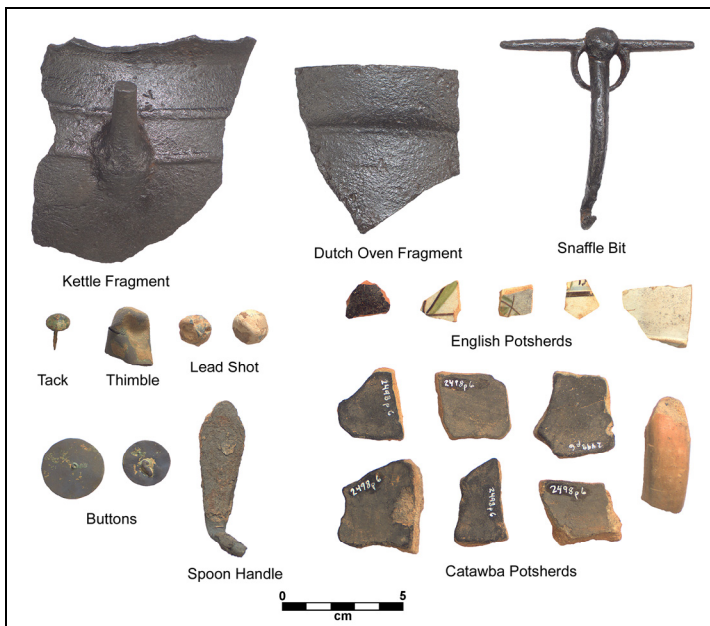


Figure 15. Artifacts recovered from Locus 1 at New Town.

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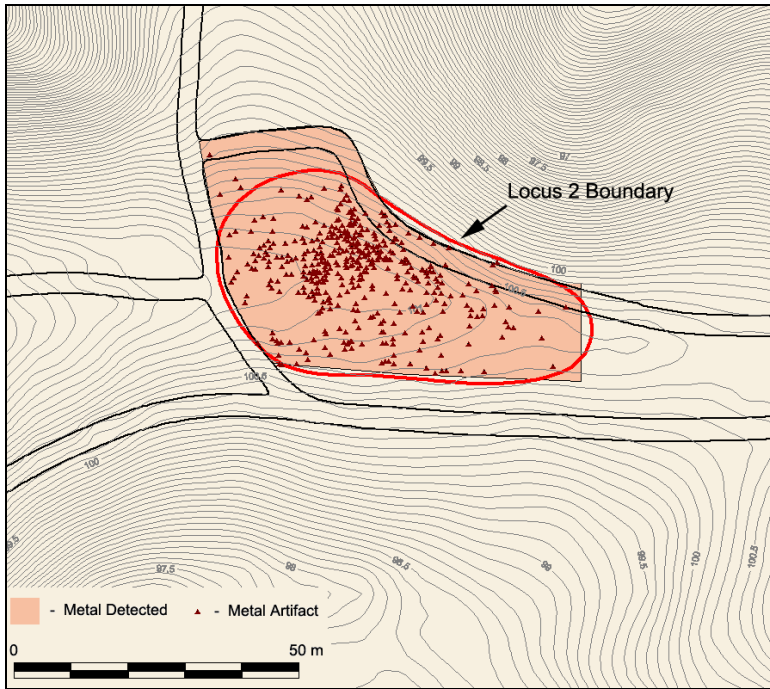


Figure 16. Map of Locus 2 at New Town showing results of metal detector survey.

distribution of these objects indicates a broad, fan-shaped dispersion from a probable cabin seat at the northern edge of the farm road.

### *Cabin Locus 2*

Cabin Locus 2 is located about 100 m northwest of Locus 1 along the same broad ridge. Systematic metal detecting and surface collecting across an 1,800 m<sup>2</sup> area defined a fairly compact distribution of ceramic and metal artifacts covering 1,600 m<sup>2</sup> (Figure 16). Artifact densities here are significantly higher than at Locus 1, and spatial patterning of artifacts suggests much greater spatial integrity. Metal detector survey at Locus 2 recovered more than 250 artifacts. Large metal artifacts, including numerous kettle and Dutch oven fragments, were scattered along the southeastern edge of the site, while wrought nails, buttons, buckles, Jew's harps, thimbles, lead shot, and other personal items were concentrated near the northwestern edge near a Federal period roadbed (Figure 17).

Close interval auger testing across a 440 m<sup>2</sup> area identified a large pit near the center of this artifact cluster. This area, now wooded, appears to



Figure 17. Representative metal artifacts from Locus 2 at New Town.

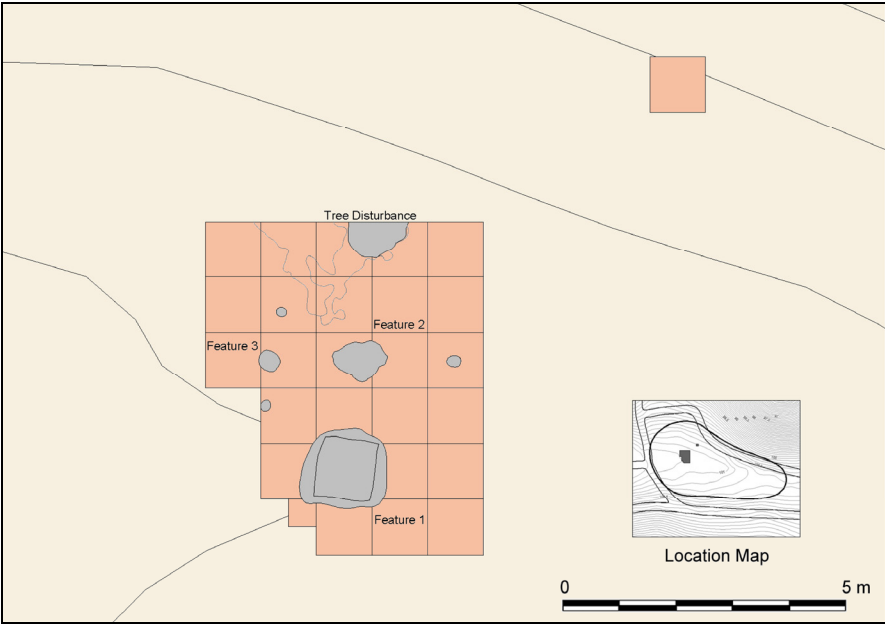


Figure 18. Excavation map of Locus 2 at New Town.

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Figure 19. View of the Locus 2 Cellar Pit with south half excavated.

have been minimally disturbed by a few shallow plowings. Excavations in 2003 exposed a square cellar pit (Feature 1) and an associated stick-and-clay chimney base (Feature 2)—contexts most likely associated with a horizontal-cribbed log dwelling with a dirt floor (Figures 18 and 19). A small, shallow pit near the cellar (Feature 3) yielded large fragments of a Catawba-made jar. Cellar deposits yielded a diverse assemblage that included numerous sherds from Catawba earthenware vessels, several polishing pebbles, pearlware sherds, buttons, thimbles, buckles, glass beads, silver ornaments, Catawba elbow pipes, and a 1793 French coin (Figure 20). Six hundred forty-three creamware, pearlware, stoneware, and porcelain sherds from Locus 2 yielded a mean ceramic date of 1806, an occupation mid-point consistent with ethnohistoric evidence and other datable artifacts found at the site.

### *Cabin Locus 3*

Cabin Locus 3 is situated about 50 m to the northwest of Locus 2. Metal detector survey of the wooded and unplowed site area identified





Figure 20. Artifacts recovered from the Locus 2 cabin cellar (Feature 2) at New Town.

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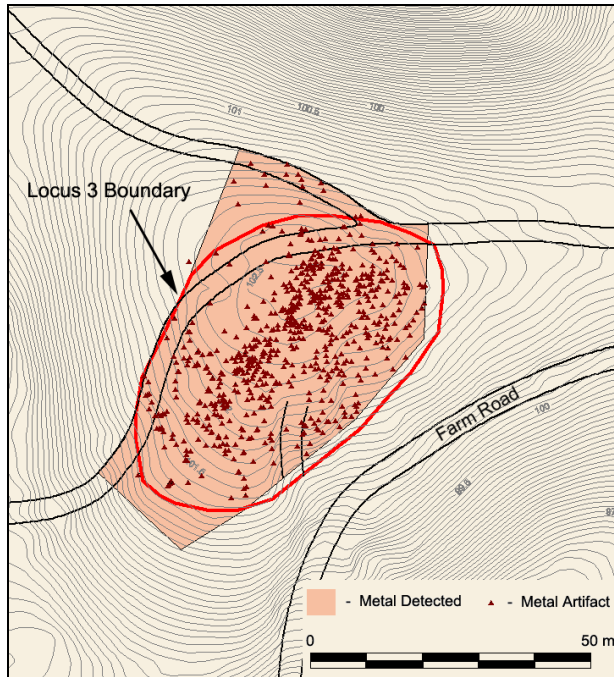


Figure 21. Map of Locus 3 at New Town showing results of metal detector survey.

almost 700 metal artifacts within a 2,000 m<sup>2</sup> area (Figure 21). Among 40 metal artifacts initially recovered for confirmation of the site's age were kettle fragments, buttons, wrought nails, knives, a buckle, snaffle bits, a hoe, and a gunlock from a flintlock pistol (Figure 22). Numerous Catawba and pearlware sherds also were found.

Locus 3 was investigated more intensively in 2003. Excavations focused on five concentrations of refuse identified by the metal detector survey (Figure 23). Because the site appeared relatively undisturbed and exhibited potential to yield fine-scale spatial patterning, sediments were hand dug from 50-cm excavation units, and many artifacts within these units were piece-plotted. Soils containing artifacts were relatively shallow, extending no more than 10–15 cm below surface, and numerous *in situ* artifacts and the tops of features and hearths were observed just beneath the ground cover. All soil from general excavations was dry screened through 1/4" mesh; soil from features was waterscreened through 1/16" mesh or processed by flotation.

The largest excavation block, a 30-m<sup>2</sup> unit, exposed four refuse-filled pits (Figures 24 and 25). One of these (Feature 5) was a large, somewhat



Figure 22. Metal artifacts from Locus 3 at New Town.

irregular-shaped basin that contained more than 8,000 Catawba potsherds and numerous other artifacts. This feature likely represents a pit that was dug to retrieve clay for daubing. The other three features were roughly rectangular pits that contained relatively rich deposits of artifacts. Features 4 and 6 may represent shallow cellar pits. All three features contained fragments of broken Catawba vessels and pearlware sherds, as well as glasswares, tableknives, and silver bangles; Feature 6 also yielded a small, unbroken Catawba-made bottle and a simple Catawba cup (Figures 26 and 27). Approximately 1,200 fragments of English-made

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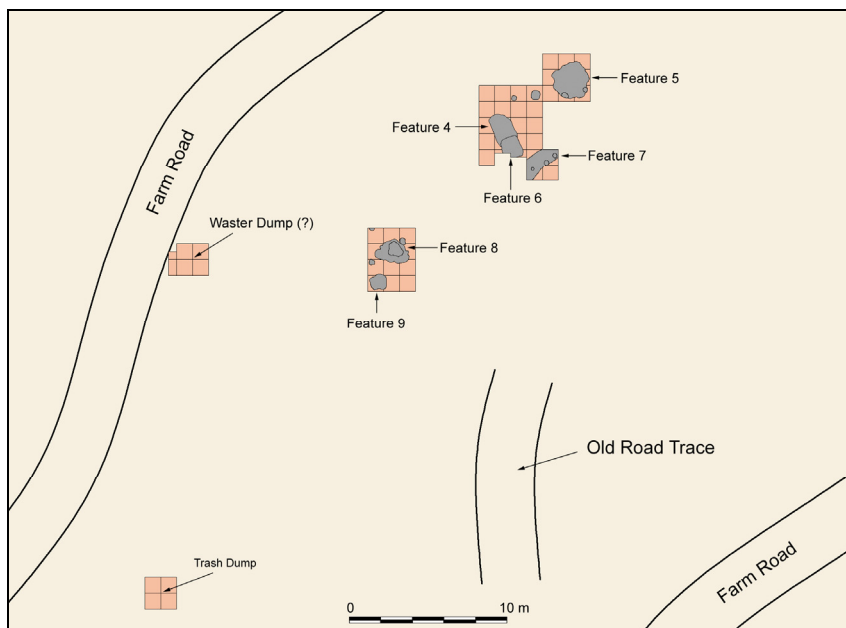


Figure 23. Excavation map of Locus 3 at New Town.



Figure 24. Students excavating Feature 5 at Locus 3.





Figure 25. Feature 6 at Locus 3 with north half excavated. Note the Catawba earthenware cup located near the center of the profile.

pottery recovered from Locus 3 yielded a mean ceramic date of 1803, indicating an occupation contemporaneous with the Locus 2 cabin.

A nearby 12-m<sup>2</sup> excavation block revealed the base of a stick-and-clay chimney (Feature 8) and a trash-filled stump hole (Feature 9) that contained large sections of two broken Catawba vessels. The chimney base was covered with a thin deposit of charcoal, ash, and burned pearlware sherds that appear to represent *in situ* hearth debris.

Two smaller areas excavated near the edges of Locus 3 revealed discrete trash dumps. One of these yielded numerous, highly fired Catawba sherds and may represent a waster dump. A significant aspect of Catawba economy in the early nineteenth century was the production of pottery for sale in commercial markets. This intensification of production is generally reflected by the uniformity and apparent large quantity of pottery found at Locus 3. Numerous heavily worn pebbles, used for burnishing pottery, were recovered at Loci 2 and 3, and they indicate a substantial scale of pottery production around these cabins.

Another small excavation, where a gunlock and snaffle bit had been found during metal detecting, revealed a second snaffle bit, a harness buckle, a pistol barrel and frizzen, and a worn-out shovel blade.

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Figure 26. Catawba and English pottery from pits at Locus 3.



Figure 27. Ornamental and personal items from Locus 3 at New Town.

### *Cabin Locus 4*

Four hundred meters south of Locus 3 is a second hamlet that consisted of at least two households. This area, on a low wooded ridge surrounded by numerous springheads, was identified by metal detector reconnaissance in early 2003. More intensive survey identified a cluster of metal artifacts, as well as Catawba and pearlware sherds, around a group of fieldstone piers and two low mounds of dirt thought to represent collapsed stick-and-clay chimneys. More subtle surface features include a Federal period wagon trace just east of the cabin seats and an eroded footpath that leads down slope from the two cabins to an improved

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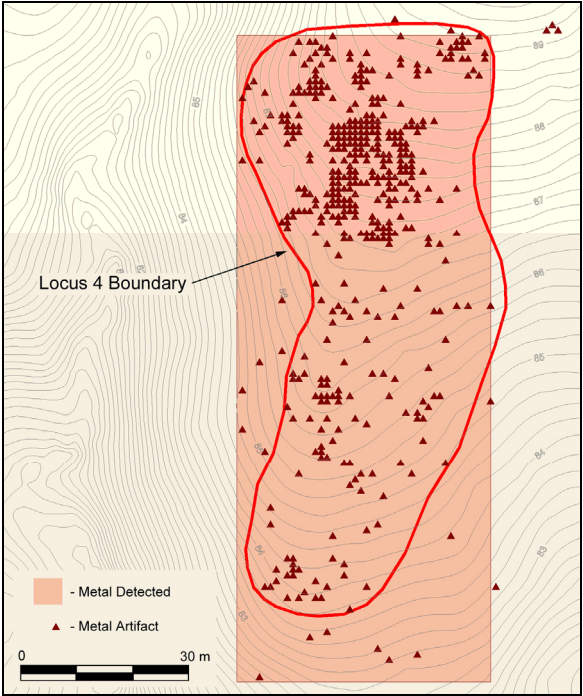


Figure 28. Map of Locus 4 at New Town showing results of metal detector survey.

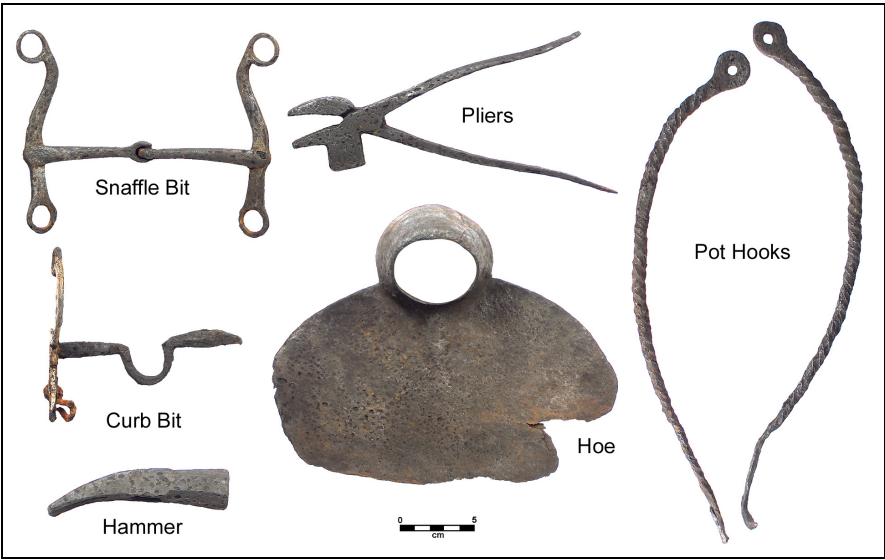


Figure 29. Large metal artifacts from Locus 4.



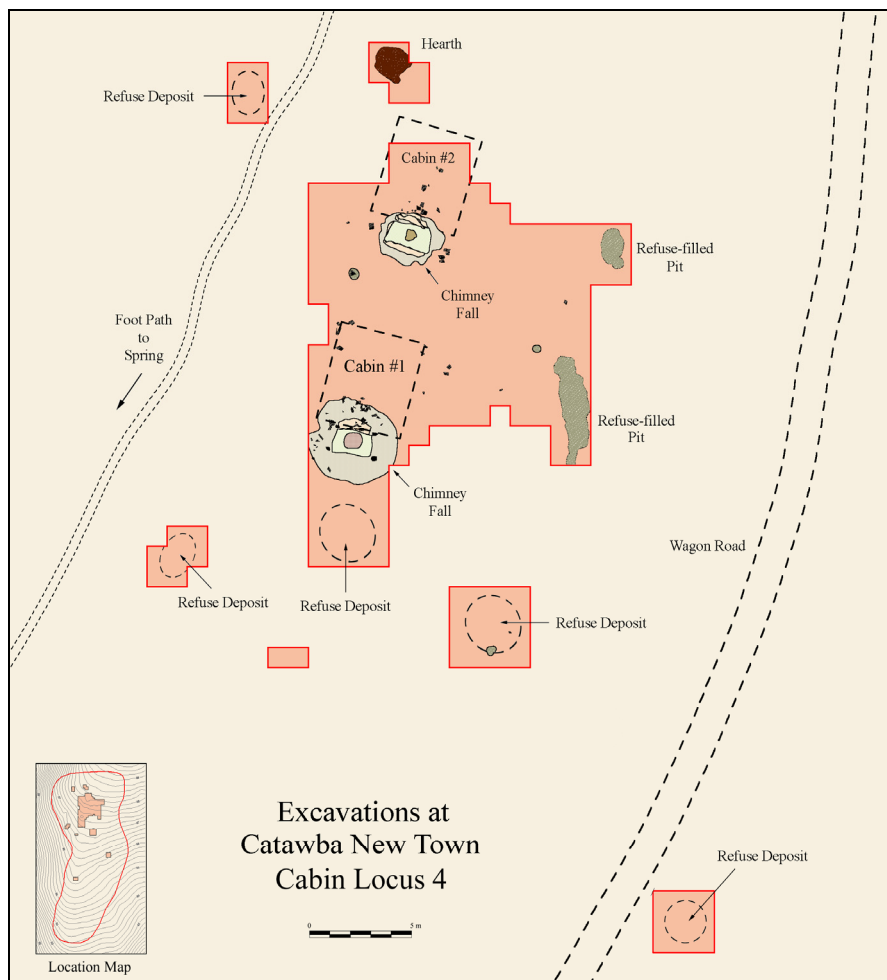


Figure 30. Excavation map of Locus 4 at New Town.

springhead. These two adjacent cabin seats and the surrounding area are designated Locus 4. This area is covered in mature hardwoods and has not been disturbed by plowing.

