Settlers and Refugees: Reframing the "Hochstetler Massacre" of 1757

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In 1757, during the "French and Indian War," Lenape and Shawnee warriors attacked the Amish Northkill settlement in Berks County, Pennsylvania, killing Jacob Hochstetler's wife and two children and taking Jacob and two sons captive.[1] Since the 1800s, Amish throughout the United States remember the incident as the "Hochstetler Massacre"—where Indians victimized the Hochstetlers regardless of Jacob's supposed refusal to let his sons fight back. In their textbooks, Amish children learn a summary of Hochstetler's story—one that valorizes his nonresistance and demonizes his attackers.[2] The legend of the "Hochstetler Massacre" persists in various forms, from the 1912 genealogy posted on the website of the local historical society to numerous visitors who make the pilgrimage to the former Hochstetler homestead site.[3] This binary, uncritical narrative (Indigenous versus European settler, "pagan" warrior culture versus Christian nonresistance) is cluttered with obvious complexities left largely unexamined.

However, some descendants and scholars have begun to present more complex interpretations of the attack.[4] While these narratives remove some of the blame for the attack from the Indigenous warriors, they sometimes present highly personalized versions of the story. In this telling, the attack was occasioned, in part, by an earlier

refusal of Jacob's wife (name unknown) to provide a hungry Indigenous warrior with food. Having been turned away from the Hochstetler home, the warrior marked the porch with charcoal supposedly indicating that the family was now singled out for a future attack. This version of the attack imparts an obvious moral lesson: by refusing to show Christian love, the Hochstetler family courted the hostility of their Indigenous neighbours.[5] Despite its more nuanced telling, this interpretation remains fraught with problems. For one, it fails to account for the larger geopolitical conflicts within which the Hochstetler attack took place. These conflicts ensnared not only the Hochstetler family, but numerous other families settling on the Pennsylvania frontier.[6]

The purpose of this article is to reframe the Hochstetler attack within the larger context of refugees competing for land and resources on a frontier contested by the French and British empires and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. The attack on the Hochstetler family crystallizes and unveils the structures of what anthropologist Patrick Wolfe has called "settler colonialism"—the effort by European colonists to "replace the natives on their land" and use imported labour to extract natural resources.[7] According to Wolfe, since colonists brought their own labour and production methods such as European-style agriculture, they could eliminate Indigenous communities and cultures wholesale.[8] While he is keen to point out that settler colonization is "a structure rather than event," we maintain that snapshots of events such as the attack on the Hochstetlers do nonetheless demonstrate how structural transformation unfolded in a specific time and place.[9] Reframing the 1757 attack on the Hochstetler family to explore the relationships to the land of those involved and the context of the French and Indian War provides a fresh perspective. We argue that Anabaptist settlers like the Hochstetlers were conscripts of British imperial colonization schemes.[10] Indeed, their time in Alsace and the Palatinate conditioned them to be ideal settler colonialists because they brought their labour and agricultural expertise to those devastated regions. Historians frequently overlook the involvement of Anabaptists in settler colonialism in part because of the tradition's emphasis on "separation" from the world. They also ignore Anabaptists' complicity in displacing Indigenous peoples because many of them lived in Pennsylvania, a province whose founder is often regarded as mindful of Indigenous concerns. The prevalence of these misconceptions compels us to re-examine the role early Anabaptist settlers played in the unfolding of settler colonialism in eighteenth-century British America. The Hochstetler attack illustrates the complexities of a fact hiding in plain view: Anabaptist settlers were refugee colonists

involved in conflicts between the imperial powers of the British, French, and Haudenosaunee.

The Conditioning Experience of the European Borderlands

Anabaptist migrants to Pennsylvania gained experience as proto-settler colonialists while residing as refugees in the border regions between France and the Holy Roman Empire. Forced into exile from Bern, Switzerland, during the latter half of the seventeenth century, they had a long history of resettlement.[11] Swiss Anabaptists trace their roots to 1525 when followers of Ulrich Zwingli, Zurich's Protestant reformer, began to baptize one another in their attempts to further reform the church. As in other places throughout Europe, their practice of believer's baptism and their refusal to swear oaths, serve in the military, or attend Protestant church services resulted in fines, imprisonment, and death sentences.[12] By the early seventeenth century, government officials in Zurich, Basel, Bern, and Schaffhausen stopped imposing death sentences on Anabaptists because it encouraged martyrdom. However, they continued to confiscate their property and imprison or banish them.[13]