More intensive investigations at Locus 4 in 2004 defined a 3,600 m<sup>2</sup> site area and delineated a number of discrete refuse disposal zones around the two cabin seats. Systematic metal detector survey recovered almost 1,000 Federal period artifacts, with concentrations around the chimney ruins and within toss zones around the periphery of the yard areas (Figures 28 and 29). Excavations focused on the cabin seats and adjacent areas in

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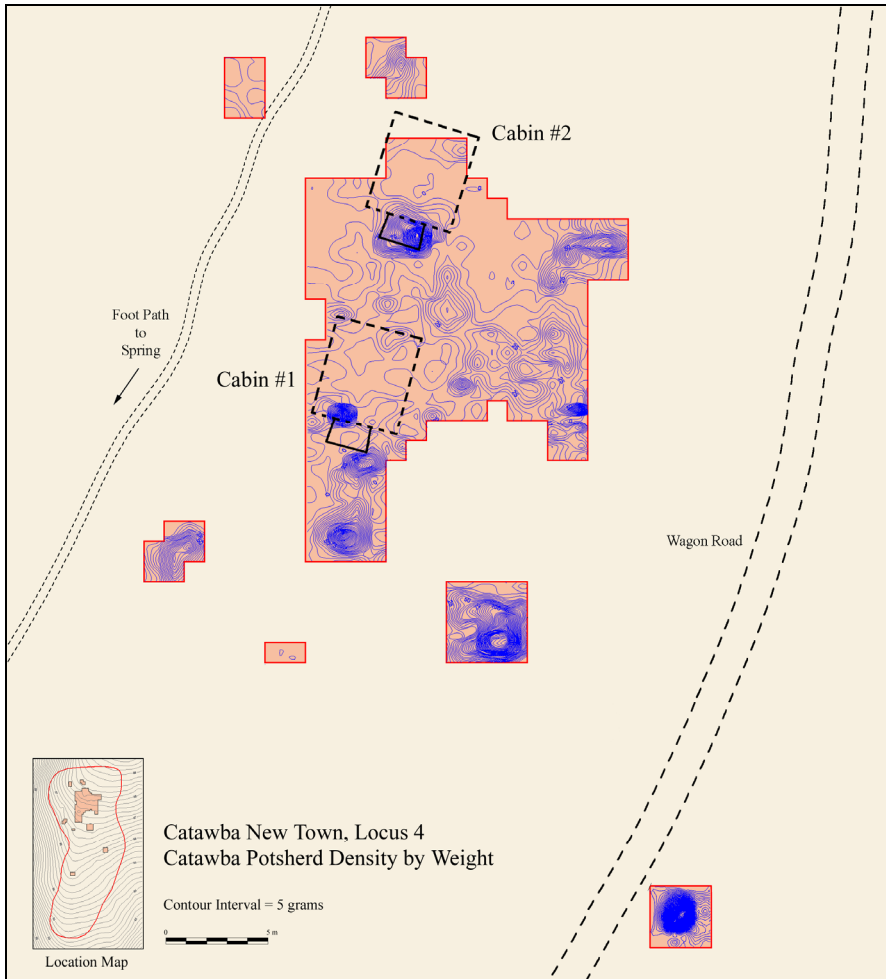


Figure 31. Excavation map of Locus 4 at New Town showing the distribution of Catawba earthenware pottery.

front (to the east) of the two cabins. Hand excavation of 1,020 50-cm units exposed the hearths of both cabins, most of the cabin floor areas, a surface hearth, and several concentrations of artifacts interpreted as trash dumps and discarded hearth cleanings (Figure 30). Highly patterned artifact distributions around the cabin exteriors and yard edges, as well as discrete trash dumps along the wagon trace, further reflect intentional refuse management (Figures 31 and 32). Door-front yards, as high activity zones, were apparently swept clean, resulting in elliptical rings of broken pottery and other refuse surrounding relatively clear areas. Broken pottery and

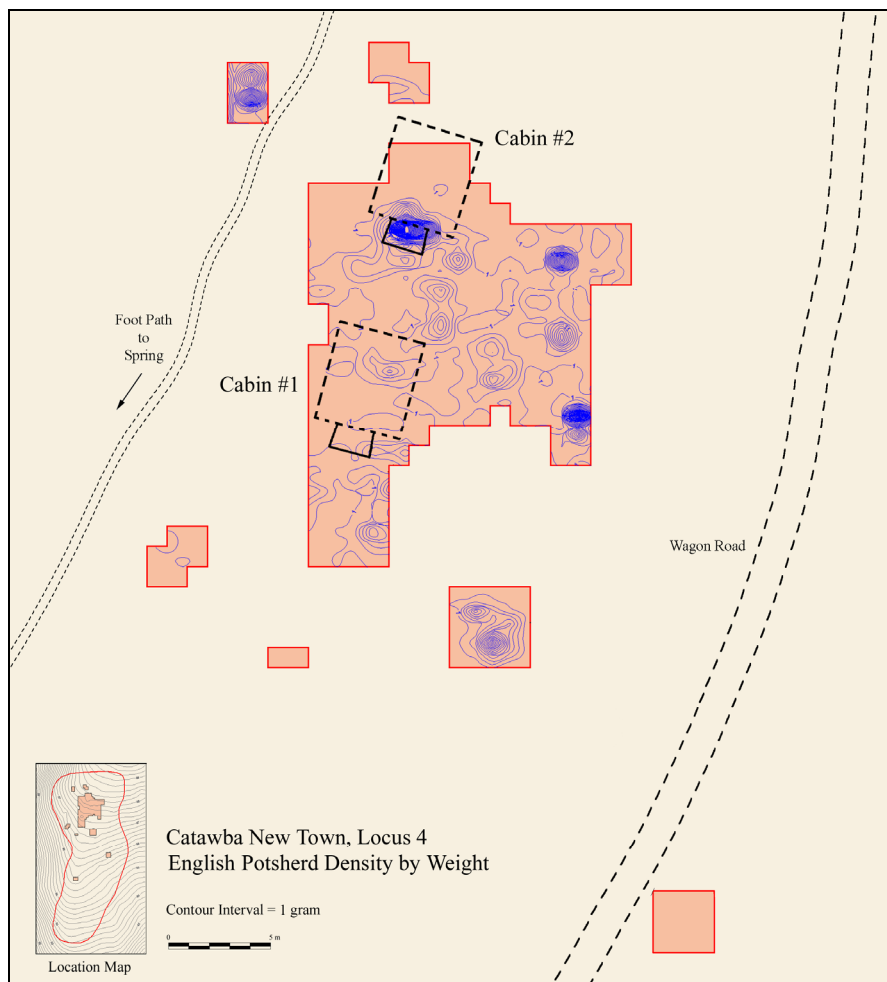


Figure 32. Excavation map of Locus 4 at New Town showing the distribution of English creamware, pearlware, and stoneware pottery.

other debris also accumulated around chimney bases and corner blocks, but did not accrue beneath the wooden house floors. Larger quantities of refuse were dumped in discrete patches along the nearby wagon road. Broken glass only rarely occurred near the cabin, but was plentiful in some of these peripheral dumps; other dumps consisted exclusively of Catawba pottery. Large, obtrusive objects, such as kettle fragments and heavy iron implements, were tossed even further away, downslope from the rear of the cabins.

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Figure 33. Catawba and English pottery from Locus 4.

Excavations at Locus 4 recovered more than 10,000 sherds of Catawba pottery and nearly 2,800 fragments of commercially made ceramics (Figure 33), as well as glass bottle fragments, Catawba pipes, metal buttons, glass beads and other jewelry, table cutlery, harness





Figure 34. Excavating Feature 1, the remnant of a stick-and-clay fireplace and chimney associated with Cabin #1 at Locus 4.

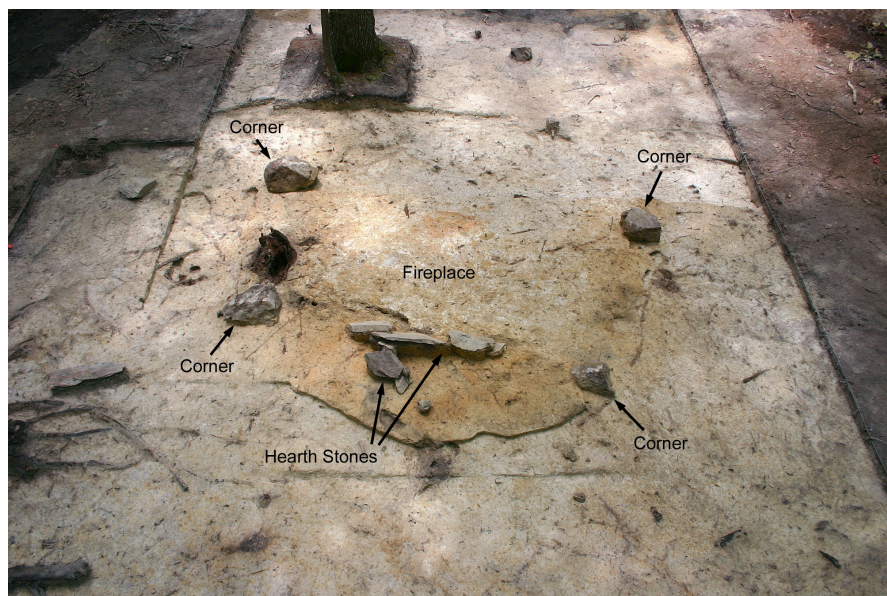


Figure 35. Feature 1 following the removal of collapsed chimney remnants, burned fireplace surface, and firebox fill. The trapezoidal shape of the fireplace is indicated by the placement of the corner stones.

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hardware, agricultural equipment, gunparts and ammunition, and numerous other categories of household refuse. Catawba pottery from Locus 4, unlike that found at Locus 3, does not appear to represent products for commercial sale. Instead, sherds are from well-made vessels and most display worn and damaged surfaces indicative of domestic use. In addition, only two fragments of pottery burnishers were recovered at Locus 4, as compared with a dozen whole or fragmented burnishers from limited excavations at Loci 2 and 3.

Catawba ceramic vessels represented at Locus 4 include numerous plates and flat-bottomed, flaring-walled pans, as well as cooking jars with thickened rims and tripod kettles with loop handles. Many vessel rims are decorated with a reddish orange paint, and at least a few rimsherds were decorated to mimic English shell-edged wares.

The most interesting archaeological features at Locus 4 were the two chimney piles, and considerable effort was spent excavating them (Figures 34 and 35). These low mounds represent the eroded remains of earth-filled, cribbed log chimney bases that elevated the hearth surfaces to the levels of the wooden cabin floors, a common construction technique. Such wooden chimney bases were cribbed from ground level as closed, earth-filled boxes to the hearth surface. Above the hearth surface, the firebox jambs, or sides, were integrated into the cribbed cabin wall, leaving the face of the fireplace open. Above the mantle log, the chimney was cribbed of smaller logs or sticks and stepped away from the cabin wall. Both chimney piles were located at the down-slope ends of their respective cabins, with the hearth surfaces elevated 30 cm above the surrounding ground level to accommodate raised cabin floors. This interpretation is supported by the presence of foundation blocks and the absence of artifacts in the floor areas. Interestingly, both chimneys were trapezoidal in shape at the base, with the chimney width increasing away from the cabin wall. Both fireplaces also had prepared clay surfaces and hearths composed of flat, tabular stone. The fireplace surface (Feature 2) associated with Cabin #2 was largely intact and contained deposits of charcoal and ash mixed with fragments of a broken Catawba pan, a Nottingham stoneware bottle, and pearlware vessels (see Figure 33).

### *Cabin Locus 5*

Immediately north of Locus 4 is Cabin Locus 5, in an area that was logged during the 1960s. Subsequent bulldozer clearing of the loggers' slash and stumps exposed the remains of at least one additional Catawba

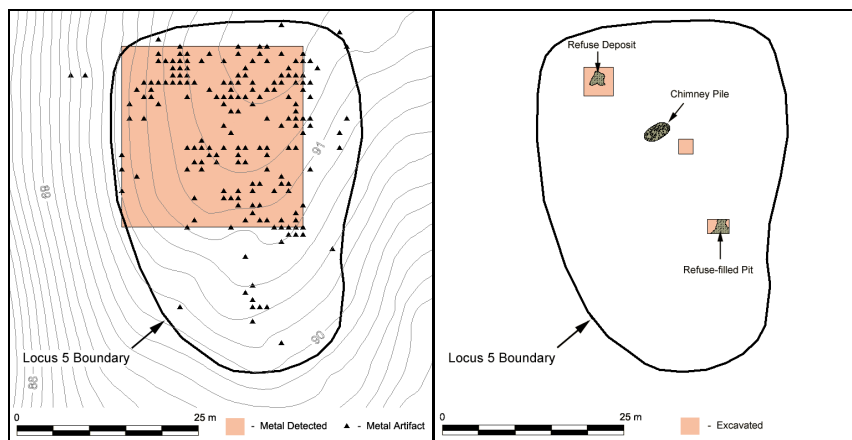


Figure 36. Maps of Locus 5 at New Town showing results of metal detector survey (left) and excavation (right).

cabin which was discovered and disturbed by relic collectors. Subsequent reconnaissance of the site in 1970 defined a small cluster of Catawba pottery exposed within the clearcut area (Davis et. al 1970).

Locus 5 is estimated to cover about 1,400 m<sup>2</sup>, though survey and metal detecting are not yet completed. Metal detector survey of a 625-m<sup>2</sup> area recovered more than 350 artifacts, including wrought nails, buttons, scissors, a nose bangle, thimbles, a knife blade, a spoon, bottle glass, and English and Catawba pottery (Figure 36). Excavations in three small blocks revealed two shallow midden deposits containing ash, large quantities of Catawba pottery, and other artifacts. Nearby was a low mound of dirt from another collapsed chimney. While it was not investigated, auger testing indicates a burned clay hearth surface near the top. More extensive investigations at Locus 5 are planned for the 2005 field season and should permit more precise delineation of the cabin, associated pits, and peripheral middens.

### *Comparison of Cabin Loci*

The two hamlets defined at New Town may correspond to the separate neighborhoods described by Calvin Jones in 1815. Jones indicated that Sally New River and General Jacob Ayers maintained households at some distance from the remainder of New Town, where the Scott, Brown, Kegg, Redhead, and Marsh families resided. Jones also noted that the “New Rivers and Ains houses had floors” while those in the large hamlet had dirt floors. Loci 4 and 5 include evidence of cabins with

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elevated floors that were occupied as late as Jones' visit, and which may correspond to the New River and Ayers occupations. Jones also observed that Ayers and New River were particularly industrious farmers, and Loci 4 and 5 have yielded much more agricultural hardware than the other areas.

Cabin Loci 2 and 3, situated nearly 400 m to the north, apparently had cabins with earthen floors, and probably correspond to the larger hamlet. Large-scale pottery production is clearly represented at these cabin loci; and Jones noted a substantial pottery industry at the larger New Town hamlet, where he observed:

Women making pans – Clay from the river – shape them with their hands and burn them with bark which makes the exposed side a glossy black. A pitcher a quarter of a dollar. Sell pans frequently for the full [measure?] of meal. Saw some sitting on their beds and making pans. [Jones 1815]

Distinguishing and attributing these two hamlets at New Town provides a basis for future analytic comparisons. Sally New River, a one-quarter Catawba métis reared in an English household, was almost certainly more Westernized in outlook and practice than her Catawba neighbors. Contextual and assemblage configurations of the New River and associated Ayers households probably more closely approximate those of their contemporary American neighbors than do the cabin assemblages from the northern hamlet. Analyses of these assemblages will focus on assessments of inter-household variability and comparison with contemporary non-Catawba contexts to determine the scale and direction of economic and perhaps cultural variation among the households of New Town.

## Conclusion

These initial investigations at the Old Town, Bowers, and New Town sites illustrate the richness of the Catawba archaeological record and its potential for addressing a broad range of research issues. The substantial material samples recovered from these sites not only present opportunities to reconstruct Catawba material life and lifeways in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, but are also important reflections of Catawba adaptive strategies and accommodations to the rapidly changing social, political, and economic environments of the late colonial and post-colonial South. Contrary to contemporary accounts, which characterize the Catawbas as an indigent and degraded community, the rich and diverse assemblages recovered from these sites suggest that Catawba families

were avid consumers of commercial goods. At the same time, it is clear that Catawba consumers structured these purchased goods in distinctly non-Western configurations that represent sustained efforts to maintain and project native identities. Substantial intersite and intrasite variation in these material samples reflect not only diachronic trends in Catawba material life, but also indicate appreciable levels of synchronic variation in wealth and Westernization among Catawba households.

Ongoing and planned analyses of late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century material assemblages from Old Town, Bowers, and New Town will focus upon issues concerning: Catawba access to and selection of mass-produced consumer goods; the economic role, scale, and organization of ceramic production for market disposal; and the degree and extent of Catawba resistance, accommodation, and assimilation of Western material lifeways among individual households. With the acquisition of still earlier samples, these research themes can be expanded into a truly diachronic archaeological perspective on Catawba coalescence and ethnogenesis, and the subsequent evolution of Catawba cultural identity in the turbulent centuries after sustained European contact.

### Notes

*Acknowledgments.* The Catawba Project has benefited from the support and assistance of many individuals and institutions. We particularly want to thank the UNC Research Laboratories of Archaeology, the UNC Summer School, the Winthrop University Foundation, Mr. Robert V. Graham, and the National Geographic Society for their continuing support of our fieldwork. Individuals responsible for that support include Drs. Vin Steponaitis and Jim Murphy of UNC and Dr. Tom Moore of Winthrop University. We wish to thank Mr. Lindsay Pettus and Ms. Louise Pettus for sharing their advice and insight into the history of our study area, and we acknowledge Drs. Doug Eckberg and Rick Chacon of the Winthrop Department of Sociology and Anthropology, who have helped foster interest in the local community for the Catawba Project.

We also want to extend our appreciation to Dr. Wenonah Haire, director of the Catawba Cultural Preservation Project, and her capable staff, for their continued interest, support, and counsel as we have undertaken research into the history of their ancestors—the Catawba people.

Fieldwork during 2003 and 2004 was undertaken as an archaeological field school with the participation of 20 students from UNC and Winthrop University. We acknowledge their hard work and recognize the following undergraduate and graduate field supervisors: Jon Marcoux, Rebecca Richman, and Michelle Schohn (2003); and Lance Greene, Theresa McReynolds, Jayur Mehta, Mark Plane, Rebecca Richman, and Dara Slivka (2004).

Finally, we wish to thank the owners of Old Town, New Town, and the Bowers site, who graciously permitted us to conduct our archaeological research on their properties.

*Collections.* All archaeological collections, associated field records, and photographs from the Catawba Project are curated at the Research Laboratories of Archaeology, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

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# **CATAWBA POPULATION DYNAMICS DURING THE EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES**

**by**

**Theresa E. McReynolds**

## **Abstract**

Ethnohistoric documents offer the best available evidence for reconstructing eighteenth and nineteenth-century Catawba demographic history. They suggest that total population declined from A.D. 1700 until about 1850, but then increased again over the next one hundred years. Documentary sources also reveal that while the effects of European-introduced epidemic diseases were among the most significant determinants of Catawba population dynamics throughout the eighteenth century, emigration and other factors may have been more significant during the nineteenth century.

The University of North Carolina's Catawba Project seeks to address a number of topics pertaining to the emergence and development of the modern Catawba Nation. Some of these topics include Catawba coalescence and ethnogenesis, diachronic changes in settlement pattern, the nature of inter- and intracommunity social and political relationships, and population dispersal.

Closely linked to all of these issues, and crucial to their satisfactory resolution, is an understanding of Catawba population history. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, native groups in the Carolina Piedmont experienced significant population decline. This population loss encouraged tribal and ethnic merging, upset cultural norms and eliminated traditional knowledge, altered relationships between humans and their natural environment, and brought about changes in settlement and subsistence practices. Population reduction also transformed kinship networks, undermined political and religious authority, motivated population dispersal, and helped shape oral and other cultural traditions that are an integral part of Catawba identity today.

The ethnohistoric evidence for this population decimation is unequivocal, but it has unfortunately led many scholars to oversimplify the reality of Catawba demographic history. An accurate reconstruction of this history should identify not only episodes of population reduction and collapse, but also periods of recovery and stability.

## CATAWBA POPULATION DYNAMICS

This paper explores the dynamic population history of the Catawba Indians during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Because epidemic disease appears to have had a significant impact on native population levels for much of this period, the principal focus is on the evidence for European-introduced diseases and their effects on Catawba population dynamics.

### **Ethnohistoric Evidence**

The bulk of evidence pertaining to Catawba population and disease comes from ethnohistoric accounts left by English settlers and their colonial governments. These sources are undoubtedly biased and deficient, but archaeological evidence pertaining to Catawba population and disease is at present even more inadequate. Ethnohistoric documents therefore offer the best available evidence for reconstructing Catawba demographic history and inform the reconstruction outlined here.

Still, there are a number of ways in which the available ethnohistoric data are problematic. One glaring deficiency is the lack of complete temporal coverage. For example, while Catawba population levels are documented reasonably well for the 1740s and 1750s (Table 1), there are only one or two estimates for each of the other decades in the eighteenth century (with the exception of the 1730s and 1790s, for which there are no estimates at all). The data for the nineteenth century are similarly patchy (Table 2).

Furthermore, population estimates that are available are not always comparable. Some recorded estimates refer to the total number of men, women, and children, some refer to the number of warriors only, and still others refer to the number of people actually living on the Catawba reservation.

Finally, even estimates purporting to describe the same aspect of Catawba population may not be compatible or accurate. Few authors were actually primary witnesses to the epidemics they recorded, and consequently most population estimates were arrived at through some specific methodology. Yet different authors frequently employed different methodologies. For example, population estimates for 1670 and 1700 (Table 1) are both derived from a warrior count of 1,500, yet they differ by some 2,000–4,000 individuals! Even if the ratio of warriors to total population changed significantly between 1670 and 1700, it is inconceivable that total population could have at the same time increased by a third. Obviously, one of these early population estimates is in error; in reality, both are likely to be problematic.

Table 1. Eighteenth-Century Catawba Warrior Counts and Population Estimates.

Year	Warrior Count	Population Estimate	Source
pre-1700 (1670?)	1,500	6,000 <sup>a</sup>	Adair 1930 [1775]; Mooney 1894
1690	-	4,000	<i>South Carolina Gazette</i> , 3 May 1760:2–3
1700	1,500	8,000–10,000 <sup>a</sup>	Mills 1826
1715	570	1,470	Lesesne 1932; Merrell 1989
1717	700	2,333 <sup>b</sup> 1,750 <sup>c</sup>	Lesesne 1932
1728	400	1,333 <sup>b</sup> 1,000 <sup>c</sup>	Lesesne 1932
1742	500	1,667 <sup>b</sup> 1,250 <sup>c</sup>	Merrell 1982
1743	almost 400	1,333 <sup>b</sup> 1,000 <sup>c</sup>	Adair 1930 [1775]; Mills 1826
1746	300	1,000 <sup>b</sup> 750 <sup>c</sup>	Hudson 1970
1748	300	1,000 <sup>b</sup> 750 <sup>c</sup>	Merrell 1982
1749	300	1,000 <sup>b</sup> 750 <sup>c</sup>	Glen 1951 [1761]
1753	400	1,333 <sup>b</sup> 1,000 <sup>c</sup>	Merrell 1982
1755	240	800 <sup>b</sup> 600 <sup>c</sup>	Merrell 1982
	320	1,067 <sup>b</sup> 800 <sup>c</sup>	Hudson 1970; Merrell 1982
1756	204	680 <sup>b</sup> 510 <sup>c</sup>	Merrell 1982: John Evans Map
1759	300	1,000 <sup>b</sup> 750 <sup>c</sup>	Merrell 1989

## CATAWBA POPULATION DYNAMICS

Table 1 continued.

Year	Warrior Count	Population Estimate	Source
1760	less than 100	333 <sup>b</sup> 250 <sup>c</sup>	<i>South Carolina Gazette</i> , 3 May 1760:2–3
	75 (men)	250 <sup>b</sup> 188 <sup>c</sup>	Brown 1966
	60 or less (men)	200 <sup>b</sup> 150 <sup>c</sup>	Richardson 1970 [1760]
1768		500	Mooney 1894
1775		400	Swanton 1946
early 1780s	60–70	200–233 <sup>b</sup> 150–175 <sup>c</sup>	Smyth 1784

*Note:* Prior to the nineteenth century, documents tend to record only the number of warriors. Most of the total population estimates given in Table 1 are therefore derived from recorded warrior counts.

Two values are provided for all estimates derived by the author. The lower estimated value is based on the assumption that Catawba warriors accounted for 30 percent of the total population, while the higher estimated value assumes warriors accounted for 40 percent of the total population. These assumptions are based on a 1715 census (summarized in Lesesne 1932) that indicates warriors accounted for 39 percent of total Catawba population, 27 percent of total Cheraw population, and 34 percent of total Waccamaw population. These 1715 census figures are of course problematic for estimating population in other years, in that the ratio of warriors to total population undoubtedly fluctuated throughout the eighteenth century as a result of epidemic disease and age-specific mortality.

<sup>a</sup>indicates derived population estimate (in original source).

<sup>b</sup>indicates population estimate derived by the author, assuming that warriors account for 30 percent of total population.

<sup>c</sup>indicates population estimate derived by the author, assuming that warriors account for 40 percent of total population.

Table 2. Nineteenth-Century Catawba Warrior Counts and Population Estimates.

Year	Warrior Count	Population Estimate	Source
1826	less than 50	110	Mills 1826
1830s		about 100 (on reservation)	Merrell 1989
1839	12 men	88 (on reservation)	Brown 1966; Hudson 1970
1850	20 men	110 (76 in N.C., 34 in S.C.)	Hudson 1970
1856		50 (in S.C.)	Hudson 1970
1858		70 (on reservation)	<i>Fort Mill Times</i> , 12 Feb 1914:1
	12 men	88 (on reservation)	Reed 1952
1859		70–75	Ivy 1859
1861		75–80	Patton 1861
1867		approx. 70	Brown 1966
1870		about 80 (on reservation)	Brown 1966
1875		70 (in S.C.)	Latham 1875
1879		barely 100	Hudson 1970
1881		85 (on reservation)	Brown 1966; Hudson 1970
		40 (in N.C.)	Hudson 1970
1886		60	Brown 1966
1893		about 80	Brown 1966; Hudson 1970

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Despite these and other deficiencies, a cautious examination of the available ethnohistoric population estimates can reveal general demographic trends. The remainder of this paper describes and attempts to explain some of these trends.

### Population Trends

Across much of native North America, population levels declined from earliest historical times through about 1890 and then began to increase again after World War II (Dobyns 1983:3–4). The ethnohistoric record indicates that Catawba population history was no exception to this general trend.

Figure 1 illustrates changes in the number of Catawbas living in ancestral territory from 1670 to 1881<sup>1</sup>. Despite problems associated with the earliest and derived population estimates, the graph suggests that the Catawbas experienced massive population reduction between 1700 and 1760. Figure 2 corroborates this trend but avoids the problems associated with derived population estimates by showing only warrior counts for the period from 1700 to 1858. Although it is impossible to determine whether population decline was abrupt or steady, this graph suggests that Catawba military strength decreased markedly between 1700 and 1720, 1720 and 1730, 1730 and 1750, and 1750 and 1760. Military strength (and presumably total population) appears to have reached an all-time low around the middle of the nineteenth century.

Figure 3 displays the number of individuals claiming ethnic affiliation with the Catawba Nation from 1670 to 2002. It thus takes into account Catawbas living on and off of the reservation. This figure suggests that population increased slowly during the second half of the nineteenth century until about 1950, at which time the increase became more rapid.

### Epidemic Disease and the Catawbas

Several of the trends described above begin to make sense in light of the ethnohistoric evidence for European-introduced infectious diseases and their effects. While smallpox appears to have been the deadliest disease introduced to the Americas by Europeans, measles, influenza, and a few others also took devastating tolls on indigenous populations. A lack of immunity to these new diseases meant that large segments of native populations likely fell ill at the same time. Mortality may have reached in excess of 30 percent in such situations of virgin soil epidemics (Ramenofsky 1987:4), especially when multiple diseases struck



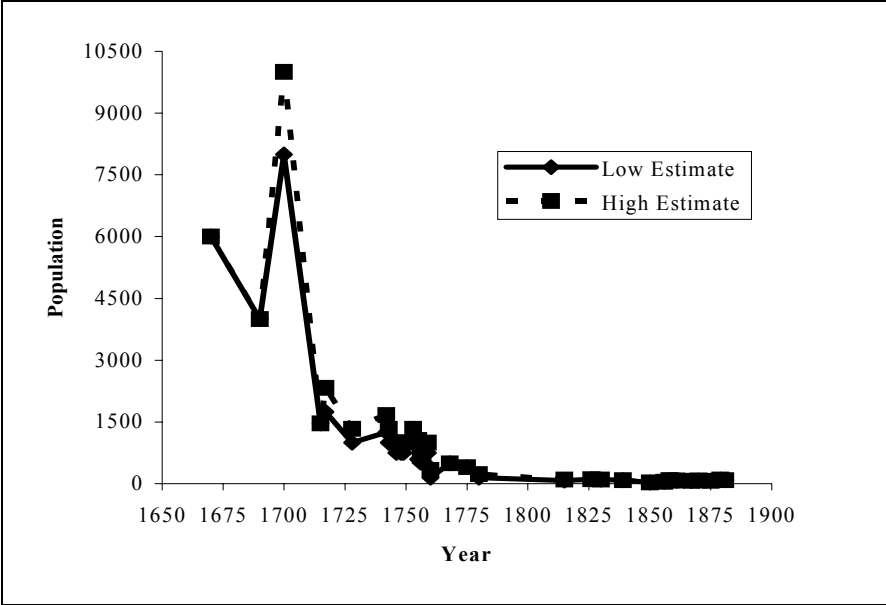


Figure 1. Population estimates of Catawbas in ancestral territory, A.D. 1670-1881.

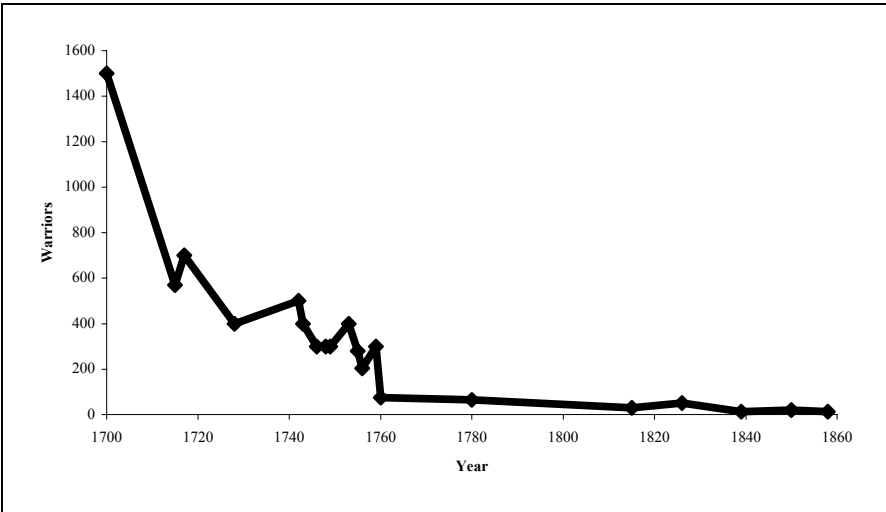


Figure 2. Catawba warrior counts, A.D. 1700-1858.

## CATAWBA POPULATION DYNAMICS

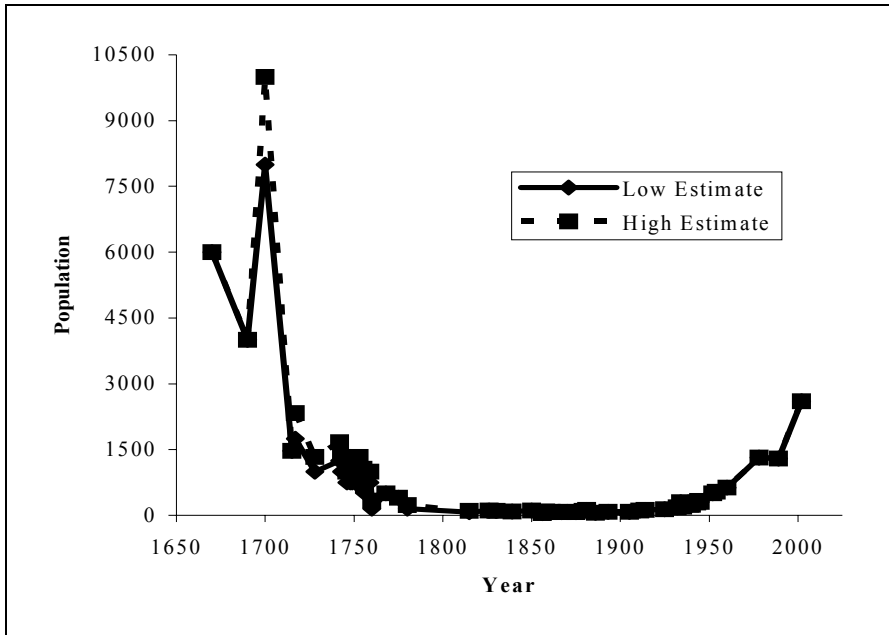


Figure 3. Estimates of total Catawba population, A.D. 1670–2002.

populations simultaneously or sequentially. Even endemic diseases<sup>2</sup> may have brought about life-threatening complications if they occurred in conjunction with another disease in epidemic stage (Crosby 1994).

Yet it was the frequency with which epidemics recurred that probably dealt the biggest blow to many native groups. Initial epidemics may have resulted in the highest levels of mortality and conferred permanent immunity for survivors (Ramenofsky 1987), but subsequent infections were almost as deadly when enough time had lapsed since the previous exposure for a new generation to become susceptible (Crosby 1994). In the case of smallpox, for example, re-exposure during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries may have been infrequent enough that most exposures resulted in major epidemics (Livingood and Ricketts 2001).

Furthermore, mortality from epidemic disease is age-specific, with children and elderly individuals experiencing the highest death rates. Consequently, the ratio of “prime” adults to total population tends to be higher following episodes of disease. In an agent-based simulation performed by Livingood and Ricketts (2001), the proportion of prime adults was significantly higher immediately following a smallpox epidemic and remained elevated for more than a decade. As these adults

Table 3. Documented Epidemics Afflicting the Catawba Nation.

Year	Disease	Source
1718	Unknown	Spotswood [1718] in Merrell 1989
1738	Smallpox	<i>South Carolina Gazette</i> , 15 Dec 1759:1
1749	Unknown	Lipscomb 1983
1751	Unknown	Three Nations to the Catawbias, Nov 23, 1751
1753	Unknown	Steel 1970 [1753]
1759	Smallpox	<i>South Carolina Gazette</i> , 15 Dec 1759:1
1775	Smallpox	<i>Fort Mill Times</i> , 18 Jun 1925:1
1918	Influenza	<i>Evening Herald</i> , 9 Oct 1918a:3, 10 Oct 1918b:3, 12 Oct 1918c:1, 14 Oct 1918d:2, 15 Oct 1918e:4; <i>Fort Mill Times</i> , 24 Oct 1918:3; <i>Record</i> , 7 Oct 1918:5, 15 Jan 1920:7
1928	Measles	Sky Eagle 1928a, 1928b, 1928c, 1928d, 1928e

aged past their prime, however, the population experienced a shortage of prime adults relative to children and post-prime adults (Livingood and Ricketts 2001:7). In addition to its obvious implications regarding the long-term effects of epidemic disease on demographic balance and labor availability, this simulated result highlights the dangers inherent in basing population estimates on warrior counts.

### *Documented Epidemics*

The first epidemic known to have definitely affected the Catawbias broke out in 1718 (Table 3). The specific nature of this “wave of contagion” remains a mystery, but its effects on Catawba population did not go unnoticed. Virginia Lieutenant Governor Alexander Spotswood wrote that “the Cattawbaues...are of late become much lessen’d, by a remarkable dispensation of Providence in rendring their women for the most part barren” (Merrell 1989:97).

The contagion of 1718 was indeed a boon for the English, paving the way for settlers to begin encroaching upon Catawba territory in the 1730s. As a consequence, literate Englishmen were around to record the effects of

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subsequent epidemics that afflicted the Catawbas in 1738, 1749, 1751, 1753, 1759/1760, and 1775.

Smallpox spread from Charlestown (Charleston) to the Catawbas in 1738, and Merrell (1989) suggests that half (or more) of the population may have succumbed to the disease. Another “Sickness” may have descended upon the Nation eleven years later. Writing in 1753, South Carolina Governor James Glen offered the following record of a 1749 epidemic:

the Catawbas who also came to that Meeting [in Charlestown in 1749] were attacked by their Enemy in our Settlements, but the Sickness which attacked them here, proved their greatest Enemy and carried off the King [Young Warrior] and nineteen of the Head Men, so that there was but one Head Man of the whole Nation left alive: The present King [Hagler] who was hunting and did not come down. [Lipscomb 1983:215]

There remains some uncertainty as to just how severely this “Sickness” affected the rest of the Catawba Nation, however.

Two additional epidemics may have struck the Catawbas in 1751 and 1753, but both are poorly documented. Evidence for the first epidemic comes from a letter dated November 23, 1751 and penned by headmen of the Oneida, Tuscarora, and Mohawk nations. These headmen regretted to hear of the “Sickness [that] has taken hold of [the Catawba] Nation” and which had prevented its members from meeting with them at Albany earlier that fall (Three Nations to the Catawbas, November 23, 1751). This “Sickness” may have exacerbated the demographic effects of the 1749 epidemic, for in 1752 King Hagler implored Governor Glen to invite the Peedee Indians to settle amongst the Catawbas “and make but one Nation, which will be a great Addition of Strength to us” (Letter from Catawba King to Governor Glen, November 21, 1752).

A letter written by Robert Steel on July 23, 1753 provides the sole indication that some sort of epidemic may have occurred in that year. In the letter, Steel informed Governor Glen that the French had recently killed 14 Catawbas. He also wrote that the Indians’ reliance upon blackberries “brought a Flux on them that has cut off a great many of them, and are still dying of it daily” (Steel 1970 [1753]:454).

Compared to the aforementioned epidemics, the smallpox outbreak of 1759–1760 is very well documented. Infected warriors returning from the French and Indian War introduced the disease (Milligen 1951 [1763]), and King Hagler first informed South Carolina Governor Lyttelton of this “Bad Disorder amongst Us” in early October of 1759 (Merrell 1982:517). By mid-December, the Charlestown-based *South Carolina Gazette* reported

that “[i]t is pretty certain, that the Small-Pox has lately raged with great Violence among the *Catawba Indians*, and that it has carried off near one half of that Nation...” (*South Carolina Gazette*, 15 December 1759:1). The disease persisted into 1760<sup>3</sup>, resulting in “a terrible Havack” (Merrell 1982:517) and prompting able-bodied Indians to desert the towns and head for the woods (Merrell 1989). On February 26, 1760, Richard Richardson wrote to inform Governor Lyttelton that “...I have seen King Haigler this Day...His Answer is that he had not been at his Nation since the Small Pox, that he does not know what People he has alive...I hear their Number of Men does not exceed sixty...” (Richardson 1970 [1760]:501–502). Some estimates indicate that population fell by two-thirds (Brown 1966) or even three-fourths (*Yorkville Enquirer*, 7 August 1879) before the epidemic finally petered out.

Smallpox appears to have broken out again fifteen years later. Sometime between July and October of 1775, members of a Catawba delegation caught “the fever” on their return from a meeting in which they had agreed to aid the colonists in their struggle against the British (Brown 1966; Kirkland and Kennedy 1905). The fever may have reached epidemic proportions upon the delegation’s homecoming, for many years later an article in the *Fort Mill Times* stated that

About the beginning of the Revolutionary war, the tribe suffered from a severe epidemic of smallpox...From its virulent type and their malpractice in treating it, hundreds of them are said to have fallen victims of the plague [*Fort Mill Times*, 18 June 1925:1].

Surprisingly, no epidemics were reported among the Catawbans during the nineteenth century, but influenza and measles took their tolls on the nation in 1918 and 1928, respectively.

## Discussion

Careful examination of Figures 1, 2, and 3 reveals that documented epidemics do not adequately explain Catawba population dynamics during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Specifically, Catawba population estimates and eighteenth-century epidemic events do not correlate in any straightforward manner. Despite an apparent population spike at 1717 (Figures 1 and 2), the general trend toward population decline that seems to characterize the period between 1715 and 1728 is at least compatible with the theory of a 1718 epidemic. The evidence for the 1738 smallpox epidemic is somewhat more ambiguous, however. There does appear to be decline between 1728 and 1746, but the estimates reported for 1742 and

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1743 (Table 1) make it difficult to clearly associate this general decline with a specific event in 1738. Evidence for the 1749 and 1751 epidemics does not show up at all in the population estimates; on the contrary, population appears to rise between 1749 and 1753.

In contrast, the 1753 epidemic appears to be reflected in the population decline between 1753 and 1756. Likewise, population estimates clearly reflect the 1759 smallpox epidemic: the steep drop in population that occurred between 1759 and 1760 (Figure 2) represents a two-thirds decrease. Finally, the effects of the 1775 epidemic are apparent in the 50 percent drop in population that occurred between 1775 and the early 1780s (Figures 1 and 3).

At the same time, evidence of nineteenth-century population recovery should be apparent if there were indeed no epidemics on the reservation between 1775 and 1918. That we do not see such evidence suggests that either not all epidemics are ethnohistorically documented or disease was not the only factor influencing Catawba population. Although the Catawbas undoubtedly experienced outbreaks of disease for which no record survives, the remainder of this paper focuses on other factors such as warfare, migration, and general lifestyle that appear to have also influenced Catawba population during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

### **Non-Disease Factors Affecting Catawba Population**

Warfare with the Iroquois and other native groups during the eighteenth century resulted in the death or imprisonment of many Catawba warriors. In some cases it also affected the welfare of women and children, as when devastating Iroquois attacks on Catawba towns in 1715 and 1716 left all of the Indians close to starvation (Merrell 1989). When warfare between the Catawbas and Iroquois escalated in the 1730s and 1740s (Brown 1966; Merrell 1989), the Catawbas were especially vulnerable to attacks, having already been devastated by disease in 1718 and 1738. The Nation made peace with the Iroquois in 1751, but other groups continued to threaten the Catawbas, who according to Mooney (1894:72) “were now so far reduced that they could make little effectual resistance.”

The exact number of Catawbas slain or imprisoned during the eighteenth century remains a mystery, but Merrell (1982) suggests that at least 221 were killed and 95 captured. The population would have been further reduced as small groups left the Nation to find security among the colonists.



At the same time, the incessant threat from warfare in the early to mid-eighteenth century also helped bolster the Nation's numbers by forcing smaller tribes already weak from disease to seek protection from the more powerful Catawbas. South Carolina officials and the Catawbas themselves further encouraged this amalgamation through active recruitment of vulnerable groups (Merrell 1982, 1989). Among those who incorporated with the Catawbas after 1700 were members of the Keyauwee, Sara, Eno, Santee, Wateree, Saponi, Cheraw, Peedee, Waccamaw, Congaree, Natchez, Yamasee, and Saxapahaw tribes (Merrell 1989; Mooney 1894).

During the nineteenth century, the tables turned and the Catawbas became the ones to leave their ancestral territory and merge with other still-powerful groups. In 1840 all but two or three families left the reservation and moved in with the Eastern Cherokees (Brown 1966; Hudson 1970). As would be expected, this arrangement between former enemies did not endure, and beginning in 1848 many of the Catawba families returned to South Carolina or went to be with the Choctaws in western Arkansas. Brown (1966) reports that a group of 257 Catawbas were living among the Choctaws and Creeks in western Arkansas and present-day Oklahoma in 1895.