Throughout the seventeenth century, Swiss Anabaptists suffered waves of persecution. For example, in the 1630s and 1640s, Zurich authorities interrogated their leaders, imprisoned men and women, confiscated the farms of forty-seven families, and forced them into exile.[14] To keep the group from expanding, Bern officials followed the same strategy and banished Anabaptists. In 1672, according to their church leaders, Anabaptists thought Bern officials would let them stay (as they had often done before) if they "kept quiet and withdrew to ourselves and kept ourselves hidden." Instead, the canton's government gave them fourteen days to leave, without granting them time to sell their property.[15] Following migration patterns of earlier exiles, they moved into Alsace and the Palatinate—areas that today belong to France and Germany. By 1672, more than six hundred people from the canton had migrated into these regions. There they settled on the estates of petty nobles desperate for people and labour needed to rebuild lands devastated by the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648).[16]

These Anabaptist exiles were refugees. In the wake of internecine religious conflicts in Europe, the French verb *réfugier* (to take refuge) was applied specifically to those fleeing religious persecution.[17] As Huguenots, French followers of Jean Calvin, migrated from France to Britain, the word "refugee" entered the English language.[18] The word did not retain its religious connotations for long.

By the time of the French and Indian War, the word "refugee" applied to anyone fleeing an unsustainable living situation regardless of religious affiliation. The term "refugee" is thus a useful designation embodying the word in its original context for Anabaptists who left Switzerland and also for the Lenapes and Shawnees who fled their ancestral lands to seek refuge in the Ohio River Valley.[19]

Anabaptist refugees in Europe were not made full subjects in their new homes but were granted specific privileges. Their legal status in Alsace (where the Amish formed their own congregations in the 1690s) was as *étrangers:* foreigners whose rights were dependent upon the indulgence of regional authorities.[20] This unstable legal category was both a curse and a blessing. On the one hand, Anabaptists in Alsace could not purchase long-term leases of land like their Catholic or Reformed neighbours. Nor could they pass on land leases to their children. Instead, Anabaptists renewed their leases on yearly or short-term bases through the payment of a non-feudal equivalent of the *cens:* the annual payment to the local landlord. On the other hand, they were exempt from the yearly oaths their neighbours made to their *seigneur* (lord) and various taxes and fees. On the whole, Anabaptists in Alsace thrived economically. They were prized for their knowledge of the land and animal husbandry, formed corporations, and offered their neighbours interest-free loans.[21]

Those refugees who settled on the estates of petty nobles in the Palatinate shared a similar marginalized legal status. The elector of the Palatinate issued a decree inviting Anabaptists to settle in his realm to rebuild after the Thirty Years' War. However, they were given orders not to proselytize, were limited in how many people could gather for worship, and had to pay an annual fee in recognition of the freedoms he extended. They also negotiated short-term leases and specific conditions for rebuilding individual estates owned by petty nobles within the electorate.[22] Thanks in part to their anomalous legal situation, Anabaptists in Alsace and the Palatinate practiced a form of proto-settler colonialism by occupying and managing large farming estates in borderland regions where the previous population had been decimated by war and famine. They brought two things: labour and expertise in land use practices first developed high in the hills and mountains of Switzerland. Since Anabaptists brought economic revitalization to these regions, local authorities often were willing to overlook the peculiarities of their religious beliefs in favor of directing their energies towards economic and political ends.

Anabaptists in the two regions adapted to the economic realities of their uncertain political status as much as they could but

eventually pressures created incentives for leaving France and the Holy Roman Empire. In the former, King Louis XIV and his ministers were constantly proposing new taxes for paying off old loans and funding new wars. In Alsace, rising taxes created tensions between Anabaptists (largely exempt from royal taxes) and their neighbours. In 1712, for example, the king issued an order expelling Anabaptists from the royal domain.[23] In the Palatinate, rising rents and taxes as well as crop failures, harsh winters, and new wars encouraged migration. As a result, Anabaptists began to move—first to neighbouring estates in areas held by different small principalities and states and then, eventually, across the Atlantic Ocean to Pennsylvania.[24]

The Amish who settled in Berks County were a part of a larger migration of German-speaking peoples to Pennsylvania. Between 1700 and 1775, roughly 84,500 people from what is today southwest Germany, eastern France, and Switzerland arrived in the British colonies. They were overwhelmingly Reformed and Lutheran. During the first half of the eighteenth century, a number of sectarian groups—including Anabaptists—joined the immigrants.[25] The journey across the Atlantic represented not only a change of continents but also of legal status. Like other German-speaking immigrants, Anabaptist settlers in Pennsylvania began by swearing or affirming their allegiance to the British crown and the provincial government upon their arrival. They could also go through a naturalization process making them subjects of the British crown. Naturalization was one step toward owning their own land outright and passing it on to their heirs. As Pennsylvania's government was dominated by Quakers, Anabaptists could be naturalized without making a formal oath of allegiance, which would have been a violation of their religious beliefs.[26] For Anabaptist immigrants, this change in legal status was important as it represented a potential break with the previous two hundred years of displacement and persecution exacerbated by the land-based hierarchies of loyalty found in the remnants of the feudal system.

It also meant being conscripted into a new form of settler colonialism. During their time in Alsace and the Palatinate, Anabaptists worked the lands of their regional benefactors and integrated into the local economies as short-term tenants. In Pennsylvania, refugees were promised the opportunity to pass on land to their children and subsequent generations. Land ownership in the British colony also required making "improvements" to the property (clearing it and building structures) and registering a series of documents with the land office in Philadelphia.[27] While the techniques and methods of agriculture the Anabaptists developed in Europe largely

remained the same in North America, the literal and figurative soil in which these tools of settler colonialism took root was markedly different.

Indigenous People and Pennsylvania Land Policies

Anabaptists settled on the homeland of the Lenapes, Munsees, and Susquehannocks.[28] The Lenapes, Algonquian peoples who spoke Unami, controlled much of the area that is today central and southern New Jersey and eastern Pennsylvania when the English arrived in 1682. They lived in un-palisaded villages, held land in common rather than as individuals or families, and were governed by sachems who maintained their political authority by following the advice of councils of elders. Historian Jean Soderlund argues that in the seventy-five years before the arrival of the English, the Lenapes maintained the upper hand as they established trade relations with the Dutch, Swedes, and Finns—even in the face of population loss due to disease. Historians often attribute William Penn's peaceful relations with the Indigenous peoples of the region to his Quaker beliefs. However, Soderlund maintains that his negotiations fit into the pattern the Lenapes had established with other European groups before his arrival. Together the Lenapes, Dutch, Swedes, and Finns had created a society that "preferred peaceful resolution of conflict, religious freedom, collaborative use of land and other natural resources, respect for people of diverse backgrounds, and local government authority, all facilitating the business relationship the residents sought for profitable trade."[29]

While the Lenapes maintained leverage in their relatively peaceful exchanges with Europeans for much of the seventeenth century, that shifted by the 1690s. Their close proximity to growing numbers of colonists led to more epidemics and dramatic loss of population in the second half of the seventeenth century. At the same time, Haudenosaunee neighbours to the north and west gained greater control of the fur trade and the Lenapes increasingly turned to agriculture. By the early eighteenth century, European competition for land and their dwindling population forced the Lenapes to leave their homelands. They joined refugee groups of displaced Munsees resettling in the Forks of the Delaware River, along the Lehigh River, and the North Branch of the Susquehanna River.[30]

The Lenapes were one of the first communities that the early English settlers of Pennsylvania encountered, but they were not the only ones. During the seventeenth century, Susquehannocks, whose homelands were located at the watershed of the Susquehanna River,

gradually expanded south as they developed robust trading relationships with the Dutch, Swedes, and English on the Delaware River and the English on the Chesapeake Bay. By the 1670s, the Susquehannocks, suffering military losses in their conflicts with the Haudenosaunees, migrated further south where they sought the protection of the Maryland government. In their new homes, the refugees became victims of the Chesapeake-Anglo conflicts with Indigenous peoples connected to Bacon's Rebellion. Once again seeking a stable place to live, most of the surviving Susquehannocks moved back north where they settled under the protection of the Haudenosaunees, Lenapes, and the New York government. By the early eighteenth century, European settlers called these refugee Susquehannocks "Conestogas."[31]