Another series of migration events occurred following widespread adoption of the Mormon religion in the late nineteenth century. During the 1880s, a number of Catawba families relocated to Utah, Colorado, and New Mexico, while others were persuaded to leave the reservation for areas of South Carolina with less anti-Mormon sentiment (Brown 1966; Hudson 1970).

When this evidence for warfare and migration is considered in conjunction with the documented population estimates and apparent demographic trends, the results are once again ambiguous. The available population estimates do not reflect the intense warfare of the mid-eighteenth century. When the evidence for eighteenth-century immigration is considered, however, it is tempting to speculate that some of the apparent increases in population (i.e., between 1715 and 1717, 1728 and 1742, 1749 and 1753, and 1756 and 1759 [Figure 2]) reflect the influx of new warriors from immigrant tribes. At present this hypothesis can be neither substantiated nor dismissed, but additional research could shed light on the matter.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, the demographic effects of the 1840 migration seem to be reflected by the slight decline in population on the reservation between 1839 and 1850 (Figure 1). In addition, the drop of almost 30 percent between 1881 and 1886 (when population fell from 85 to 60; Table 2) could correlate with the 1884 migration to Utah.

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Finally, the influences of alcohol and abortion on Catawba population must not be overlooked. Early accounts of the causes of Catawba population decline frequently cite liquor alongside disease and warfare (e.g., Lawson 1937 [1714]; Mills 1826; *South Carolina Gazette*, 3 May 1760). Lawson (1714) also mentions “an Art to destroy the Conception” possessed by the Indians of the Carolinas, and Smyth (1968 [1784]) suggests that the “medicinal simples” used to induce abortion in young, unmarried women often led to later fertility problems.

### Conclusions

In summary, ethnohistoric documents suggest that, on the whole, Catawba population declined from A.D. 1700 until about 1850, but then increased again over the next one hundred years. While the effects of European-introduced epidemic diseases appear to have been among the most significant determinants of Catawba population dynamics throughout the eighteenth century, emigration and other factors appear to have been more significant during the nineteenth century.

Obviously, the full complexity of Catawba demographic history is only just beginning to emerge from the ethnohistoric data. Fortunately, more data should be forthcoming as a result of further study under the Catawba Project. Additional ethnohistoric research will undoubtedly turn up significant new information that will confirm, refute, alter, or augment the tentative conclusions offered in this paper.

However, the most significant new data pertaining to Catawba population and disease is likely to come from the identification and evaluation of non-documentary evidence contained in the archaeological record. Future research should therefore also consider archaeological evidence that might reveal undocumented processes and their demographic effects on the Catawba people.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> “Ancestral territory” refers to the South Carolina interior prior to 1760 and the Catawba reservation thereafter.

<sup>2</sup> Diseases and other ailments found in the Americas prior to contact with Europeans included Chagas’s disease, Carrion’s disease, syphilis, tuberculosis, parasites, and anemia (Crosby 1994; Krech 1999; Mann 2002).

<sup>3</sup> Additional strains of smallpox may have been introduced in 1760 by traders or goods coming from Charlestown, where the disease had broken out in January of that year (Krebsbach 1996).

<sup>4</sup> Note that if the seemingly high estimate for 1717 does indeed reflect immigration, then the demographic evidence for the epidemic of 1718 becomes much more pronounced.

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# **CATAWBA ETHNICITY: IDENTITY AND ADAPTATION ON THE ENGLISH COLONIAL LANDSCAPE**

by

**Mark R. Plane**

## **Abstract**

Historians have described the Catawba Indians as possessing a distinctive cultural identity throughout the colonial and federal periods. Working from theory on ethnicity and cultural transmission, this paper combines documentary and archaeological evidence in an effort to gain a clearer picture of how the Catawba maintained their identity despite intense economic and cultural pressure from Anglo-American settlers.

## **Introduction**

This paper examines cultural transmission between Anglo-Americans and Catawba Indians in South Carolina during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Documentary and archaeological evidence demonstrate that the Catawba Indians adopted a wide variety of Anglo-American material goods as well as social and economic practices, including market trading in animal hides and traditionally manufactured Catawba pottery (Baker 1972; Merrell 1989).

My analyses focus on the tensions between agency and acculturation within colonial contexts (e.g., Bhabha 1997; Lightfoot 1995). I focus on defining ethnicity and exploring how societies maintain ethnic boundaries despite pressures toward acculturation (Barth 1969). In particular, I examine Catawba and English-made ceramics recovered from pit features excavated at the Catawba settlements of Old Town (ca. 1770–1780) and New Town (ca. 1800–1818). I also examine artifacts related to personal adornment. Although significant quantities of European ceramics and other artifacts superficially suggest a process of acculturation, when viewed through theoretical perspectives on ethnicity, these artifacts suggest that the Catawba were actively engaged in constructing and maintaining a distinctive identity for themselves.

### **Theoretical Perspectives on Ethnicity**

Homi Bhabha (1997:153) describes mimicry as “one of the most elusive and effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge.” In his analysis, colonial regimes sought recognizable and controllable colonial subjects through the production of so-called “mimic men.” In serving as teachers, soldiers, translators, and bureaucrats, European colonial subjects were induced to adopt many elements of European cultural identities (Bhabha 1997:152–155; McClintock 1995).

Catawba Indians, through their roles as deerskin traders and itinerant potters, were subject to considerable British influence throughout the eighteenth century. During this time, the Catawba acquired many aspects of British culture and became increasingly dependent upon the British for their everyday material needs. Nonetheless, ethnohistorians argue that Catawba’s maintained a distinct cultural identity during the colonial era (Brown 1966; Hudson 1970; Merrell 1989).

While Bhabha’s (1997) work demonstrates the importance of approaching acculturation as a conscious and effective strategy of European colonial domination, such research must be approached with theoretical and methodological caution. Researchers such as Kent Lightfoot (1995:206) have forcefully criticized acculturation studies in which archaeologists have employed simplistic understandings of cultural transmission that deny the agency of colonial subjects and ignore their efforts at resistance or strategic engagement with European colonial powers.

### **Ethnicity**

Race and ethnicity are distinct social constructs. In this discussion, race is considered an imposed, etic category, whereas ethnicity is considered a self-imposed, emic category (Orser 2004:79–81). Ethnicity provides individuals with ascriptive and exclusive membership to a cultural identity group. Individuals form and belong to ethnic groups to the extent that they use ethnic identities as means of categorizing themselves and as bases for interactions with others (Barth 1969; Jones 1997; Orser 2004). Ethnic identities are based upon specific cultural characteristics. Within an ethnic group, some characteristics are used by individuals as markers of ethnic differences, while others may be ignored (Barth 1969:14). The composition of ethnic groups can assume many forms, including groups of individuals who come to share traditions but

may nevertheless have diverse geopolitical origins (Orser 2004:79). Moreover, ethnicity is not static, and the cultural features of the group's members and its organizational form may change over the course of time (Barth 1969:14).

The concept of ascriptive and exclusive groups clearly depends on the maintenance of cultural boundaries between ethnic groups (Barth 1969:9–10, 24–25). However, social relations across ethnic boundaries do not necessarily lead to the erasure of these boundaries through change and acculturation; cultural differences can persist despite considerable inter-ethnic contact (Barth 1969:9–10). Indeed, increasing cultural similarities between ethnic groups do not necessarily decrease the social relevance of their ethnic identities (Barth 1969:32–33).

### **Ethnic Boundaries and Cultural Translation**

If one considers culture as a form of information that is used and transmitted by actors in the world (Rosenburg 1994), the concept of translation is useful to an investigation of cultural transmission and change among ethnic groups. For example, in Leland Ferguson's (1992:xlii) linguistic model of Creole ethnogenesis, material things are part of the lexicon of culture while their creation, use, and meaning are part of the underlying structure or cultural grammar. Within this model, the flow of cultural information across an ethnic boundary, rather than a straightforward process of acculturation, may be likened to linguistic translation, in which new elements are understood and used within a pre-existing cultural grammar.

Archaeologists studying the adoption of European goods and cultigens by American Indians have found that new items were often selectively integrated into pre-existing institutions and were initially supplements to, rather than outright replacements for, analogous, traditional items (Gremillion 1993:15–16; Mason 1963:78; Ward and Davis 1988:122). Selective integration, or translation, of new artifacts as analogues to traditional items may reflect the extent to which cultural elements are interlinked in practice and meaning. Scott Ortman's (2000:637–640) research on metaphor and material culture suggests that tightly interlinked sets of cultural elements are not easily infiltrated by innovations that contradict the meanings and relationships contained within the set. Viewed in this theoretical light, selective integration may represent novelty that is consistent with practices, meanings, and relationships contained within a pre-existing suite of cultural elements.

Archaeological excavations of Catawba households dating to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries have yielded rich assemblages of European artifacts, demonstrating that the Catawba had adopted significant elements of Anglo-American architecture, technology, foodways, and modes of dress (Davis and Riggs, this volume). However, rather than being evidence of an unambiguous process of acculturation, ceramic and ornamental assemblages suggest that the Catawba were often purposefully selecting and modifying European artifact forms, thus rendering them useful and meaningful on their own terms.

### **Catawba Economic Adaptations**

One key to the Catawba's survival throughout the colonial era and into the Federal period was the creation of strategic alliances with Europeans. During the height of the deerskin trade in the early eighteenth century, colonial government officials and backcountry traders were the most important European allies.

Archaeological evidence suggests that white-tailed deer was the single most important mammal species in the Mississippian diet at the time of European arrival (Muller 1997:229–231). Deerskins were an important tribute item throughout the Southeast, and European observers also remarked on Piedmont Indians storing surplus deer hides for future use or for exchange with peoples near the coast (Merrell 1989:32). Thus, when European traders arrived in the Piedmont, they found a native populace well prepared to participate in the European leather market (Merrell 1989:35–36).

### **European Trade Goods and Indian Culture**

The deerskin trade had a profound impact upon Indian peoples. As the colonial era wore on, the steady flow of European goods into Indian communities transformed their societies. Through the displacement of native technologies and related knowledge, Indians became commodity consumers, largely dependent on trade for their material existence; through participation in this trade, many aspects of daily life became solidly enmeshed within colonial politics and capitalist economics (Mason 1963; Hudson 1970; Merrell 1989). Nonetheless, certain of the goods obtained through the deerskin trade provide excellent examples of the cultural translation process through which Indians maintained ethnic identities.

Archaeologists have found evidence of widespread domestic production of shell ornaments throughout the eastern United States (Ceci

1982:98; Muller 1997:343). While shell beads were important prestige goods (i.e., symbols of rank and status in Mississippian societies), they appear to have been widely used and shared, and are found on farmsteads and small sites as well as in elite contexts (Muller 1997:391). European observers remarked that shell beads functioned not only as status symbols, but also as a medium of exchange and as an important means of symbolic communication (Braund 1993:123–124). Indeed, the importance and ubiquity of shell beads in so many Native American societies largely explains the massive historic trade in glass beads and metal ornaments such as brass bells. These European trade goods were readily incorporated into widespread, pre-existing native systems of meaning and practice.

### **Colono Ware and the Catawba Ceramic Trade**

“Colono-Indian” pottery, or “colono-ware,” has been recovered on a wide variety of archaeological sites across the southeastern United States (Ferguson 1992:22–23). Its manufacture has been linked not only to various Indian sources, but also to African and European folk traditions (see for example Ferguson 1992; Heite 2002).

Documentary sources from the Colonial and Federal periods describe the Catawba making utilitarian ceramics for trade with white settlers in the early 1770s, with Catawba women selling pottery from house to house (Baker 1972:11, 13; Merrell 1989:210–211). Early nineteenth-century observers remarked on Catawba women trading pottery as far away as Charleston, where they would dig clay, build, and fire the pottery they intended to sell (Hudson 1970:61; Merrell 1989:230). Catawbas were also observed making pottery for sale on plantations while en route to Charleston—pottery which planters provided to their African slaves (Ferguson 1992:90).

Analyses of the ceramics excavated Catawba Old Town (c. 1770–1780) and New Town (c. 1800–1818) suggest that Catawba wares were primarily replicas of English wares such as milk pans, soup plates, and foot-ringed teacups and bowls. The majority of these wares were highly burnished and smother-fired to a jet-black color, usually on the inside of the vessel. The incorporation of substantial quantities of imported English tablewares in Catawba households excavated at New Town suggest that Catawba replicas of English wares had become a significant part of Catawba foodways.

### **Changing Foodways in Colonial Anglo-America**

Foodways include not only the particular foods eaten within a given society, but also the means through which those foods are obtained, stored, prepared, served, and consumed. Foodways are of anthropological interest insofar as they provide important insights into ethnic identity and social relations (Deetz 1977; Douglas and Isherwood 1979; Goody 1982; Sinopoli 1991; Welch and Scarry 1995).

Working from both archaeological and archival evidence, researchers have proposed that prior to the mid-eighteenth century, Anglo-American life was less differentiated than what most modern Americans are familiar with. For example, activities such as sleeping and eating tended to occur in a single room rather in specialized areas of the house (Deetz 1977; Leone et al. 1987:287–288).

Foodways in particular were characterized by corporate practices. Food was brought to the table in a large wooden or ceramic bowl or platter. Depending on the dish being served, it was either eaten directly with hands or spoons, or ladled onto large wooden trays, or trenchers, that were often shared by two or more “trencher mates” (Anderson 1971:237–240).

By the mid-eighteenth century, such communal lifeways were rapidly giving way to a more individual order. As evidence for this shift, Deetz (1977:58–59) cites the disappearance of trenchers from probate inventories and the proliferation of matching plates, cups, and saucers in archaeological sites and probate inventories in colonial New England dating to the 1760s and later.

According to Deetz (1977:122–124), this change in tablewares is related to a shift in the foods consumed. Until the mid-eighteenth century, English cuisine was characterized by stews, or pottages (Anderson 1971:243–248). However, by the late eighteenth century, meals comprised of separate components served on dinner plates were commonplace in the Anglo world (Ferguson 1992:97–98). The widespread shift from liquid stews and pottages to portioned meals was accompanied by the introduction of the fork and knife as eating utensils (Deetz 1977:122; Ferguson 1992:97–98).

### **The Segmentation and Standardization of Everyday Life**

In their examination of archaeological and archival evidence from Annapolis, Maryland, Leone et al. (1987:287–289) documented increasing

variation of Anglo-American ceramic assemblages between the early eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This increasing variability is due primarily to the increasing variety of serving vessels with specialized functions. At the same time, ceramic assemblages were increasingly composed of matched sets of dishes.

Leone et al. (Leone et al. 1987:288) argue that foodways came to reflect economic and social divisions between individuals in Anglo-American society, and that with the rise of mercantile capitalism during the eighteenth century, segmentation of tasks, standardization of mass-produced products, and standardization of productive behavior came to pervade everyday life.

Thus, in regard to foodways, corporate modes of serving and consumption were replaced with practices that separated people from one another while dining. This segmentation of people was accompanied by the segmentation of food by courses and by types through the use of specialized serving vessels (Leone et al. 1987:288; Weatherhill 1993:215–216; Goodwin 1999:120–122).

### **Anglo-American Foodways in the South Carolina Backcountry**

Archaeological excavation of late eighteenth-century British settlements in the South Carolina backcountry confirm that the patterns documented in New England and the Mid-Atlantic occurred in the Southeast as well (Groover 1992; Brooks et al. 2000). Mark Groover, in his work at the Thomas Howell site, documented cultural changes described by Deetz (1977) and Leone et al. (1987:288).

Located in central South Carolina, the Thomas Howell site was occupied from about 1740 until 1820. Based on examination of a 1760 probate inventory, Groover (1992:74–76) established that plates, forks, and knives were part of the Howell family's standard serving assemblage from at least 1760 onward. Groover cites the appearance of matching creamware and porcelain dining sets in a 1784 probate inventory as evidence for segmentation and standardization at the Howell site. Corroborating archaeological evidence reveals that the percentage of flatwares used at the site increased significantly, from 12% in contexts dated between 1740 and 1775, to 64% in contexts dating between 1775 and 1820 (Table 1; Groover 1992:134–135).



Table 1. Distribution of Serving Wares from the Thomas Howell Site.

Period	Flatware	Hollow Ware	Total
1740–1775	12%	88%	100%
1775–1820	64%	36%	100%

Data from Groover (1992).

### Comparative Perspectives on Anglo-American and Southeastern Indian Foodways

In his survey of Indian foodways in southeastern North America, David Hally (1986:268–272) makes three points that are of particular relevance to this study:

1. *Ethnohistoric and archaeological evidence depict great uniformity in foodways among Indians throughout the southeastern United States.*
2. *Indians apparently seldom used individual eating vessels.* Rather, most foods seem to have been served in large vessels from which people ate in turn using their fingers or large spoons or ladles.
3. *Prepared food staples were primarily liquid in consistency, such as soup, or stews.*

When viewed in terms of Hally's archaeological and ethnohistoric research, the two key ways in which late eighteenth and nineteenth-century Anglo-American foodways differed from those documented among southeastern Indian societies are: (1) an emphasis on individual rather than corporate practices; and (2) the presence of a greater variety of serving vessels with specialized functions.

### Study Setting: Catawba Old Town and New Town

In the summer of 2003, the Research Laboratories of Archaeology at UNC-Chapel Hill conducted excavations at two recently discovered Catawba town sites, Old Town (SoC 634) and New Town (SoC 632), located in northern Lancaster County, South Carolina. Documentary sources place the occupation of Old Town between 1770 and 1780, and the occupation of New Town between 1800 and 1818. Excavation of several



Figure 1. Artifacts from Feature 2 at Catawba Old Town: brass tinklers, silver bangles, cuff-links, and glass beads (left); and fragments of Catawba-made octagonal soup plates (right).

cabin sites, each representing a separate household, yielded a wide variety of artifacts, including considerable quantities of both Catawba and English-made ceramics.

The materials examined in this study were recovered primarily from large pit features, each containing a wide variety of artifacts. The first to be considered is Feature 2, a cabin cellar pit located at Catawba Old Town (occupied 1770–1780). This feature was the most spectacular of those excavated at either town site; in addition to Catawba and English ceramics, bottle glass, and a variety of metal objects, it also contained numerous personal items, including coins, small silver and brass ornaments, a pair of cuff links, and over 1,700 glass beads (Figure 1).

At Old Town, the extremely small quantity of English ceramics found suggests that the Catawba relied almost entirely on their own ceramic industry to satisfy their household needs. Nevertheless, most of the Catawba ceramics recovered from Feature 2 appear to be replicas of English wares.

Next to be considered are three features at Catawba New Town (occupied 1800–1818). Feature 1 is a cabin cellar pit located at New Town's Locus 2. It contained substantial quantities of both Catawba and English ceramics, as well as bottle glass and a variety of metal objects, including knives, a fork and spoon, and the lid of an iron cooking pot. It also contained numerous personal items, including glass beads, small silver and brass ornaments, and brass and pewter buttons.

The last to be examined are Features 4, 6, and 9, located at New Town's Locus 3. Features 4 and 6 are shallow, rectangular pits with sloping sides; they each contained a range of artifacts similar to that

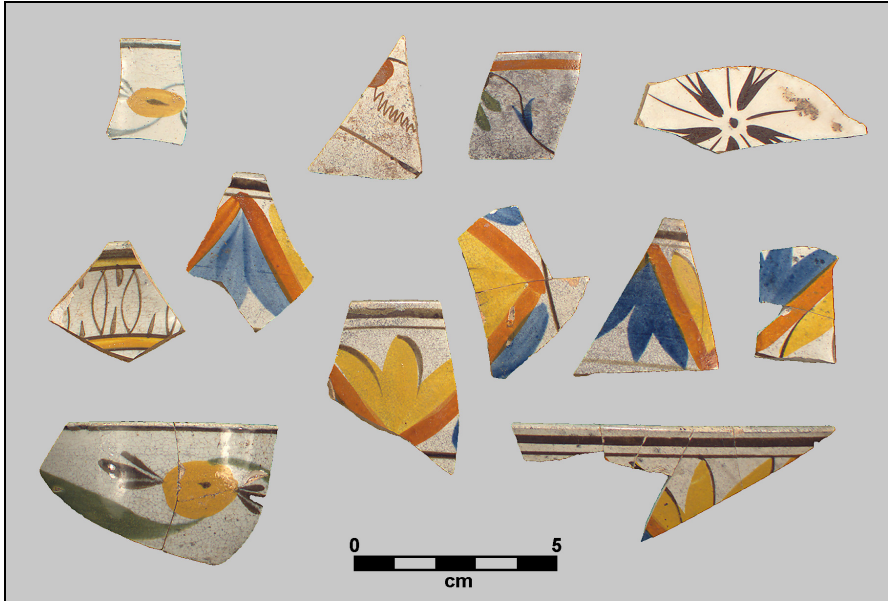


Figure 2. Tablewares from Locus 3 at New Town: English hand-painted pearlware (top); and Catawba pottery (bottom). Note the foot-rings on Catawba sherds (top and middle rows).

described for Feature 1, including relatively large quantities of both Catawba and English tablewares (Figure 2). Feature 9 was a filled-in stump hole that contained large sections of two broken Catawba vessels.