By the mid-eighteenth century, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy wielded the most power in the region. Together with Pennsylvania's Quaker government, they maintained a "covenant chain" that both groups used to create a frontier region between the confederacy to the north, Pennsylvania to the east, and the French with their Indigenous allies to the west. In doing so, both the Haudenosaunees and the English acted as though the confederacy held power over other smaller refugee Indigenous groups.[32] One of those groups was the Shawnees, originally from the area that is today western Kentucky, who scattered in the 1680s in response to Haudenosaunee raids. The Shawnees entered the area that became Pennsylvania from different directions. A substantial contingent settled on the Susquehanna River in the 1690s. After conflicts in the 1720s, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy claimed authority over the Shawnees and the latter eventually migrated to Ohio Country.[33]

The conflicts among Indigenous peoples in the region were exacerbated by Pennsylvania's land policy and the growing number of arriving settlers. Between the colony's founding in 1681 and his death in 1718, Penn followed Dutch and Swedish precedent and recognized Indigenous claims to the land.[34] "Purchasing" claims was not as straightforward as buying specific tracts of land. In contrast to European views of land ownership as "perpetual and exclusive," Indigenous communities in the region viewed them as "temporary and shared."[35] Consequently, Penn negotiated with individuals and communities—sometimes by purchasing multiple claims to the same land and sometimes by receiving confirmation of his rights from different groups or neighbouring colonial governments.[36] As proprietor of the colony, Penn also reserved the sole right to negotiate with Indigenous communities. Theoretically, Penn confirmed rights to Indigenous land before the colony's land office issued warrants for surveys, and ultimately patents granting settlers land that

was "cleared of Indian claims." Between 1681 and 1718, Penn "purchased" much of the region between the Delaware and Susquehanna Rivers and from Duck Creek to the Lehigh Mountains—that is, he cleared the region of Indigenous claims.[37]

Negotiations for land ended with Penn's death in 1718. From then until the early 1730s, legal conflicts over his estate, the Penn family's debt, and a boundary dispute with the proprietors of Maryland prompted the government's land office to stop issuing patents. Penn's heirs to the colony were also not in a financial position to negotiate for additional Indigenous land. Simultaneously, German and Irish immigrants began arriving in large numbers, including Anabaptist immigrants like the Hochstetlers. All of the newcomers sought land, but by the 1720s Penn's agents had already sold the property cleared of Indigenous claims. Consequently, many immigrants simply settled on the land that appeared to them to be "vacant" and claimed they would pay when the land office was back in business. "Palatine" immigrants from New York, for example, settled on Lenape land in the Tulpehocken region, forcing them to move to the Allegheny Valley. When Thomas Penn (one of Penn's heirs) finally arrived in the colony in 1732, his first task was to negotiate with Indigenous communities for more land.[38]

Further complicating land acquisitions in the 1730s were alliances between the Haudenosaunees and the Pennsylvania government. In their efforts to bring order to what they perceived as chaotic communities of Lenapes, Shawnees, and other refugee groups living in the Susquehanna valley and Ohio Country, colonial officials granted unwarranted power to the Haudenosaunees. They attributed sovereignty over these groups to the Haudenosaunees, whose diplomats acquiesced when it was in their interests to do so. In 1736, Penn and his agents conducted two treaties. In Philadelphia the Haudenosaunees released their claim to their lands in the Susquehanna Valley as far north as the Blue Mountains. To satisfy his desire for Lenape lands, Penn, along with James Logan, orchestrated a negotiation at Shamokin in which the Haudenosaunees "release[d] and quit all their Claims" to the lands between the Delaware and Susquehanna Rivers.[39] The following year, the Penns' agents conducted the so-called "Walking Purchase" through which they fraudulently purchased the remaining Lenape claims to Pennsylvania land—land in the Forks of the Delaware where the refugees had resettled in the late seventeenth century. The Lenapes repeatedly petitioned the colonial government for redress—to no avail. At a 1742 treaty in Philadelphia, where the Lenapes thought their petitions would be heard, the Haudenosaunees claimed the Lenapes were under their control and confirmed the Walking Purchase. The

Penns went along with the scheme and the remaining Lenapes were forced to move again—this time further west.[40]

Imperial Competition and the Crisis of Settler Colonialism

When the Hochstetlers migrated from Alsace to Pennsylvania in the late 1730s, they were thrust into this cauldron of contested control at the colony's frontier, one which shared some similarities to the war-torn European borderlands from which they had emigrated. Historian Patrick Spero argues that the notion of the "frontier" coalesced in Pennsylvania during the eighteenth century and gradually came to mean "a zone vulnerable to invasion," or, in the words of Thomas Jefferson, "the border, confine, or boundary of a kingdom."[41] Frontiers were contingent and prone to contraction. Above all, they were defensive. The Hochstetlers settled along the Northkill Creek at the foothills of the Blue Mountains in what was to become Berks County—the furthest extent of Pennsylvania's frontier.

Formed out of Lancaster County in 1752, Berks County lay at the edge of British-controlled North America. Named after the Berkshire region in England, the ancestral homeland of the Penn family, the county held significant economic promise for its links to the Schuylkill River, connecting it to Philadelphia and British overseas trade. Its waterways could be used to establish mills and iron forges, thus making the county an important potential centre of industry. The first step in the British settlement of Berks County was to recruit farmers to clear the land and plant crops for urban markets. The Hochstetler family, along with other Anabaptist families, were slotted into this project with the earliest settlements established along the Tulpehocken Creek.[42] Beginning in the decades before the county was officially formed, these Anabaptist settlers were part of a larger movement of German-speaking migrants to the area.[43]

The Penns' next step in controlling the region was to establish Reading, a new inland market town.[44] The founding of Reading and Berks County is representative of what Gregory Evans Dowd calls "metropolitan governance," or the settler colonialism of urban centres of trade and bureaucracy. When Thomas Penn established the new county seat and market town, he fashioned a visible presence of provincial government in the region. Reading became a commercial hub with courts for settling disputes and enforcing the laws. Metropolitan governance intersected with the colonialism of frontier settlements in the form of the land office as the depository of colonial claims. Yet even with the establishment of the city of

Reading in 1748, Berks County very much remained the fringes of European settlement in Pennsylvania.[45]

Soon after the founding of the county, this fragile Pennsylvania settlement was disrupted by the arrival of the 1754–1763 French and Indian War (also known as the Seven Years' War). Pennsylvania had managed to avoid war with Indigenous populations and rival European powers for the first seventy-three years of its existence as a colony.[46] In 1754, however, the struggle for power between the British, Haudenosaunees, and French came to a head. The immediate source of the conflict was control over the Ohio River Valley, a swath of land encompassing much of what is today western Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, and West Virginia. Primarily inhabited by Indigenous peoples, European governments viewed control of the Ohio River Valley as key to control over North America as a whole. France and Britain had deployed different strategies for projecting their influence into this region. In part because of Haudenosaunee strength during the seventeenth century, the French had created a series of alliances with Indigenous groups who migrated into the areas that are now Wisconsin and the upper peninsula of Michigan. A relatively small network of French trappers, traders, and Jesuits set up a series of trading posts, forts, and missions alongside Indigenous populations and established a series of non-coercive alliances with them. By the mid-seventeenth century, the refugee groups grew strong enough to push back against the Haudenosaunees.[47]

The Haudenosaunees quickly countered the French threat. They had created a "covenant chain" with the British after the Dutch lost control of New Netherland in 1664.[48] Their partnership with the British provided weapons and supplies that allowed them to continue dominating the smaller Indigenous communities in the Ohio River Valley. The Haudenosaunees had further resolved their conflicts with the French and the British with the "grand settlement" of 1701. The series of agreements promised the French Haudenosaunee neutrality in exchange for rights to hunt and trade. They further ceded lands north of the Great Lakes to the British to cement the covenant chain arrangement. In a brilliant stroke of diplomacy, the Haudenosaunees managed to keep both the French and British in the dark about their respective agreements with the rival powers.[49] Their careful diplomatic maneuvering also allowed them to wield power at the expense of smaller Indigenous communities.