### **Ethnic Markers and Cultural Translation in Catawba Society**

In March of 1791, the Reverend Thomas Coke visited the Catawba. Of his meeting with the Catawba's chief, he wrote:

Their general [i.e., chief, named New River], who is a tall, grave, old man...round his neck he wore a narrow piece...of leather...and was adorned with a great variety of bits of silver. He also had a silver breastplate. Almost all the men and women wore silver nose-rings, hanging from the middle gristle of the nose; and some of them had little silver hearts hanging from the rings.  
[quoted in Brown 1966:288]

Analyses of materials excavated from New Town and Old Town amply demonstrate the process of cultural translation. For instance, the use of a silver breast plate or gorget by the Catawba's General New River represents a straightforward example—shell gorgets were important symbols of rank and status in Mississippian societies (Muller 1997).

Each cabin site excavated at Old Town and New Town yielded fine silver chains and silver bangles similar to those described by the Reverend Coke. These distinctive nose ornaments, constructed of materials obtained through trade with Europeans, gave Catawba women and men a decidedly non-European appearance and represent markers of Catawba ethnicity.

The Catawba's use of European clothing is supported archaeologically by the considerable number of brass and pewter buttons and cuff-links recovered from Catawba cabin sites. Ethnohistoric research suggests that although Catawba people wore European style clothing, they often accented it with items such as turbans, blanket sashes, decorative paint and feathers, glass beads, and bits of metal called "tinklers" (typically small pieces of conically rolled sheet brass) that were strung on horse hair threads and woven into clothing and other personal objects (Brown 1966:288; Merrell 1989:230). From the numerous glass beads and "tinklers" recovered at Old Town and New Town (see Figure 1), it seems clear that Catawba people often employed European artifacts and materials as distinctly ethnic clothing ornaments.

The impact of European culture and economics upon Catawba everyday life is particularly evident in changes in Catawba foodways that occurred between the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The following sections will examine Catawba artifacts associated with food

consumption. While ceramic serving wares and eating utensils provide some evidence of segmentation and standardization in Catawba foodways, they also suggest the maintenance of certain traditional foodways. This blending of cultural traits further reveals the complex nature of cultural translation processes.

### **Ceramic Analysis: Methods and Materials**

Rim and body sherds recovered from features at Catawba Old Town and New Town were used to determine the minimum number of vessels (MNV) represented by the ceramic assemblages. Catawba vessels were identified on the bases of rim profile, rim diameter, paste texture, paste color, surface treatment, and decoration. English vessels were identified on the bases of rim profile, rim diameter, ware type, surface treatment, and decoration. Vessel identification was further aided by efforts at refitting rim and body sherds, in some cases yielding partial vessels.

The principal forms addressed in this study are flatwares (including plates and soup plates) and hollow wares (any bowls). Small quantities of teawares, of both English and Catawba manufacture, were recovered at Old Town and New Town; this study does not address the teawares in detail.

### **Overview of Catawba Ceramic Assemblages**

All Old Town and New Town Catawba vessels included in this study are burnished wares. Vessel forms, the use of fine paste, and the extensive use of fire-smudging were used to identify serving vessels for these analyses (for discussions of these identifying criteria, see Hally 1986; Steponaitis 1983; Welch and Scarry 1995).

The available rim profiles and numerous fragments of flat bases and foot-rings suggest that many of the Catawba hollow wares are imitations of English vessel forms. Thus, for the purposes of comparative analyses, Catawba and English vessels will be categorized in terms of general Anglo vessel forms. The principal forms addressed in this study are: flatwares (including plates and soup plates), hollow wares (any bowls), and teawares (cups only for the Catawba assemblage). Those Catawba vessels that possess identifiably aboriginal forms tend to be small jars or larger cooking pots; the latter vessel forms are not addressed in this study.

At least 29 serving vessels are represented by the Catawba pottery recovered from the cabin site at Catawba Old Town. Of the Old Town

Table 2. Catawba and English Ceramics at Old Town and New Town, Locus 3.

Site	Ware	Flatware		Hollow Ware		Teawares		n	Total %
		n	%	n	%	n	%		
Old Town									
	English	0	0	1	25	3	75	4	100
	Catawba	5	17	24	83	0	0	29	100
	Total	5	15	25	76	3	9	33	100
New Town, Locus 3									
	English	26	38	30	43	13	19	69	100
	Catawba	14	28	35	70	1	2	50	100
	Total	40	33	65	54.6	14	11.8	119	100

Catawba pottery, 17% are flatwares, 83% are hollow wares, and none are teawares (Table 2). At least 50 serving vessels are represented by the Catawba pottery recovered from the cabin site at Catawba New Town's Locus 3. Of the New Town Catawba pottery, 28% are flatwares, 70% are hollow wares, and 2% are teawares (Table 2).

### Overview of Imported English Ceramic Assemblages

At least four serving vessels are represented by the English ceramics recovered from the cabin site at Catawba Old Town. These include a porcelain punch bowl and three teacups (Table 2).

A minimum of 69 creamware, pearlware, and porcelain serving vessels are represented by the English ceramics recovered from the cabin site at Locus 3 at Catawba New Town. The vast majority of these vessels are pearlwares and creamwares. Of the English ceramics at Locus 3, 38% are flatwares, 43% are hollow wares, and 19% are teawares (Table 2).

The total serving ware assemblage (i.e., including Catawba and English-made ceramics) for Catawba Old Town consists of 15% flatwares, 76% hollow wares, and 9% teawares. The total serving ware assemblage for Catawba New Town's Locus 3 consists of 33% flatwares, 54.6% hollow wares, and 11.8% teawares (Figure 3, Table 2).

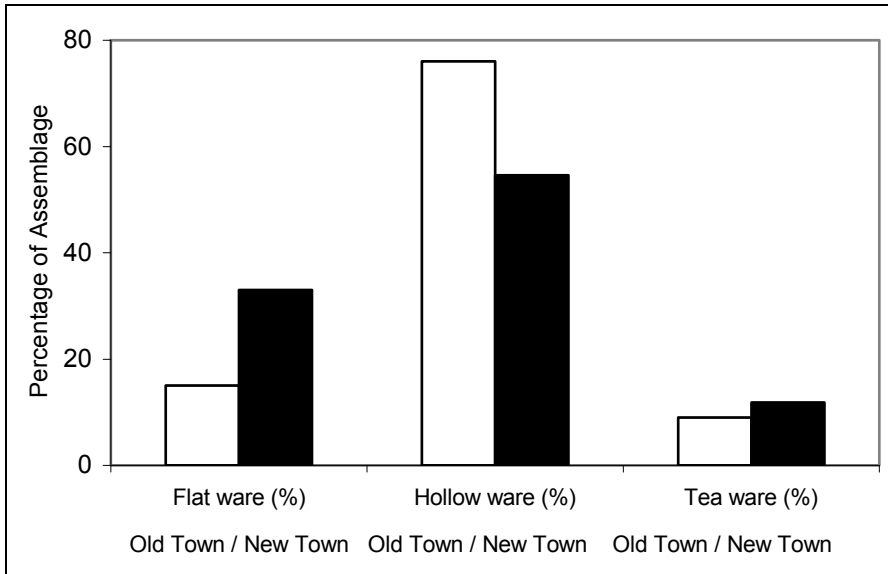


Figure 3. Distribution of ware types at Catawba Old Town and New Town.

### Evidence of Segmentation in Catawba Foodways

As described by researchers such as Deetz (1977) and Leone et al. (1987), the segmentation of everyday life in eighteenth-century Anglo-America was reflected in a shift from corporate to individualized dining practices. In this research, flatware and the associated consumption of portioned meals are considered *de facto* evidence of individualization in foodways (Deetz 1977; Ferguson 1992:97-98; Leone et al. 1987; Otto 1984:68, 152). The increase in the percentage of flatwares between Old Town and New Town is evidence for increasing segmentation of Catawba everyday life; however, the Catawba assemblages continue to consist primarily of hollow ware vessels (Table 2). While not necessarily evidence for continued emphasis on corporate dining practices, this does suggest a continued preference for traditional soups and stews, as opposed to Anglo-style, portioned meals.

There is additional evidence of segmentation in the Catawba assemblages. The presence of knives and forks in addition to plates at New Town Locus 2 implies at least some consumption of portioned meals on individual serving wares. Between the occupation of Old Town and New Town, there appears to be an increasing variety of vessel forms used

in Catawba households as well. At New Town, English plates occur in a variety of forms—indeed, the full range of 6, 7, 8, 10, and 12-inch sizes (as per Miller 1980). Despite this range of sizes, English vessels at New Town do not appear in matched sets of varying sizes. However, in the cabin cellar pit at Old Town, there were fragments of two Catawba-made soup plates, identical in form and with identical decorations painted on them, but different in size—one is 16 cm in diameter and the other is 22 cm in diameter.

In addition to flatwares, the Old Town and New Town assemblages also contain limited quantities of teawares, further evidence that the Catawba had begun to adopt the individualized dining practices of Anglo-Americans.

### **Evidence of Standardization in Catawba Foodways**

The standardization of everyday life is implicit in the wide variety of industrially manufactured commodities recovered at Catawba New Town. In addition to imported English ceramics, forks, knives, and spoons, the cabins at Loci 2 and 3 each yielded a matched set of dishes: at Locus 2 a set of at least three identical transfer-printed individual serving bowls is represented, and at Locus 3 a set of at least six hand-painted individual serving bowls is represented.

### **Discussion**

Ceramics, elements of clothing, and other personal items recovered from Catawba cabin sites provide insights into Catawba ethnic identity. Due to the quantity and variety of ceramics recovered from Catawba sites, changes in Catawba foodways seem to represent a particularly fruitful avenue for the study of Catawba ethnicity.

Material goods are essential in rendering cultural forms coherent and visible, and they are used to represent and enact identity and social relations (Douglas and Isherwood 1979:59; Sinopoli 1991:212). In regard to the consumption of food, in *Cooking, Cuisine, and Class*, Jack Goody (1982:38) writes:

The identity and differentiation of the group is brought out in the practice of eating together or separately, as well as in the content of what is eaten by different collectivities; this is the arena of feasts and fasts, of prohibitions and preferences, of communal and domestic meals, of table manners, and modes of service.



In many societies, ceramics have been among the primary means through which foodways are materialized; indeed, it is a commonplace observation that food is stored, prepared, and consumed in pots (Blitz 1993). It therefore stands to reason that significant changes in a society's ceramic assemblage potentially convey information relating to significant changes in identity and social relations.

In producing pottery for trade with colonists, Catawba women shifted from the production of pottery for everyday use to the production of commodities for market exchange. In addition to this economic change, the trade in pottery had a significant impact Catawba foodways as well.

Catawba households continued to rely heavily on traditionally made ceramics for food consumption; however, contact with British colonists encouraged Catawba potters to incorporate English vessel forms into their repertoires, and these copies as well as actual Staffordshire wares subsequently became part of Catawba foodways. The results of this adoption were complex. The continued emphasis on hollow ware vessels suggests that traditional soups and stews remained important in the Catawba diet. Nonetheless, at Catawba Old Town and New Town, the use of flat dinner plates and other individual serving vessels are measures of both segmentation of people while eating and segmentation of food by type (although soup plates may well have been used for liquid foods).

While pottery continued to be made in domestic contexts, the ceramic trade nevertheless required Catawba women and their families to travel considerable distances, making their way from market to market and home again. This process of traveling, making pottery, trading, and traveling was part of the segmentation of tasks and standardization of productive behavior that came to permeate everyday life in Anglo-America during the course of the eighteenth century. Thus, between the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, changes in Catawba foodways not only reflected the influence of English ceramic styles, but also broader economic and social changes in Catawba and Anglo-American society.

The trade in "colono-ware" offered Catawba women an opportunity to situate themselves in the capitalist system through the practice of a traditional craft. Through the ceramic trade, Catawba women actively sought to survive as individuals, as members of families, and as members of a distinct ethnic group. At the same time, they doubtlessly became familiar with the concepts of private industry and individual gain that govern production and distribution within capitalism. The incorporation of English ceramics in the form of individual serving wares may represent a material manifestation this awareness. If imported English ceramics in Catawba households indeed represent consumer choice, serving food to

family members and guests in these wares may have been a powerful symbol of success in the capitalist marketplace.

### **Conclusion**

Catawba adoption of European culture in many ways represents a process of strategic engagement in a social environment that was quite hostile toward non-European ethnic groups (Davis and Riggs 2003). In his research on the historic Catawba, Charles Hudson (1970:55–56) outlined three ways in which Indians were incorporated into South Carolina colonial society. Many Indians were enslaved, often captured by rival Indian groups who were played off against each other by competing colonial interests. Some existed as de-tribalized, “free” Indians, most of whom owned no land and survived through such marginal enterprises as tenant farming and poaching. Occupying the last category were “national” Indians. With their status as ethnic groups officially recognized by the European colonial powers, national Indians were able to maintain reservations and exercise limited political, economic, and cultural autonomy. There can be little doubt that the Catawba perceived the advantages of maintaining their status as national Indians. The maintenance of a distinctively Indian ethnic identity would have been an important part of this survival strategy.

By the early twentieth century, the Catawba’s trade in utilitarian ceramics was gradually being replaced by the sale of decorative wares to tourists and collectors, a trade that continues on the Catawba reservation today. However, in addition to its economic importance, the commercial sale of pottery has enabled the Catawba to maintain a traditional activity that is strongly associated with Catawba ethnicity. Future archaeological research will continue to examine the Catawba’s changing, yet distinctive ethnic identity, and their creative responses to the imperatives of European colonialism.

### **Notes**

This paper is drawn from a more extensive study, titled “Of Mimicry and Metamorphosis: Catawba Ethnicity and Adaptations to English Colonialism,” that was submitted by the author to the faculty of the Department of Anthropology, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2004.

*Collections.* Artifact collections used in this study from Catawba Old Town and New Town were excavated by the 2003 UNC archaeological field school and are curated at the Research Laboratories of Archaeology, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

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# **CATAWBA MILITARISM: ETHNOHISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL OVERVIEWS**

by

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## **Abstract**

While many Indian societies in the Carolinas disappeared into the multi-colored fabric of Southern history before the mid-1700s, the Catawba Nation emerged battered, but ethnically viable, from the chaos of their colonial experience. Later, the Nation's people managed to circumvent Removal in the 1830s and many of their descendants live in the traditional Catawba homeland today. To achieve this distinction, colonial and antebellum period Catawba leaders actively affected the cultural survival of their people by projecting a bellicose attitude and strategically promoting Catawba warriors as highly desired military auxiliaries, or "ethnic soldiers," of South Carolina's imperial and state militias after 1670. This paper focuses on Catawba militarism as an adaptive strategy and further elaborates on the effects of this adaptation on Catawba society, particularly in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. While largely ethnohistorical in content, potential archaeological aspects of Catawba militarism are explored to suggest avenues for future research.

American Indian societies in eastern North America responded to European imperialism in countless ways. Although some societies, such as the Powhatans and the Yamassees (Gleach 1997; Lee 1963), attempted to aggressively resist European hegemony by attacking their oppressors, resistance and adaptation took radically different forms in a colonial world oft referred to as a "tribal zone," a "shatter zone," or the "violent edge of empire" (Ethridge 2003; Ferguson and Whitehead 1999a, 1999b). Perhaps unique among their indigenous contemporaries in the Carolinas, the ethnically diverse peoples who came to form the "Catawba Nation" (see Davis and Riggs this volume) proactively sought to ensure their socio-political and cultural survival by strategically positioning themselves on the southern Anglo-American frontier as a militaristic society of "ethnic soldiers" (see Ferguson and Whitehead 1999a, 1999b). Catawba leaders, "unable to defeat yet unwilling either to embrace or flee Anglo-America" (Merrell 1987:56), consciously cultivated a warlike mystique and shrewdly marketed their martial skills to Anglo-American officials in the Carolinas and Virginia throughout much of the late seventeenth and eighteenth

centuries. In Anglo-American eyes, Catawba warriors became indispensable paramilitary allies and enforcers of governmental policies through the American Revolution and beyond.

Through such an adaptive strategy, which was much more sophisticated than simple “accommodation,” the Catawbas affected the cultural survival of their people by promoting and fielding Catawba warriors as highly desired military auxiliaries of South Carolina’s imperial, and later state, militias as early as the mid-1670s. Moreover, the projection of power, real or perceived, partially insulated the Catawbas to some degree from the numerically superior, predatory slaving societies (e.g., Chickasaws and Northern Iroquois [see Ethridge 2003]) most heavily involved in the eighteenth-century, Anglo-Indian slave trade. While the Catawbas’ hawkish stance, particularly during the mid-eighteenth century, provided tangible and intangible societal benefits, the negative repercussions, including combat deaths on distant fields, enemy reprisals on the home front, and recurrent disease exposure, nearly destroyed the Catawba Nation by the end of the Seven Years’ War (see McReynolds this volume). The documentary evidence of the Catawbas’ perpetual involvement in many violent conflicts from the mid-1670s to 1865, as well as numerous lively accounts of Catawba martial prowess, bears witness to these general observations.

The study presented here is a preliminary contribution to the University of North Carolina’s Catawba Project, which R. P. Stephen Davis and Brett H. Riggs initiated under the auspices of the University’s Research Laboratories of Archaeology in 2001 (see Davis and Riggs this volume). In this article, I briefly explore the history and nature of “Catawba militarism” and consider the potential social and material aspects of such an adaptation on Catawba society during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. I use the term “militarism” in a broad sense, encompassing such notions as the projection of a bellicose attitude, the development of a socio-politically influential warrior class, and a societal penchant for warfare. Ferguson and Whitehead’s (1999a, 1999b) concept of “militarization in the tribal zone” and the concurrent development of “ethnic soldiers” inform this study. While aspects of Catawba militarism are explored in seminal Catawba studies by Blumer (1987, 1995), Brown (1966), Hudson (1970, 1979) and Merrell (1986, 1987, 1991), and it is challenging to substantively add to their considerable contributions, my intent here is to bring the phenomenon into somewhat sharper focus and to suggest ways that Catawba militarism both influenced their society and shaped the present archaeological record.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, geopolitical actions of rival European states, fiercely competing for land, natural resources, slaves, and loyalties of ethnically diverse indigenous peoples, radically altered the Contact period cultural landscape of eastern North America. In this highly unstable socio-political milieu, native societies succumbed to or resisted European hegemony in different ways and along different historical trajectories. Through the end of the American Revolution, competition among rival European states gave many American Indian societies greater autonomy within the colonial realm and better rates of exchange for European produced trade goods, but there was a terrible cost—more bloodshed, as global forces drew indigenous peoples into ever-expanding European wars (Ferguson and Whitehead 1999a). By 1670, the nascent “Catawba Nation,” which ultimately came to incorporate the politically dominant Catawbas (Cuttauboes, Esaws, Kadapaus, Katahbas), and their allies and subject peoples (e.g., Cheraws, Congarees, Peepees, Sugarees, Waterees, Waxhaws), found itself in this chaotic colonial environment. Capitalizing on an early warlike reputation and demonstrable martial abilities, the Catawbas opted to ally with the British regime in South Carolina and provide ethnic soldiers to fight rival military forces, primarily other ethnic soldiers, organized by French or Spanish military officials in neighboring colonies.

In many colonial settings, ethnic soldiers, typically culled from an existing indigenous warrior class, are “drawn into the service of state agents by varying combinations of coercive and seductive measures” (Ferguson and Whitehead 1999a:22) such as force and trade. Empires and states use ethnic soldiers as auxiliary combat troops, as raiders to procure something the state desires (e.g., slaves), or to further the geopolitical interests of the empire. Moreover, ethnic soldiers often perform internal policing functions to control subversive activities or enslaved populations (Ferguson and Whitehead 1999a:21–22). Given the geopolitical situation of eastern North America at the end of the seventeenth century, the Catawbas were, in the face of numerically and technologically superior forces, fundamentally restricted to the following limited suite of adaptive strategies: (1) remain passive and accept the status of “tributary” Indians; (2) fight the militarily superior colonial regime and be decimated; (3) fight other Indian societies in response to perceived self-interests; or (4) become indispensable to colonial patrons as ethnic soldiers.

The Catawbas, ever cognizant of their political situation, astutely learned from the mistakes of their neighbors. While numerous coastal Carolina tribes quickly dwindled to the impotent status of “settlement” or “tributary” Indians (e.g., Cusabos and Croatans), colonial forces decimated



the Tuscarora (1711–1713) and Yamassee (1715–1718) communities that chose the “fighting option” in a quick succession of essentially genocidal conflicts prosecuted by British officials in the Carolinas (Corkran 1970; Dunbar 1960; Gallay 2002; Lee 1963; Milling 1940). After initially assisting the Yamassees in their brief attempt to destroy the South Carolina colony in 1715, the Catawbias adopted alternate paths to survival, namely diplomacy and ethnic soldiering.

Before any indigenous group decides whether or not to provide ethnic soldiers to a dominant colonial power, there must be a perceived military need for such auxiliaries by the state. The numerical population weakness of the Anglo-European enclaves on the Carolina coast was readily apparent to Indian and colonist alike, particularly in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. As such, the foreign invaders sought military alliances with all Indian tribes where possible (Sirmans 1966). While other Carolina tribes allied themselves with the English at various times, such alliances were fickle arrangements in the fluid geo-political environment of colonial North America. With the brief exception of the Yamassee War, the Catawbias remained staunch allies of South Carolina, spurning Cherokee and French overtures in the 1730s and 1740s, throughout the colonial period, and well into the nineteenth century (Corkran 1970; Hewatt 1971 [1779]; Milling 1940; Merrell 1991). From the perspective of the colonial government in Charles Town, the Catawbias were a ready-made, “frontier garrison” in a strategic geographic position (Jacobs 1967; Merrell 1991; Nester 2000).