By the outbreak of war in 1754, the Lenapes and Shawnees were caught in the frontiers between competing British, French, and Haudenosaunee authority. While the growing population of Pennsylvania's landowners posed an immediate and sustained threat, the

machinations of the Haudenosaunees contributed to driving the Lenapes and Shawnees into the arms of the French. At the 1754 Albany Congress, British envoy Sir William Johnson and the Haudenosaunees reached an agreement diminishing the Lenapes' political independence.[50] The Pennsylvania representatives to the congress also negotiated an agreement with the Haudenosaunees for lands on which the Lenapes had resettled.[51] For the Lenapes, who had sought the Pennsylvania government's promise of peaceful protection from the Haudenosaunees, the agreement was a perilous sign. Already made refugees by the Haudenosaunees and Pennsylvania's proprietors several times over, most Shawnees and Lenapes sided with the French in the hope of recouping their lost lands when war broke out in 1754.

The initial phases of the war in Pennsylvania went poorly for the British and their allies. Major General Edward Braddock, commander-in-chief of the British forces, was killed during the disastrous march to take the French outpost of Fort Duquesne. Braddock's successor, Colonel Thomas Dunbar, promptly abandoned the western theatre of operations for the safety of Philadelphia and left Pennsylvanians vulnerable to enemy attack. Lenape and Shawnee warriors raided isolated British settlements from the upper Susquehanna to the Blue Ridge Mountains. The towns of Lancaster, York, and Carlisle rapidly swelled with war refugees as colonists fled their isolated settlements for the safety of more protected market towns.[52]

Pennsylvania was the main battleground for much of the North American theatre of the war. One of the war's first victims was the trust between frontier settlers and the colonial government. The Quaker-dominated assembly's undoing was the failure to provide for the defence of settlers against the incursions of Indigenous warriors allied with the French. Reacting to British setbacks in Pennsylvania, Brigadier General John Forbes crafted a new strategy for victory. First, he oversaw the construction of several forts which successfully pushed the British zone of control further west in the direction of Fort Duquesne (the main British objective). Second, he circumvented the authority of Sir William Johnson and reached out to the Lenapes and Shawnees with promises, approved by the Pennsylvania legislature in 1757, to reserve land in the Wyoming Valley specifically for their communities if they switched sides. At the Treaty of Easton in October 1758, the Haudenosaunees were granted assurances that the Pennsylvanians would renounce their claims to lands west of the Allegheny Mountains while the Lenapes and Shawnees were given equal status as negotiators (a departure from their previous subservient status under the Haudenosaunees) and promised territorial integrity for their remaining lands.

Forbes's plan worked. The British eventually took Fort Duquesne and the Lenapes and Shawnees agreed to switch sides, allying themselves with the British. Lenape and Shawnee attacks on settlers at the frontier ceased.[53]

The Attack

In September 1757, a year before the Easton Treaty, the Hochstetlers were attacked on their Northkill farm. At the time, the family consisted of Jacob, his wife, and their six children, four of whom were still living at home: Jacob Jr., Joseph, Christian, and an unnamed daughter.[54] According to Jacob Hochstetler Sr.'s account, the family was attacked by fifteen Lenape and Shawnee warriors.[55] When the house was set on fire to drive them into the open, the family took shelter from the heat by hiding in the dampness of the cellar. But the next morning their attackers discovered them emerging from the ruins of the house. Hochstetler's wife, daughter, and Jacob Jr. were killed. Jacob Sr., Christian (about eleven years old), and Joseph (about fifteen years old) were taken captive. Meanwhile John Hochstetler, Jacob Sr.'s eldest son, living on his own farm nearby, observed smoke coming from the direction of his parent's homestead and immediately set off for help from colonial authorities in Reading.[56]

After a roughly twenty-day journey westward, the three captives were taken to Fort Presque Isle. There the French military gave them to people from three different villages in the Ohio Country. Jacob Sr. went to the Senecas at Buckaloons. One of his sons was taken to Custaloga, a Lenape sachem who lived at Custaloga's town, where he was adopted. It's not known where the other son was taken.[57] Jacob Sr. remained with the Senecas until early May 1758 when he managed a daring escape after being granted liberty to hunt alone. Nearly starving, he made a harrowing fifteen-day journey east that included floating on the Susquehanna River on a homemade raft. When he was spotted near Fort Augusta, Colonel James Burd had Jacob Sr. pulled from the river and took him to Carlisle where he was interrogated by Colonel Henry Bouquet. Because he had spent time behind enemy lines, the British wanted to access his knowledge. Jacob Sr. was able to convey detailed intelligence about each of the garrisons the captives had visited, how many men were stationed there, and the conditions of weapons and provisions.[58]