To reach their southern enemies, both English and Indian, Northern Iroquoian war parties often followed the Great Trading Path, the gateway to the Atlantic Southeast, which passed through the Catawba settlements at Nation Ford on the Catawba River (Brown 1966). The Catawbias formed a living bulkhead between the coastal British settlements, the unpredictable Cherokees to the west, and northern Indian raiders, primarily from the Iroquois Confederacy, influenced by French machinations. As well as a strategic buffer, the Catawbias served as a ready-reserve force and a psychological weapon to suppress potential black slave insurrections in the Carolinas (Hudson 1970; Bentley 1991; Willis 1971). Moreover, white Carolinians remained perpetually fearful of potentially murderous alliances between Indians and enslaved blacks, “two exploited colored majorities,” throughout the colonial era (Oliphant 2001; Willis 1971). Accordingly, British officials carefully cultivated friendly relations with the Catawbias and the Catawbias’ satellite allies or subjects by plying them with gifts of guns, ammunition, and other sundry “presents,” perhaps as early as the mid-1670s (Brown 1966).

Decades later, James Glen, Royal governor of South Carolina (1743–1756), continued to reinforce the Catawbas' perpetual military alliance with trade protections, lavish gifts, and administrative efforts to curtail unrestricted white encroachment of traditionally recognized Catawba territory (McDowell 1958, 1969; Merrell 1987, 1991; Nester 2000; Robinson 1996). The perpetuation of the Anglo-Catawba alliance, however, was not a simple matter of British officials applying state powers of seduction and coercion. Such an assumption fails to recognize Catawba actions and choices within the confines of their colonial experience. Throughout much of the eighteenth century, Catawba leaders used play-off diplomacy; this was particularly true under King Hagler's tenure (1750–1763) as leading chief of the Catawba Nation (Merrell 1986). The Catawba leadership carefully manipulated colonial officials from Virginia and the Carolinas, those administrators seeking and competing for Catawba military support, to garner the best possible arrangements, in terms of political patronage and gift payments (McDowell 1958, 1969; Merrell 1986, 1987, 1991; Oliphant 2001; Saunders 1993a). Despite Anglo-American attempts to fully orchestrate the Catawbas' actions, the Catawbas readily recognized their power, influence, and place in fluid colonial affairs through the late 1700s. As James Merrell (1986:63; emphasis in original) noted:

Once the goods [i.e., payments and gifts] arrived, the Catawbas usually lived up to their end of the bargain, but only in their own time and their own way. War parties set out when it suited them, fought in their own manner, and stayed as long as they wished, much to the dismay of their colonial 'superiors.'

Why did British officials from competing colonies repeatedly send diplomatic missions to curry Catawba favor? Most colonial officials recognized the need to form friendly relationships or strong military alliances with Indian societies for both economic and strategic reasons (McDowell 1958, 1969; Robinson 1996). White Carolinians, however, exhibited a particular interest in the Catawbas, in part because of their highly touted, warlike reputation, which neighboring Indian groups undoubtedly inspired. Indeed, it is likely that the Catawbas' development of martial skills and their ferocious reputation among neighboring southeastern Indians predated initial English occupation of South Carolina in the 1670s. In 1693, a Cherokee entourage requested protection from the South Carolina government "against the *Esaw* [Catawbas]...Indians, who had destroyed several of their towns, and taken a number of their people prisoners" (Hewatt 1971 [1779]:127). The Cherokees, although more populous than the Catawbas, "...begged the governor [of South Carolina]

to restore their relations [with the Catawbas], and protect them against such insidious enemies” (Hewatt 1971 [1779]:127), actions which Governor Thomas Smith solemnly swore to pursue in a spirit of friendship and peace.

Reportedly, Catawba warriors were among the fiercest, most capable fighters known to the colonials in the East. As one observer concluded, “Other tribes went on the warpath occasionally, but with the Catawbas fighting was a trade” (McCants 1927:151). Edmond Atkin, a Carolina Indian trader and later British Superintendent of Indian Affairs in the South, remarked:

In War, they are inferior [to] no Indians whatever. The greatest loss perhaps the Six Nations ever Received at one time in Fight with Indians, was by them [Catawbas]. Such is the Honour in Indian Estimation to be acquired by Killing any of them, that Indians as far remote as the [Great] Lakes go in quest of them. [Jacobs 1967:47]

Atkin likely refers to a 1727 action when a small party of Catawba warriors, pursuing Oneida raiders into Virginia, fought a running, two-day battle and ultimately killed 57 Oneidas and took a number of others prisoner (Milling 1940:236). Another example of the Catawbas’ fighting skill is evident in an August 1753 account where “six Catawbas and two Boys, had out of 20, killed 18 French Indians” in a running firefight deep in the South Carolina backcountry (McDowell 1958:456).

Even with the ultimate eclipse of Catawba military power, especially in the aftermath of the great smallpox epidemics of 1738–1739 and 1759–1760 (see McReynolds this volume), James Adair, noted Indian trader and author of *The History of the American Indians* (1775), stated, “We are not acquainted with any...of so warlike a disposition, as the Katahba and the Chikkasah” (Williams 1930:235). In a lively vignette, Adair (Williams 1930:421–423) recounted how a single Catawba warrior killed seven Northern Iroquois warriors in a running battle, and after his subsequent capture, endured great torture in the Iroquois’ town, only to escape and kill five Iroquois pursuers before returning home in triumph with all 12 scalps. Raids and defensive actions against the Iroquois in the mid-1700s enhanced the Catawbas’ fearsome reputation among white Carolinians and Virginians, such as George Washington (Fitzpatrick 1931a, 1931b), but their reputation was certainly more than false bravado. As James Merrell (1987:122) pointed out, “by the time Iroquois warriors began venturing south [in the early 1700s], the piedmont populations that made up the Catawba Nation were probably both thoroughly accustomed to and very good at killing people.”

Catawba leaders astutely capitalized on the achieved status of their warriors and further cultivated the mystique in their diplomatic interactions with Anglo-American leaders. In 1756, the Catawba Nation's most famous *Eractasswa* (chief), King Hagler (*Nopkehe*), boasted to South Carolina Governor James Glen, "We are a small Nation but our Name is high, and if we go to the War with the White People against the enemy we shall drive them so far as that we shall raise many Children without any Danger or Molestation" (McDowell 1969:107–108). Word of the Catawbas' bravado and bellicose attitude often filtered back to British officials as they attempted to negotiate peace agreements between warring Indian nations in the colonies. In 1750, Iroquois representatives demanded that:

the English not...mediate in their war with the Katahba Indians, as they were fully resolved to prosecute it, with the greatest eagerness, while there was one of that hateful name alive; because in time of battle, they [the Catawbas] had given them the ugly name of short-tailed eunuchs [i.e., castrates with short penises]. [Williams 1930:143]

The purposeful militant posturing by the Catawbas continued well into later Federal period. South Carolinian Lucius Bierce commented on the Catawbas' anger when South Carolina officials failed to invite them to fight for the American cause in the War of 1812. After some discussion on the Catawbas' plight as a "poor degraded people," he concluded: "Thus, the ruling passion [militarism] shows itself strong in the death of their nation...and but a remnant of them, and yet, rather than not be at war, they will fight for their oppressors" (Clark 1973:63–64).

While the Catawbas reacted to colonial conditions that essentially forced them to select from a limited range of adaptive strategies, they diplomatically maneuvered as agents of their own destiny. Coercive and seductive measures undertaken by European governments certainly contributed to the decision-making process, but Catawba leaders shrewdly manipulated colonial administrators and frequently used "play-off" diplomacy to enhance the position of the Catawba Nation (McDowell 1958, 1969; Merrell 1986; Saunders 1993a). The Catawbas opted for actions based on their exceptional abilities to field and perform as ethnic soldiers or enforcers of the dominant regime, whatever that regime might have been—proprietary colony, royal colony, rebel colony, fledgling state, or rebel state, between 1670 and 1865. By purposefully positioning their society in a particular militaristic niche, the Catawbas endeavored to advance or protect their socio-political interests for nearly two centuries.

### History of Catawba Militarism

Throughout much of the Colonial period from the mid-1670s through 1776, Catawba warriors capably operated as ethnic soldiers in most British sponsored military expeditions supported by the governments of South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia. Catawba warriors served in auxiliary combat units in several major wars as well as scouts who collected military intelligence or guided Anglo-American militia forces through hostile Indian territories (Flynn 1991). Other Catawba contingents quelled slave insurrections or tracked down and re-captured escaped slaves well into the post-Revolutionary, Federal, and Antebellum periods (Bentley 1991; Clark 1993; Flynn 1991; Hudson 1970). All such paramilitary operations were undoubtedly encouraged and supported, both materially and emotionally, by Catawba women who bore their share of the war efforts, much like their counterparts among the Northern Iroquois (Prezzano 1997). Some women accompanied warriors in the field (Fitzpatrick 1931b), while other women on the home front provisioned war parties and managed food production, household activities, slaves, and other aspects of community life in the absence of the war parties.

In the late seventeenth century, Charles Town officials first courted Catawba warriors as allies against the Westos and Savannah-Shawnees, but evidence of Catawba participation in the Westos War is largely circumstantial (Brown 1966; Corkran 1970; Gallay 2002; Milling 1940; Merrell 1991; Silver 1990; Speck 1939). In 1709–1710, British officials hired the Catawbas to both take the war north and defend the colony when Northern Iroquois warriors mounted raids against settlement Indians and outlying white settlements scattered about Charles Town (Blumer 1987). For a brief period in the Yamassee War (1715–1718), the Catawbas allied with the warring Yamassee coalition, but quickly realigned themselves with the Carolinians after suffering brutal losses of men, women, and children at Goose Creek in 1715 (Corkran 1970; Hewatt 1971 [1779]; Klingburg 1956; Merrell 1991). To cement the restored alliance with the white Carolinians, Catawba warriors later destroyed several warring Waxhaw villages and reportedly subjugated the warring Cheraws (Merrell 1991; Milling 1940). Most notably, however, Catawba contingents fought with Carolina militiamen, British regulars, and other Indian auxiliaries in the Franco-Spanish attack on Charles Town (1706), the Tuscarora War (1711–1713), and the Seven Years' War (1756–1763), which included several expeditions in the Ohio Valley, patrols in the Broad River valley, and major actions against the Savannah-Shawnees and the Cherokees

(Barnwell 1908a, 1908b; Blumer 1987; Brown 1966; Fitzpatrick 1931a, 1931b; Gregg 1991 [1867]; Hamilton 1899; Hewatt 1971 [1779]; James 1971; Kegley 1938; Kirkland and Kennedy 1905; Klingburg 1956; Meriwether 1940; Merrell 1991; Lee 1963; McDowell 1969; Merrell 1986, 1987, 1991; Oliphant 2001; Ramsay 1858; Robinson 1979, 1996; Saunders 1993a; Speck 1939; Starkey 1998; Steele 1994).

Although deadly conflicts between northeastern and southeastern Indians, as well as the so-called “mourning wars” and the associated mourning war ritual complex, probably predate European contact in eastern North America, internecine warfare between northeastern and southeastern Indian peoples intensified with the onset of colonialism (Fenton 1978; Merrell 1987; Richter 2001; Sullivan and Snow 1992; Wallace 1972). Throughout most of the eighteenth century, except for sporadic interludes associated with shifting Euro-Indian alliances, the Catawbas remained at war with the Savannah-Shawnees, Cherokees, Tuscaroras, and the Iroquois Confederacy (Aquila 1997; Merrell 1987, 1991; Speck 1939; Wallace 1972; Williamson 1930), a brutal conflict of attrition that dramatically escalated after 1701. When French and Iroquois Confederacy representatives signed “The Great Peace” in 1701, the French directed their Iroquois allies southward to attack British settlers in the Carolina backcountry and their Indian allies (Drooker 2002; Merrell 1987). Although such monuments are not known to archaeologists today, perhaps the “seven heaps of Stones, being the Monuments of seven [Catawba] *Indians*, that were slain in that place by the *Sinnagers* [Senecas], or *Troquois* [Iroquois],” which John Lawson (Lefler 1967:50; emphasis in original) observed in 1701, materially reflected the increased violence.

For complex socio-political reasons, the Catawbas regularly participated in these protracted inter-tribal wars both autonomously, to pursue their own interests, and at the behest of British agents. In such internecine conflicts, the Catawbas were not, however, simply victims of colonial machinations. Since the Catawbas shared a “common culture of conflict” with the Northern Iroquois, they essentially needed enemies to fight (Merrell 1987) and certainly profited from the capture and sale of Indian slaves taken during frequent counter-raids (Bentley 1991; Milling 1940). Although imperial forces of coercion and seduction encouraged the Catawbas to fight for the British cause, the Catawbas “operated within a mourning-war tradition and fought to ‘satisfy the supposed craving ghosts of their deceased relations’ ... [Indeed, the] desire to prove oneself as a warrior was also in the forefront of a Catawba’s thoughts” (Merrell 1987:120; quoting James Adair [1775]). The scale and intensity of these intertribal conflicts, however, greatly diminished with the ultimate British

victory over Spanish and French forces at the end of the Seven Years' War in 1763.

The stirrings of the American Rebellion, readily apparent by 1770, must have been obvious to the Catawbas, but there is no record of their thoughts on the matter. Their position, however, became clear to the South Carolina government with the news of battles at Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill, and the subsequent seizure of forts and British military supplies on the coast in 1775 (Lumpkin 1981). Even though the Catawbas were "too decimated to be of much [strategic] military importance" (Hudson's 1970:51), especially against the populous Cherokees to the west, South Carolinian officials apparently considered Catawba military prowess of some significance at a tactical level. Knowledgeable militia officers were likely interested in their well-known expertise as riflemen, scouts, and trackers. With the outbreak of the American Revolution, the South Carolina Council of Safety specifically courted the Catawbas and sent a letter to the Nation that promised gifts and pay to soldiers in return for military service. The letter, however, threatened non-specific repercussions if the Catawbas chose the "wrong side" (Merrell 1991). The Council stated, "we expected their warriors [Catawbas] to join ours" (Moultrie 1968 [1779]:81), and several influential colonists made overtures to the Catawbas on behalf of the Rebel cause (Brown 1966; Merrell 1991).

It is oft concluded that the Catawbas, geographically surrounded by white Rebels all of whom might do the Catawbas great harm, had no choice but to fight for the American cause (Calloway 1995; Merrell 1991). Despite this undisputed fact, a complicating issue similarly noted by King Hagler nearly 20 years before (Saunders 1993a), I suspect that veiled threats were not especially necessary. The Catawbas, as in the past, were perfectly willing to fight for war honors as well as for lucrative gift or monetary payments. Moreover, if they were to be paid for their services, the Catawbas were wholly satisfied in fighting with the rebel South Carolinians. Of the southeastern Indians who actively participated in the American Revolution, only the Catawbas fought from beginning to end for the Rebel cause (Lumpkin 1981). Even after the British invasion of South Carolina, when all appeared to be lost in the South, the Catawbas did not run for the British lines; instead, they evacuated their families and their warriors continued to cast their lot with the rebel Americans. These actions suggest that factors other than fear of Rebel reprisals entered into their decision. The South Carolinians were not the only party interested in the Catawbas' services. The North Carolina Committee of Public Claims paid for presents sent to the Catawbas in March of 1775 (Clark 1994).

Although the expressed purpose of these gifts is unclear, North Carolina Rebels at that time were forming regiments in southeastern North Carolina to fight Crown forces (Robinson 1963). Anticipating the war, the North Carolinians were apparently courting the Catawbias for military support.

During the American Revolution, some 80 Catawba auxiliaries, primarily riflemen, participated in the Rebel defense of Charleston and the Battle of Sullivan's Island in 1776. Catawba volunteers operated with Rebel partisan ranger units against marauding bands of escaped black slaves and Loyalist Tory units in the Carolina backcountry in 1775–1776 and 1780–1781. Catawbias served as scouts and riflemen with Colonel Andrew Williamson's forces in the 1776 expedition against the Cherokees and in General Benjamin Lincoln's Georgia campaign of 1779. Later, under General Thomas Sumter, Catawba riflemen supported General Nathanael Greene in North Carolina at Guilford Courthouse and Haw River (Blumer 1987; Brown 1966; Corkran 1970; Flynn 1991; Kirkland and Kennedy 1905; Logan 1980; Lumpkin 1981; Mahon 1988; Merrell 1991; Milling 1940; Mills 1972 [1826]; Olson 1968; Scaife 1930; Speck 1939; Swanton 1979; Watson 1995; Williams 1943).

With the fall of Charleston in May and the subsequent American disaster at Camden in August of 1780, the Catawbias sought to secure their vulnerable families from the British advance and removed to the safety of Virginia (Merrell 1991; Milling 1940; Williams 1943). With their families safe from British or Tory retribution, the Catawba soldiers returned to fight with the Rebels in the backcountry. The Nation's leading chief, General New River, the noted soldier Captain Pinetree George, and some 50 Catawbias served in Captain Thomas Drennan's Company under General Sumter during the rancorous guerilla war between the Rebels and the Tories (Watson 1995). Near Orangeburg, South Carolina, Colonel Robert Gray reported:

The swamps were filled with loyalists, the rebels durst not sleep in their houses, & Sumpter irritated by the hostility of the Country, got the Catawba Indians to track the Loyalists from the swamps, w<sup>h</sup> were at the same time traversed by large parties of armed rebels to kill or take the tories. [Gray 1909:155]

With the American victory at Yorktown, Virginia, in October 1781, the Catawbias returned to the Nation's reservation, which had been looted and destroyed the previous summer by British troops under the command of Lord Rawdon (Lumpkin 1981).

With the change from a nation within a colonial regime to that of a nation within the new republic, the Catawbias remained a people oppressed by an outside polity, the State of South Carolina, in which they were not



citizens. Although minor intertribal warfare continued between the Catawbas and their old nemesis, the Iroquois Confederacy (Merrell 1987), the Catawbas had fewer opportunities to exercise their martial skills during the post-colonial era. Catawbas served with the state militias as slave catchers and participated in an attack on an escaped slave camp on the Savannah River in 1787 (Bentley 1991; Blumer 1987). Although largely ignored by state military officials during the Federal period, a Catawba contingent served with the South Carolina militia, without seeing combat, in the War of 1812 (Clark 1973; Flynn 1991; Skeen 1999). Some fifty Catawba volunteers, many of whom were veterans of the American Revolution, regularly attended militia muster in York County, South Carolina, but Governor David Williams (1814–1816) “ordered them off the field for lacking proper military discipline” (Flynn 1991), undoubtedly an affront to the veteran riflemen and scouts so respected by General Sumter and other prominent American officers in previous conflicts.

After an apparent antebellum hiatus, Catawba volunteers served in the Mexican War (1846–1848) (United States Senate 1930) and at least 16 men went on to enlist in the South Carolina State Troops to serve with the Confederate States Army during the American Civil War (1861–1865) (Blumer 1995; Brown 1966; Hudson 1979; Milling 1940). An 1864 report, delivered by Catawba Agent John R. Patton to the South Carolina General Assembly, noted:

All of the males Except 3 is now or have been in the Service of the Confederate States Five of whom have died in the Service, one or Two Discharged from Physical Disability. Two or three have been Severely Wounded and one of them a cripple for life. [Blumer 1995:223]

Most of the Catawba Confederate soldiers were killed or wounded over the course of the war. Several died in disease-ridden Union prisons and a number of survivors suffered permanent physical handicaps. Of the sixteen known Catawbas who served, nine died in service or in Union prisons (Blumer 1995).

While Catawba oral tradition indicates that local whites threatened to shoot Catawba men if they did not enlist in the Confederate service (Brown 1966; Hudson 1979), I suggest that the relatively poor Catawba farmers, as during the American Revolution, saw military service as an opportunity for both honor and money. Confederate enlistment bounties were offered and military service generated pay (Blumer 1995; Shock 2001), albeit in Confederate notes. It should be noted, however, that a number of the Catawbas held enslaved blacks in bondage during the antebellum period (Bentley 1991). Whether or not the Catawbas simply

adopted the practice of purchasing enslaved blacks simply to emulate whites, and thus gain social acceptance (Bentley 1991), this social factor may have played some role in their decision to fight for the Confederacy. Whatever their reasons, Blumer (1995:228) concluded, "When the state of South Carolina made its call to arms in 1861, the Catawba responded willingly. The Nation, once the scourge of the entire eastern seaboard, never shirked an opportunity to go to war." Blumer (1995:221) further indicates that modern "Catawba[s]" are proud of their military history and are quick to point out that their ancestors fought for the Confederacy." There seems to be little evidence to support the notion that the Catawbas were truly forced to fight in any war. To the contrary, King Hagler's statement to Governor Glen during the Seven Years' War is significant. Hagler boasted, "Our Warriors delight in war...and our young Men are equally pleased that they have an Opportunity of going to Battle" (Merrell 1987:120).