While Jacob Sr. succeeded in escaping and returning to Berks County, his sons remained with their adoptive families. Even after the Treaty of Easton was signed in 1758, numerous captives taken

by the Lenape warriors remained with their communities as collateral.[59] As a rule, the Lenapes treated their captives well (provided they did not try to escape) and returned them upon the end of hostilities. However, in 1758 Teedyuscung, the chief Lenape negotiator, maintained that "the prisoners would never be deliver'd up, till the Indians were satisfied about the Lands."[60] The Lenapes were not taking any chances; Joseph and Christian Hochstetler were among the captives they retained. On August 13, 1762, Jacob Sr. petitioned Governor James Hamilton requesting that the governor intercede on his behalf to return his sons. Joseph may have been returned in 1763 or 1764 but Christian did not return home until at least the summer of 1765. Jacob Sr.'s petition shows that he followed closely the news of government efforts to bring home captives.[61]

Conclusion

When the attack on the Hochstetler homestead occurred each of the groups involved—the Hochstetlers, the Lenapes, the Shawnees—were refugees caught up in the larger imperial aims of Britain and France. They were all occupants of a frontier that others (the Haudenosaunees, the Pennsylvania Assembly, the French government) had demarcated for their own purposes. In this frontier the Hochstetlers found ample land and waterways to which they might apply their agricultural expertise while pushing the colonial claims of the British further west. Their weapons were not their muskets but their plows which, with each spring planting, solidified their presence in Berks County. In contrast, the Lenapes and Shawnees saw their own hopes for economic and political autonomy within this frontier diminished. Imperial competition conscripted both Anabaptists and Indigenous peoples into a battle for control of the frontier.

What benefits arise from teasing out the larger imperial context of war for the participants—both victims and attackers—in the 1757 attack on the Hochstetler family? How does a thorough study of the participants' status as refugees and their relationship to the land change and complicate the more traditional uncritical narrative that has been passed down through generations of Hochstetler descendants? The Hochstetlers, as descendants of Swiss Anabaptist refugees who had migrated repeatedly in search of stability, gained experience as settlers improving and rebuilding borderlands in Europe. For them a move to Pennsylvania was an extension and a deepening of their status as settler colonists. As family traditions suggest, within the context of the French and Indian War, Jacob Sr. may have

remained true to his beliefs in nonresistance and refused to allow his sons to resist their attackers with readily available guns. Nevertheless, he provided military authorities with intelligence he gathered while a captive of the Senecas. The Lenape and Shawnee warriors who attacked the Hochstetlers were themselves refugees whose own families had been forced to move repeatedly in search of new homelands. Their position as refugees provided an incentive for them to be conscripted into colonial wars. They, like the Hochstetlers, had been living in frontier areas that marked the border regions between the more powerful British, Haudenosaunees, and French. Expanding our knowledge of how refugees on all sides were conscripted into larger imperial projects provides us with a multivalent, denser, and more complicated understanding of the event.

By contextualizing the Hochstetler attack as an event embedded in larger narratives of colonization and shifting alliances between rival imperial powers, we better grasp the situation of Lenapes, Shawnees, and Anabaptist settlers on the Pennsylvania frontier. Contrary to what has been suggested by some accounts, the Hochstetler attack was not the result of personal animus between the Hochstetler family and the local Indigenous population. Indeed, it is highly unlikely that they had ever met each other prior to the attack. Even so, both groups were participants in larger strategies of survival for their communities—with one key difference: for the Lenapes and Shawnees, their presence in Pennsylvania was ending; for the Anabaptists, no longer refugees but permanent settlers, it was just beginning. Their own reframing of the attack on the Hochstetler family over generations helped to consolidate Anabaptists' position and identity as settlers in Pennsylvania.

Notes

1 For a brief overview of the incident drawn from primary sources and a careful use of secondary accounts, see Beth Hostetler Mark, *Our Flesh and Blood*, 3rd ed. (Elkhart, IN: Jacob Hochstetler Family Association, 2009), 1–2. Mark reproduces the known primary sources related to the attack on the Hochstetler family for the years between the attack in 1757 and the assumed return of the last captive son in 1765.