Although this overview largely focuses on Catawba militarism in the colonial period, aspects of the tradition continued well into the modern era. In post-colonial times, however, overt Catawba militarism rapidly waned with the pacification of the tribal zone in the East. Nevertheless, young Catawba men continued to seek the socially important warrior status. Proportionately high percentages of Catawba males accordingly enlisted as soldiers in organized volunteer or conscript armies after 1775. As discussed, they served with North and South Carolina regiments in the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the Mexican War, possibly the Seminole Wars, and the American Civil War. Reportedly, all able-bodied Catawba males in South Carolina volunteered for service with the Confederate Army in the Fifth, Twelfth, and Seventeenth South Carolina infantry regiments (Blumer 1995; Brown 1966), while several living in North Carolina apparently served in Thomas' Cherokee Regiment (Milling 1940). Dozens of men and women, primarily volunteers, later served with US forces in World War I, World War II, and the Vietnam War (Brown 1966; Blumer 1987; United States Senate 1930). The Catawbas, like most American Indian tribes across the United States, have volunteered in disproportionately high percentages for service in all of the country's twentieth-century conflicts (Department of Defense 1998). Their willingness to serve and the great respect shown to war veterans in the Catawba Nation today are traditions influenced by Catawba militarism of an earlier era.

### Functions and Effects of Catawba Militarism

The obvious functions and societal impacts of Catawba militarism and the Catawbas' perpetual role as ethnic soldiers were most evident during the mid-to-late eighteenth century, but what we glean from their colonial experiences inform our understanding of Catawba militarism over time. As an adaptive strategy, Catawba militarism served multiple tangible and intangible functions that operated at both individual and group levels, but there were positive and negative social consequences. The most obvious function of militarism and the projection of a bellicose attitude is that of societal self-preservation for peoples subject to frequent attacks by polities exhibiting superior military force. The Catawbas certainly had to fight or be destroyed by their numerous, often numerically superior enemies (e.g., Northern Iroquois, Cherokees, and Chickasaws) throughout the eighteenth century, but by decisively developing a peculiar mystique as the toughest backcountry Indians, their reputation likely protected them from many potential attacks from either fearful European colonists or other Indian enemies. This issue was critical during the heyday of the Indian slave trade, when other militaristic, Indian slaving societies preyed on weaker victims across the Southeast (Ethridge 2003, Galloway 2002). In other instances, however, as with the Northern Iroquois and the Cherokees, the Catawbas' militant attitude and swagger made their enemies even more determined to destroy them (Merrell 1987; Williams 1930). In the 1740s, for example, the Iroquois Confederacy intensified attacks on Catawba settlements after Catawba warriors disparagingly referred to the Iroquois warriors as "women" and stated that Catawba warriors were "double men." Outraged Iroquois representatives reported to British officials that Catawba warriors said that they "had two Conveniences, one for their Women, and one for us [the Iroquois]" (Merrell 1987:123).

Despite such repercussions, chronic internecine warfare and ethnic soldiering contributed to the ethnogenesis of the Catawba Nation through the incorporation and acculturation of subject or allied peoples, such as the Waxhaws, Sugarees, Waterees and Cheraws, under the protective umbrella of the Catawba identity. As Ferguson and Whitehead (1999a:14) noted, colonialism generally changes patterns of indigenous social relations as warfare and diseases reduce populations, which can force previously separate groups to coalesce. As in other regions of the colonial Southeast, chronic warfare drove alliance formations and brought ethnically diverse societies together (Willis 1980). In general, warfare involving indigenous

peoples “leads to the differential survival of ethnic formations and political organizations” (Ferguson and Whitehead 1999a:14). With the Catawbas, the Catawba-Iroquois wars promoted group solidarity among politically decentralized tribes, speaking some twenty different dialects, which came to form the “Catawba Nation” (Merrell 1987, 1991; Steele 1994).

By the mid-eighteenth century, the militant “personality” of the waxing Catawba polity “encouraged” smaller tribes decimated by disease and war to seek Catawba protection from predatory slaving groups and, perhaps more insidiously, “persuaded” dissatisfied member tribes not to splinter off for fear of encouraging the Catawbas’ wrath (Merrell 1991). The bellicose attitude helped the Catawba polity to both grow as a nation and curb population reductions by discouraging ethnically unrelated groups from withdrawing once within the Catawba sphere of influence. In a symbolic sense, Merrell (1987:121) observed, “conflict also brought in its train [of] heroes and stories that provided Cheraws, Waccamaws, and their Catawba hosts with a shared heritage.” Such shared commonality enhanced group solidarity within the clearly multi-ethnic polity.

In terms of diplomacy, Catawba leaders and individual warriors often used their war record to “wave the flag” in their diplomatic relations with the British and subsequent American regimes. In 1755, King Hagler requested ammunition to fight the French, a drum, and a “Union Jack” flag after one of his sons died in battle. Hagler stated, “The Colours we have I covered my Son with when he was dead” (McDowell 1958:85). Hagler recognized the value of manipulating the symbol of British might. The implication in his statement was that the Catawbas’ best bled for the English and his people expected something tangible in return. Decades after Hagler’s statements, such “flag waving” continued in the aftermath of the American Revolution when the “Catawbas derived maximum mileage from their revolutionary services, and by wrapping themselves in the [American] flag used their record of service in the patriot cause” to rightfully further their socio-political interests in the Carolina backcountry (Calloway 1995:285).

Strategically, the Anglo-Catawba military alliances indirectly helped to protect the Catawbas from predatory northern Indians. For several reasons, in part due to the Catawbas’ perpetual loyalty, British officials made several formal and informal attempts, from the 1740s through the 1760s, to bring about a peaceful resolution to the long-standing Catawba-Iroquois wars, as well as sporadic conflicts between Catawbas and their southeastern neighbors, such as the Natchez and the Chickasaws. While all parties concerned agreed to peace terms on a few occasions (e.g., in 1738, 1741, 1742, 1744, 1745, 1746, 1751, 1757, and 1763), long-

standing hostilities, shifting political interests, “crying blood,” and meddling colonial officials collectively operated to re-ignite conflicts (Merrell 1987; Meroney 1991; Milling 1940; Robinson 1996; Steele 1994). While the Anglo-Americans could not culturally comprehend the mourning war complex, they readily perceived the ultimate outcome of the process—the near destruction of the Catawba Nation by 1763. Although a garrisoned British fort, variably proposed by colonial administrators or requested by Catawbas for a decade in the 1750s, came too late, both North and South Carolina officials eventually ordered forts built near the Catawba settlements. Ostensibly for the protection of the Catawbas, but certainly to protect their own backcountry settlements, North Carolina Governor Arthur Dobbs and South Carolina Governor William Lyttleton, respectively, orchestrated the construction of separate bastioned forts in 1757–1758 and 1760. Only the South Carolina fort was completed, but it was never armed or garrisoned by British forces during the height of the Catawba-Iroquois conflict at the end of the Seven Years’ War (Heath 2004).

At the Augusta Conference of 1763, colonial officials heard and acted on Catawba complaints about white land encroachment and granted a 144,000-acre reservation tract—a “final payment” of a sort for the Catawbas’ war services—to the Catawba Nation (Hudson 1979; Merrell 1991). Despite the fact that the Catawbas were reeling from heavy population losses and were of “negligible military importance” by 1763 (less than 100 warriors [McReynolds this volume]), the Catawbas were included at the bargaining table and recognized as a sovereign Indian nation (Hudson 1970; Richter 2001). It is apparent that South Carolina officials, while land-hungry, acknowledged and somewhat protected the reservation from further Anglo-American settlement because the Catawbas continued to serve, on a reduced scale, as a buffer against the ever-worrisome Cherokees to the west, as well as an effective, anti-insurrection threat against enslaved blacks (Bentley 1991; Clark 1993; Hudson 1970; Willis 1971). White Carolinians used the enslaved blacks’ fear of the Catawbas and other tribes to discourage slaves from attempting escape beyond the settled frontiers. At times, Indians in the Southeast did raid remote plantations and enslaved, killed, tortured, or scalped blacks, along with their white masters, irrespective of ethnicity. As Dr. John Brickell noted of early slave uprisings in the Carolinas:

When they [enslaved blacks] have been guilty of these barbarous and disobedient Proceedings, they generally fly to the Woods, but as soon as the *Indians* have Notice from the *Christians* of their being there, they disperse them; killing some, others flying for Mercy to the *Christians* rather than to fall

into the others Hands, who have a natural aversion to the *Blacks*, and put them to death with the most exquisite Tortures they can invent, whenever they catch them. [Brickell 1968 [1737]:273]

Thus, it was not difficult for plantation masters to portray the Catawbas to their subjugated charges as cruel and inhuman (Willis 1971).

In pure military terms, the Catawbas were not a realistic military threat to the British Empire or the Cherokees after 1763, but they were a psychological weapon. The Catawbas martial reputation, combat expertise, and continued services as a paramilitary police force against enslaved blacks allowed the Catawbas to live somewhat autonomously “on borrowed time.” Regardless of their diminished numbers, the Catawbas were still “a force in being,” just as they had been in the decades of the 1740s and 1750s.<sup>1</sup> The psychological threat of their comparatively small but potentially highly lethal force, derived from their long-standing martial mystique, allowed the Catawbas to negotiate and preserve their place as a distinctive minority in American society from a position of influence. As Hudson (1970:58) observed, “the Catawbas of the late eighteenth century occupied their social position [in South Carolina] by virtue of the role that the planters and [government officials] *thought* they played.” Unlike the coastal tribes, which were more rapidly decimated by disease and warfare to the reduced status of accommodating “settlement Indians” with little or no autonomy (Milling 1940), the Catawbas retained a relative degree of socio-political autonomy and held on to their status as a sovereign Indian nation through 1840 (Hudson 1970, 1979).

Despite their stalwart service to the Carolina colonists and the perpetual gifts or payments, the colonial government often neglected the Catawbas until their living conditions had devolved to particularly mean states. In 1753, Robert Steill, in a letter to Governor Glen, reported, due to intense fighting with Northern Iroquois raiders on the Carolina frontier, that:

They (Catawba) have been in a very parishable Condition all this Summer. They could not hunt, for the Enemy, and were obliged to give away what Cloathing they had for Corn, and since that was gone, they have lived entirely upon Blackberries... They want Ammunition very much and a little Cloathing would be very acceptable to them. If your Excellency thinks proper to order what few Goods there are at the Congree Fort, *this is what they expect* as they are our steady Friends and a good Guard to our Back Settlements. [McDowell 1958:454; emphasis added]

Such accounts reflect the reality of the situation, while South Carolinians prided themselves on their patronage of the Catawbas. In a

1769 report to the Earl of Hillsborough, the South Carolina Council boasted:

Their (Catawba) Complaints when injured by any White Men have been attended to and redressed by the Governor...their Men accompanied the King's Troops and the Troops in the pay of the Province in the two Cherokee Expeditions during which their Men were in the pay of and their Women and Children were fed and clothed by this Province for proof of which we refer to the Journals of the Council and Assembly. [Clark 1993:227]

Beyond the more external aspects of Catawba militarism discussed thus far, habitual warfare and the associated warrior "caste" system influenced Catawba internal society as well. As with most southeastern Indian societies (Hudson 1976), Catawba chiefs, council members, and respected male elders typically were proven warriors or veteran war leaders during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Blumer 1987; Merrell 1986, 1991; Watson 1995). As male rank and status were generally achieved with respect to one's accomplishments in war, men who did not validate their masculinity by distinguishing themselves in combat had to work, in some cases, at menial tasks, such as tending fires and serving other men (Hudson 1976). The expected pursuit of war honors, "one of the main preoccupations of Southeastern Indian men" (Hudson 1976:325), usually came at a great societal cost. During General John Forbes' disastrous 1758 expedition to destroy the French garrison at Fort Du Quesne, two prominent Catawba war party leaders, Captains Bullen and French, were killed in an ambush near Fort Cumberland. The young Colonel George Washington reported:

The loss we sustain by the death of these two Indians, is at this juncture very considerable, as they were remarkable for their bravery, and attachment to Our interest; particularly poor Bullen whom (and the other) [French] we buried with Military Honours. [Fitzpatrick 1931b:274]

Even when the Catawbas were not actively fighting, an overriding martial spirit and the male social need to exhibit prowess in war (Hudson 1976), albeit in altered form, influenced their actions. After the American Revolution, South Carolina State Militia "muster was a time for the Catawbas to visit with their old comrades in arms and a place to show off their skills as warriors since there was no longer an occasion for the war party so basic to [Catawba] Indian culture" (Flynn 1991:148).

During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the Catawba "kings" (later "generals" with the coming of the Republic) mentioned in various records all led war parties against the Northern Iroquois or fought

with the British in the major colonial wars (Blumer 1987; Merrell 1986, 1991; Watson 1995). Several American Civil War veterans served as chiefs during Reconstruction, and many World War I and World War II veterans later served as chiefs or tribal council members (Blumer 1987; Watson 1995). As the effects of Catawba militarism faded over time, associated social practices changed. After 1865, many, but not all, chiefs were war veterans (Blumer 1987; Watson 1995). Similar patterns are found with other American Indian tribes across the United States (Department of Defense 1998). In recent decades, Catawba military veterans have been highly esteemed in the Nation, but there are no positions within the tribal government that require military service as a prerequisite for civil service, and no particular social or ritual tasks must be performed by veterans. Catawba veterans, however, are socially recognized during festivals through their participation in a special dance on the Reservation (Thomas Blumer, personal communication 2002).

With the end of the Catawba-Iroquois wars in the late 1700s, James Merrell concluded:

Without the central thread provided by the Iroquois wars...the entire fabric of Catawba warfare came unraveled, and Catawbas stopped fighting the Iroquois or anyone else...Its end, however gradual, must have had a profound effect on the Nation. How would "crying blood" be silenced, a young man's ambitions satisfied.... For a time some warriors substituted runaway slaves or British troops for native enemies.... After 1800 the wounds of warfare healed.... Only the memories of old battles remained...and the last Catawba warrior passed away. [Merrell 1987:132]

While this statement is generally accurate, Catawba men actively sought military service in the wars of the nineteenth century and perhaps in the twentieth century as well, in order to perpetuate the "central thread," albeit in modified form, of their society. Indeed, the Catawbas' anger when not invited to fight for South Carolina in the War of 1812 relates to the very issue raised by Merrell (1987). Such issues, individual social aspirations, and the culturally influenced desire to fight for honor, as well as the desire to follow the warrior tradition (see Holm 1996), entered into the complex mix of reasons why Catawba men sought to participate in numerous wars from the colonial period through the modern era. In the face of increasing economic marginalization and social injustice during the post-colonial period, the Catawba warriors "soldiered on" for a country and state that largely neglected them, especially after 1840 (Hudson 1970; Merrell 1991).

Beyond the more abstract aspects of Catawba militarism are the material aspects. Colonial officials typically "paid" Catawba chiefs, war



leaders, warriors, and their families with “presents” of arms, trade goods, or food supplies for their alliances and martial services, or to track and recover escaped black slaves. Moreover, the Anglo-Americans paid cash bounties, or “premiums,” for enemy Indian scalps taken during the major imperial wars and during the American Revolution (Kirkland and Kennedy 1905; Mahon 1988; McDowell 1958, 1969, 1992; Milling 1940; Shaw 1931). For turning against the Yamassee coalition in 1715, a trading factory was positioned near the Catawba settlements to facilitate the Catawbas’ access to highly desired European goods (Merrell 1991). One colonial observer wryly noted that “presents of considerable value were also necessary, to preserve the friendship” of the Catawbas during the Yamassee War (Hewatt 1971 [1779]:233). As witnesses to the genocidal outcomes of the Westo, Tuscarora, and Yamassee Wars, the Catawbas likely realized that without firmly established trade relationships, especially for the acquisition of guns and ammunition, they could not survive the readily apparent arms race—the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century militarization of the North American tribal zone (see Ethridge 2003; Ferguson and Whitehead 1999a). By remaining at peace with the English, the Catawbas *preserved* their trade relationship. By going to war with the English as stalwart military auxiliaries, the Catawbas *enhanced* their trade relationship and sociocultural autonomy in a native world increasingly manipulated and controlled by Europeans.

Records from the Seven Years’ War period indicate that Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina officials provided a diversity of gifts, which included: sugar, rum, wine, coats, shirts, breeches, ruffled shirts, laced hats, belts, buttons, thread, scissors, blankets, cloth, bound trunks, mirrors, beads, brass wire, ear bobs, hawk bells, combs, paints, brass kettles, tin pots, glass decanters, clasp knives, hatchets, iron tools, horse tack, swords, muskets, musket rifles, powder, ball, and gunflints. Moreover, Charles Town officials paid for services rendered to the Catawbas by European craftsmen, doctors, and apothecaries for gun repairs, saddle repairs, medicines, and medical treatment (McDowell 1958, 1969, 1992). Until the collapse of the Indian slave trade in the mid-1700s, captives taken in raids against enemy tribes were another important source of profit for the Catawbas. While some captives were adopted or otherwise held in the Nation as slaves to replace Catawba war losses (Bentley 1991; Merrell 1987; Richter 2001; Wallace 1972), many successful Catawba raiders regularly traded or sold their war captives to Carolina slavers in the Charles Town markets, who primarily resold them to Low Country, Middle-Atlantic, or West Indies planters (Bentley 1991; Gallay 2002; Milling 1940). Moreover, grateful Carolina planters and

colonial administrators paid Catawba warriors in cash or trade goods for capturing runaway black slaves, or when the Catawbas squelched black slave uprisings (Bentley 1991; Willis 1971). At the Augusta Conference of 1763, colonial officials set the lucrative price for a captured and returned black slave at “one musket and three blankets” (Willis 1971:106).

Fighting alongside British troops during the Seven Years’ War provided the Catawbas, both at home and abroad, with arms, food provisions, and sundry presents. Early in the war, James Glen gave each of King Hagler’s subordinate chiefs new pistols, while individual warriors received guns and ammunition as well as food rations and other presents from British garrisons in combat zones (Fitzpatrick 1931a, 1931b; Gregg 1991 [1867]; Hamilton 1899; McDowell 1958, 1969; Milling 1940; Saunders 1993a). Beyond such material incentives, warriors were paid cash scalp bounties for each enemy scalp taken. Virginia paid 5-pounds per scalp, while South Carolina apparently paid as much as 10-pounds per scalp (Fitzpatrick 1931a; Hamilton 1899; Kegley 1938; Kirkland and Kennedy 1905). Intensive warfare, however, diminished the Catawbas’ ability to feed their own people (McDowell 1958), despite the intermittent integration of Indian captives taken by Catawba warriors as slaves or adoptees.

Combat deaths incurred on campaigns, as well as fielding and provisioning warriors for long treks north, west, and south of Catawba territory, sapped labor and supplies needed to support families at home. Additionally, Catawba women often accompanied warriors in the field and suffered death or wounds alongside their male counterparts (Fitzpatrick 1931b; James 1971). As intertribal conflicts between Indian societies throughout the East escalated in the mid-eighteenth century, Catawba warriors were killed or incapacitated, while women and children were killed or captured in the Catawba settlements to serve as slaves or adoptees among groups as diverse as the Natchez, Chickasaws, Cherokees, and the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy (Fenton 1978; Merrell 1987; Milling 1940; Richter 2001; Robinson 1996; Wallace 1972). Although there is little evidence for such actions before the Seven Years’ War, North and South Carolina officials, vying for Catawba loyalties, sent allotments of beef and corn to the Catawba settlements in 1756, 1757 and 1769 (McDowell 1969; Saunders 1993a, 1993b). By the late 1760s, however, the perceived military value of the Catawba paramilitary force diminished, and the decline in status is reflected in a 1767 list of presents distributed to several different allied tribes by the British Southern Department of Indian Affairs (Shaw 1931).

As Catawba warriors made the later transition from ethnic soldiers of the colonial era to enlisted ethnic soldiers in the American armies of the Revolutionary and Federal periods, enlistment bounties, service pay, and eventual pension payments or land grants (in a few cases), as well as occasional relief payments to dependent Catawba families, replaced the colonial-era scalp bounties and trade good payments (Brown 1966; Flynn 1991; Merrell 1991; Sarrett 1998; Watson 1995). Given the Catawbas' traditional subsistence regime, focused on hunting and gardening, there were limited opportunities for them to earn money during the post-colonial era, except for commercial pottery production (see Davis and Riggs this volume), reservation land leases (Merrell 1991), and ethnic soldiering. After 1775, individual Catawba soldiers apparently spent enlistment bounties and pay on food supplies, spirits, and a host of consumer goods produced in European or American factories (for an archaeological overview, see Davis and Riggs this volume). In addition to gifts and payments made to Catawba soldiers during, or after, the American Revolution, the South Carolina Legislature reimbursed the Catawbas for horses, cattle, and hogs provided to supply Rebel partisans or lost to British forces during the war (Flynn 1991; Watson 1995).

After 1818, some surviving Catawba veterans received monthly pensions for their Revolutionary War services (Blumer 1987; Brown 1966). The situation was somewhat similar during the American Civil War. With most of the Nation's able-bodied men deployed with the Confederate Army, living conditions on the Reservation, as in many rural areas across the South, were even more difficult than before the war. By 1863, the State of South Carolina increased annual funds to the Nation and allowed families with men in Confederate service to draw additional money for dependent family relief (Blumer 1987). During the war period, South Carolina paid Catawba soldiers both an initial enlistment bounty and a monthly wage (Shock 2001)—for what Confederate notes were worth by 1865! After the war, surviving Catawba Confederate veterans and their widows, if not remarried, received “Confederate pensions” after 1888 (Blumer 1987). Thus, for military services as ethnic soldiers in the nineteenth century, which served both internal and external social needs, the Catawbas received money, trade goods, weapons, food supplies, and varying degrees of autonomy or sporadic official recognition and protection.

Despite contemporary accounts that portrayed the nineteenth century Catawbas as wretchedly poor people (Calvin Jones Papers; Clark 1973; Mills 1971 [1826]; Scaife 1930 [1896]), recent archaeological investigations have yielded exceptionally diverse artifact assemblages

indicative of the Catawbas' full integration into the early American market system (see Davis and Riggs this volume). Despite great adversity and many social setbacks throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the socially positive aspects of Catawba militarism coalesced with other factors to preserve the Catawba Nation.

### **Archaeology of Catawba Militarism**

The archaeological manifestations of Catawba militarism are as difficult to assess as our historical understanding of the issue. How might the collective observations discussed here affect the material record on Catawba archaeological sites in the Carolinas? At a macro-scale, Catawba settlement patterns certainly reflect, at least partially, the Catawbas' fortunes at war. In the Coalescent (1716–1759) and Late Colonial (1760–1775) periods (see Davis and Riggs this volume), the Catawba-Iroquois wars reshaped more dispersed seventeenth century settlement patterns as smaller allied and subject tribes moved under the protective umbrella of Catawba militarism. While a complex myriad of factors played into settlement arrangement decisions (e.g., natural/cultural environments, subsistence regimes, trade relationships, and population pressure), early-to-mid-eighteenth century Catawba towns along the lower Catawba River, at least through the late 1760s, either were heavily fortified or incorporated associated fortifications to shelter the local populace from enemy attacks (Figure 1).

In response to intensified inter-tribal warfare, the Catawbas apparently further modified their settlement patterns in mid-1700s to better protect their communities and to enhance their abilities to operate as ethnic soldiers. As James Glen observed, "...the Situation of their Towns makes them stronger than any Indian Nation of double their Number for they are very compact all their Gun Men...can be called together in two hours time" (Merrell 1987:122). Recent documentary study and archaeological survey data suggest that mid-eighteenth century Catawba towns, to which Glen referred, were fortified and well-situated as "hilltop forts," commanding the heights of the Catawba River valley (see Davis and Riggs, Figure 2, this volume).

If such a settlement pattern was beneficial in conflict situations, however, it proved extremely detrimental during disease epidemics. Especially in 1738–1739 and 1758–1759, Catawba diplomats and warriors exposed to smallpox in Charles Town (1738) and on the Fort Duquesne expedition (1758) transmitted the disease to their families at home (see McReynolds this volume). Unfortunately, the concentrated settlements,



Figure 1. Detail from a circa 1730 map, “Road to the Cuttauboos.” Note the bastioned fortifications of “Nassau Town” (Nassaw), the Catawba’s principal town, and the satellite palisaded village inhabited by the Waterees. Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Washington, DC (original in The National Archives, London).

while beneficial for the common defense, proved ruinous when close-quarter living conditions stimulated the rapid spread of disease. During the 1758–1759 epidemic, approximately one-half of the Nation perished in the settlements. While the disease raged, King Hagler and a large Catawba contingent, apparently healthy and resistant, moved down the Catawba River and established two new settlements at Pine Tree Hill, near present day Camden, South Carolina.

By the end of the Seven Year’s War in 1763, the Catawbas returned to their old settlement areas, upriver from Camden, but stability was short-lived. Due to their military support of the Rebel cause during the American Revolution, the Catawbas’ settlement system again completely collapsed in the summer of 1780 when the British army invaded South Carolina. Catawba families, fearful of British reprisal, evacuated first to North Carolina and then to Virginia, reportedly to live among the Algonkian Pamunkeys in the Chesapeake Tidewater. After open hostilities

ended in 1781, most Catawba families returned to the Nation's reservation, but found their homes, crops, and livestock destroyed—the cost of supporting rebellion (Brown 1966; Merrell 1991; Milling 1940; Mills 1972 [1826]; Rountree 1979; Williams 1943).

In terms of material life, various trade records define the nature of “presents” or gifts made to the Catawbas for their colonial military services through 1775. From the late seventeenth century through the Yamasee War period, Virginia traders dominated the Indian trade in the Carolina backcountry. South Carolina traders, however, vigorously pursued trade with the Catawbas and aggressively pushed the Virginians out of South Carolina by cutting “prices” or resorting to physical violence to drive out competitors (McDowell 1991; Merrell 1991). The Catawbas typically obtained diverse goods from the deerskin trade, but colonial officials presented special gifts to warriors when they participated in campaigns and to successive kings and village headmen in return for military alliances. South Carolina officials courted the Catawbas’ military support and loyalties well before the Seven Years’ War. In an effort to cut the Virginians out of the Carolina trade and to gain more influence with the Catawbas, the South Carolina Commissioners of the Indian Trade ordered in 1718 that exchange rates for trade goods be lowered for the Catawbas (McDowell 1992). Despite the “Disadvantage the Publick may be under, from the Lowness of the Rates and Prices,” it is in the “Interest and Safety of this Government, to prosecute our Trade with those [Catawba] Indians” (McDowell 1992:207). Such actions suggest that the Catawbas’ position as a martial force of ethnic soldiers allowed them to perhaps procure more trade goods than less powerful “settlement” tribes in the Low Country region, given the same quantity of deerskins traded. By 1752, however, trade administrators attempted to curb apparent excesses and advised the commander of the trading factory at Fort Congaree: “There is not any Occasion to give the Catawbas any more of the said Presents than in Proportion to what is to be given to the other Indians contiguous to and in Alliance with Carolina and Georgia” (McDowell 1958:201). Although the colonial administration apparently downgraded the Catawbas’ special status in 1752, it quickly rebounded with the outbreak of the Seven Years’ War in 1756. South Carolina’s Lieutenant Governor William Bull reportedly presented King Hagler a fine “silver-mounted rifle” and a solid gold gorget for his leadership in the Cherokee expeditions (McCants 1927; Ward 1940).

Perhaps the most concrete way we might assess the material aspects of Catawba militarism is the most obvious—the presence of military related accoutrements on Catawba sites. Presently, the most famous

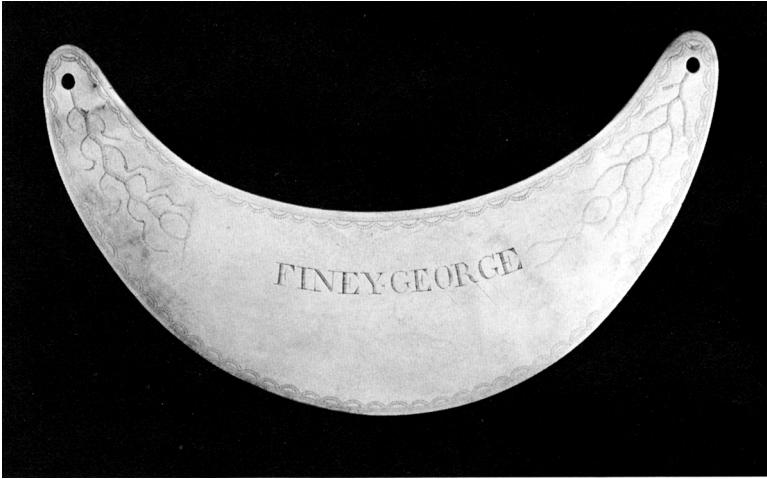


Figure 2. Engraved silver gorget presented to the Revolutionary War soldier Piney George (Pine Tree George). Note the silversmith incorrectly engraved the name as “Finey George.” Courtesy of the University of North Carolina Press (Jones 1983).

recovered object, although looted from its original burial context, is the silver gorget made for Revolutionary War Captain Pinetree George or “Piney George” (National Park Service 1998) (Figure 2). This object has since been repatriated to the Catawba Indian Nation. Other known Catawba military objects, likely recovered from looted burials, include two War of 1812 period uniform devices (Figure 3). The context of these objects suggests that many military accoutrements were interred as burial goods, but military coat buttons (post-1775) and other more mundane martial accoutrements associated with Catawba militarism likely entered the archaeological record in household contexts.

In special circumstances of major wars, colonial patrons sent sundry presents to the Catawba kings or their headmen to encourage them to fight for the British, but from a material standpoint unique gifts, such as silver gorgets made for war party captains, or King Hagler’s golden gorget and silver-mounted rifle, may not necessarily manifest themselves archaeologically, except in mortuary contexts. In 1815, Calvin Jones met General Scott and Colonel Ayers, Revolutionary War veterans and principal Catawba Nation leaders (Watson 1995), and reported Catawbas, presumably warriors, wearing silver “plates [i.e., gorgets] on the neck with their names on them” (Calvin Jones Papers). Special gifts, such as the gorgets noted by Jones, likely exited the living cultural system as burial goods, especially in the case of deceased warriors, or as raid plunder



Figure 3. Federal-era brass uniform devices, probably headgear badges, looted from a Catawba burial in the 1960s. Courtesy of the Research Laboratories of Archaeology, University of North Carolina.

collected by enemy war parties in the eighteenth century. In other instances, warriors' payments were, archaeologically speaking, highly perishable objects that included food supplies, gunpowder, coats, breeches, shirts, hats, stockings, fabrics, ribbons, and spirits (Fitzpatrick 1931a, 1931b; McDowell 1958, 1969; Saunders 1993a). Accordingly, little evidence of such gifts will survive in the archaeological record. Other payment goods were commonly traded items pulled from trade good stocks in colonial market centers such as Charles Town, Williamsburg, or Brunswick Town.

Given the informal nature of colonial military uniforms on the North American frontier (McMaster 1971), especially outfits worn by *ad hoc* European militia units and ethnic soldiers (Figure 4) before and during the American Revolution, it is highly unlikely that any diagnostic military accoutrements, other than weapons parts and ammunition, will be found on pre-1775 Catawba sites. With the coming of the Revolution, however, Catawba warriors apparently obtained some American military uniform components, such as uniform coats, from the Rebels. While we have no contemporary images of Catawba soldiers, John Trumbull's 1790 sketch of a Creek warrior, Fus-hatchee Miko, is informative. The striking warrior in Figure 5 is generally representative of a southeastern Indian warrior of the early post-colonial era (note the military style uniform coat, gorget, and individually unique headgear of the ethnic soldier). One post-





Figure 4. Mesquakie warrior, circa 1766. Note the traditional summer dress (leggings, moccasins, loincloth), trade musket, and unique adornments of the colonial-era ethnic soldier. Courtesy of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University Library (Carver 1781).

Revolutionary War account of an old Catawba veteran mentioned that he rushed off to pull on an “old Greencloth Coat, with gold binding” for an astonished Reservation visitor in 1798 (Merrell 1991:219). Certain South Carolina ranger units wore similarly described uniform coats, green in color, during the war (McMaster 1971).

Other war materials provided to the Catawbas by the colonial governments typically included: guns, gunpowder, ball, shot, gunflints, powder horns, knives, swords and hatchets (Fitzpatrick 1931a, 1931b; McDowell 1958, 1969; Saunders 1993a). Such items, however, were part of the regular trade network and always available in some quantity at some price. Moreover, Eastern Woodlands Indians, at least through the colonial era, rarely preferred the heavy martial muskets used by British or French regulars (Brown 1980; Hamilton 1982, 1987). Through the early 1800s, the Catawbas were generally armed with trade guns, such as long-barreled, small-bore muskets, so-called “trade fusils” (“fuzees”), martial pistols, and over time, musket rifles. Limited documentary evidence (Lumpkin 1981; McCants 1927; Milling 1940; Ward 1940) and the results of recent archaeological investigations at Catawba sites tentatively support these



Figure 5. Creek warrior, Fus-hatchee Miko, sketched by John Trumbull (1790). Note the military issue coat, silver gorget, and unique adornments of the post-colonial-era ethnic soldier. Courtesy of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University Library (Trumbull 1905).

observations (Figure 6). Imperial officials provided many weapons and the Catawbas, apparently “armed to the teeth” by the early eighteenth century, obtained other small arms through the deerskin trade network. While expendable war stocks, such as powder, ball, shot, and gunflints, were consumed in the act of war, possible caches of such items, if found archaeologically, may represent hunting stocks rather than war stocks. Thus, the potential material manifestations of Catawba militarism will be ephemeral. With adequate samples, however, we might tease out differences in trade good assemblage richness and diversity between various eighteenth century Catawba towns, or perhaps between contemporaneous Catawba and Cherokee sites.

### **To What End?**

During the interludes between the litany of North American wars from 1670 to 1865, British and Anglo-American officials in Virginia and the Carolinas often neglected the Catawbas’ grievances and living conditions, but when potential attackers loomed on the horizon, the Catawba Nation was invariably called into action. At the zenith of their

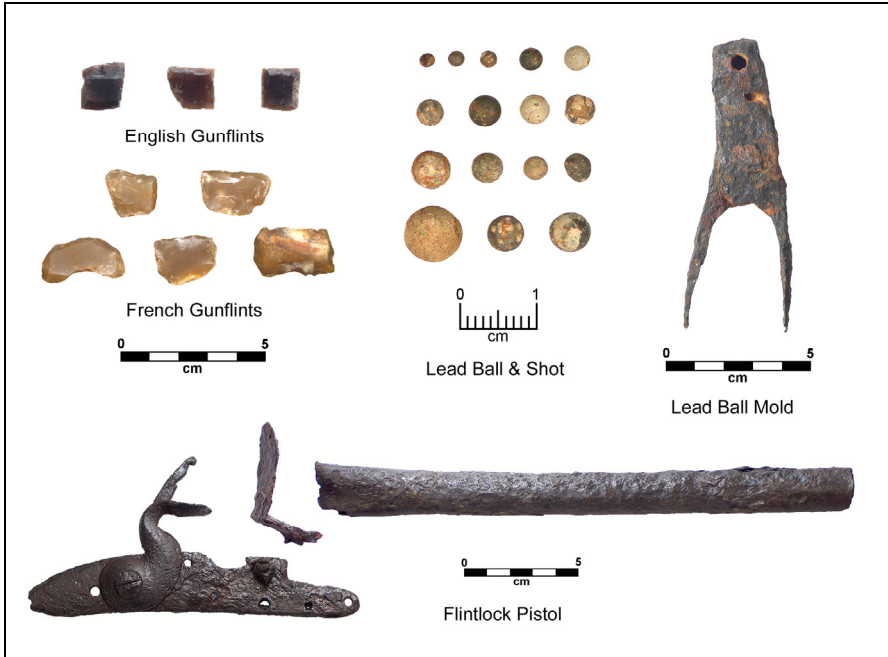


Figure 6. Representative sample of late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century artifacts recovered from Catawba houses at the Old Town, New Town, and Bowers sites. Courtesy of the Research Laboratories of Archaeology, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

influence and military power in the 1740s and 1750s, the Catawbas negotiated their world with a degree of autonomy long unknown to the remnants of once populous Indian societies scattered across the Piedmont and Coastal Plain provinces of the Carolinas, but bouts of pestilence and protracted warfare took their toll. With the end of the Seven Years' War, and perpetual fears of Northern Iroquois raids but a memory by the 1770s, Carolina settlers eyed Catawba lands in earnest, and expansionists within the colony conveniently forgot their stalwart allies, as well as promises made under duress of war. Particularly after South Carolina Governor William Lyttleton's administration (1757–1760), white Carolinians had no qualms about settling on, or farming in, Catawba territory despite official restrictions (Hudson 1970; Merrell 1991). Throughout the period of King Hagler's leadership, he was both aggressive and politically perceptive in his overtures toward and manipulations of colonial officials from South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia (Merrell 1986). Hagler, an astute and eloquent orator, continually sought to enhance the position of his people and his nation by playing the governors of the three colonies off against one another—"when he died much of the glory of the Catawba

Nation died with him” (Ward 1940:2). Problems worsened as the Catawba population continued to dwindle in the late colonial era and the fears of Catawba retribution diminished (Hudson 1970; Merrell 1991). Through time, the Catawbas’ military sacrifices were further ignored, or considered of little consequence, by the very people the Catawbas opted to defend.

As such, the Catawbas’ perpetual loyalty to the Anglo-Americans seemingly gained them little, except higher mortality rates and incremental losses of homeland territory. As conditions continued to deteriorate in the early 1800s, an 1822 petition for a Revolutionary War pension from Peter Harris is especially poignant:

I fought the British for your sake. The British have disappeared nor have I gained by their defeat. I pursue deer for subsistence; the deer are disappearing and I must starve.... The hand which fought the British for your liberty is now open for your relief. In my youth I bled in battle that you might be independent; let not my heart in my old age bleed for the want of your commiseration. [Scaife 1930:16]

Catawba population losses from disease outbreaks and intensive warfare dramatically reduced their martial capabilities by 1776, but despite the precipitous decline, many Catawba warriors served with both North and South Carolina Regiments in the American Revolution. Catawba service in the Rebel army during the American Revolution was, in many ways, the Catawbas’ “finest performance” (Merrell 1991:215) of fighting prowess and loyalty in their perpetual role as ethnic soldiers.

The Catawbas’ Revolutionary War participation and other Antebellum period services, such as policing slaves, continued to protect Catawba sovereignty and 1763 reservation territory until 1840. In 1840, South Carolina “terminated” most state services and the state’s sponsorship of the Catawba Reservation with the signing of the Treaty of Nation Ford. With this treaty, the Catawbas ceded rights to their reservation to the government of South Carolina for a mere pittance (Hudson 1970, 1979; Merrell 1991; Milling 1940; Rountree 1979; Swanton 1979). In 1839, the Catawba Nation’s chief, General Kegg, spoke to state commissioners negotiating the reservation purchase. General Kegg (Scaife 1930:7) rebuked the commissioners and stated, “When they [the Catawbas] were a strong nation and the State weak they came to her support, and now when the State was strong and the Catawbas weak she ought to assist them.” A century later, Catawbas were still echoing such rhetoric to the federal government, but living conditions had changed little to their benefit in later years (United States Senate 1930).

With the loss of the Nation’s homeland, the Cherokees, despite ancient animosities, invited the disenfranchised Catawbas to resettle

among their people in western North Carolina—the beginning of the Catawba Diaspora. Some Catawbas moved to Virginia to live with the Pamunkeys, while a few families managed to stay in North and South Carolina (Hudson 1979; Milling 1940; Speck 1939). Approximately 100 Catawbas moved to the Cherokee Reservation in western North Carolina, but ancient enmities soon surfaced. Friendly relations quickly deteriorated and most of the Catawba contingent moved back to South Carolina in the late 1840s (Hudson 1979; Neely 1979; Watson 1995). Some Catawbas sought refuge among the Chickasaws in Arkansas, but the Chickasaws rejected the overture. The Choctaws in Oklahoma later accepted this group (Covington 1954; Swanton 1979). By 1852, those who chose to return to South Carolina were given a token annual payment and some 650 acres of poor land, a tract administered by the South Carolina government within the bounds of the former 144,000-acre reservation (Hudson 1979; Scaife 1930). Although the details of the governmental compensations, in terms of annual funds, government services, and land rights, fluctuated over time, the Catawbas were never adequately compensated, despite their continued diligent service to the state and the nation in America's wars of the mid-nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As the astute King Hagler observed in 1755, "the White People spoke much and performed but little" (McDowell 1969:86). For American Indians across the United States, the trend continues.

The archaeologically oriented observations offered here are tentative suggestions regarding how we might perceive and assess the historical influence of Catawba militarism in the archaeological record. As the University of North Carolina's Catawba Project continues to develop, and as new data are collected from a diachronic sample of Catawba sites in the Carolinas, our present understanding of Catawba militarism will certainly evolve. The limited scope of this study lacks the nuances of more detailed syntheses of Catawba history, such as Merrell's (1991) groundbreaking volume. Indeed, the historical overview presented in this article simply lays a foundation for future research. I have incorporated information from a number of primary sources in this study, but have relied upon numerous secondary sources without the benefit of closely studying the obscurely archived documents cited in these sources. As I have only "scratched the surface," perhaps future research in the area of Catawba militarism, fully integrating archaeological, ethnohistorical, and historical data, will provide a more nuanced understanding of this anthropologically important issue.

The Catawbas, as all peoples past and present, typically prefer peace over war, but in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries they lived in the

shatter zone on the violent edge of empire. In such a hazardous and uncertain colonial context, the Catawbas were forced to adapt and resist physical destruction or disappear as a distinctive society. Actively responding to complex external forces, the Catawbas exploited “opportunities” thrust upon them during the struggle for empires by cultivating a militaristic stance and projecting a bellicose attitude toward their enemies *and* their fickle, undependable Anglo-American allies. Unlike many other Indian societies found in the Carolinas at Contact, the Catawbas emerged from the chaos of colonialism to live and thrive in the heart of their traditional homeland. Although many social factors not discussed here, especially the cultural tenacity and indomitable spirit of the Catawba people, contributed to this achievement, Catawba militarism undoubtedly played a significant role in the survival of the Catawba cultural identity we continue to acknowledge today.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> For the notion of a “force in being,” I borrow the theoretical concept of “fleet in being” from naval warfare studies. A fleet in being is a naval force that exerts strategic influence without ever leaving port. If the fleet left port to face an enemy, it could lose in battle and no longer influence enemy actions, but by remaining in port, it serves as a psychological weapon. The enemy is forced to guard against it through the deployment of additional forces or diplomatic action. Thus, the fleet in being, even if numerically inferior to potential enemy forces, exerts power that influences enemy actions (see Holger 1990).

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