2 Uria R. Byler, *Our Better Country: The Story of America's Freedom* (Gordonville, PA: Gordonville Print Shop, 1963), 59, 197–208. In the reprinted book, used for seventh- and eight-grade history lessons in Amish schools throughout the United States, Jacob Hochstetler's story is told as an appendix—"Sidelines of History: 'The Ordeal of Jacob Hochstetler.'" The text also

includes a short chapter on "Indian Warfare" that provides a brief summary of the French and Indian War. But the two discussions are completely separate.

3 C. Z. Mast, "The Hochstetler Massacre," https://www.berkshistory.org/multimedia/articles/hochstetler-massacre/. Based on excerpts from Rev. Harvey Hochstetler, "Descendants of Jacob Hochstetler, 1912."

4 See, for example, J. Virgil Miller, "From an Indian Perspective," Descendants of Jacob Hochstetler, https://www.jhfa.net/indian-massacre-attack, who suggests that the Hochstetlers' attackers were seeking revenge "partly because of previous injustices by other settlers." Ervin R. Stutzman presents a much more complex interpretation of the family's story in his Return to Northkill fictional trilogy: *Jacobs Choice*, *Joseph's Dilemma*, and *Christian's Hope* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 2014, 2015, 2016). For a recent example of another Pennsylvania Anabaptist story that comes to terms with the complicit role of Pennsylvania Mennonites in settler colonialism, see John L. Ruth, *This Very Ground, This Crooked Affair: A Mennonite Homestead on Lenape Land* (Telford, PA: Cascadia Publishing House, 2021).

5 Harvey Hostetler, *Descendants of Jacob Hochstetler, the Immigrant of 1736* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Publishing House, 1912), 30–31. For an example of a fictionalized version of this story, see Bob Hostetler and J. M. Hochstetler, *Northkill* (Elkhart, IN: Sheaf House Publishers, 2014), 9–13.

6 For other Anabaptist families in the region who were attacked, see Leroy Beachy, *Unser Leit: The Story of the Amish*, vol. 1 (Millersburg, OH: Goodly Heritage Books, 2011), 301–2, 307–10.

7 Patrick Wolfe, "Land, Labor, and Difference: Elementary Structures of Race," *American Historical Review* 106, no. 3 (June 2001): 866–905; quotation, 868.

8 Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (Dec. 2006): 387–409; quotation, 388. Early American historians have complicated Wolfe's concept of settler colonialism. See, for example, Daniel Richter, who argues that the term is much better suited to British North America by the mid-eighteenth century than during the seventeenth century. Daniel Richter, "His Own, Their Own: Settler Colonialism, Native Peoples, and Imperial Balances of Power in Eastern North America, 1660–1715," in *The World of Colonial America: An Atlantic Handbook*, ed. Ignacio Gallup-Diaz (New York: Routledge, 2017), 209–33.

9 Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," 390.

10 We are using the broader term "Anabaptists" in this article because, while the Hochstetler family was Amish, many of their neighbours were Mennonites who shared a common history of migration and many beliefs. For Anabaptist settlers as "conscripts," see Reina C. Neufeldt, "Settler Colonial Conscripts: Mennonite Reserves and the Enfolding of Implicated Subjects," *Postcolonial Studies* 25, no. 4 (2022): 508–26.

11 Rosalind J. Beiler, "Information Networks and the Dynamics of Migration: Swiss Anabaptist Exiles and their Host Communities," in *Religious Refugees in Europe, Asia and North America (6th–21st Century)*, ed. Susanne Lachenicht (Munster: Lit Verlag, 2007), 81–91.

12 C. Arnold Snyder, "Swiss Anabaptism: The Beginnings, 1523–1525," in *A Companion to Anabaptism and Spiritualism, 1521–1700*, ed. John D. Roth and James M. Stayer (Boston: Brill, 2011), 45–82; James M. Stayer, "Swiss-South German Anabaptism, 1526–1540," in *A Companion*, 83–118.

[13] Urs B. Leu, "Letzte Verfolgungswelle, und niederländische Interventionen," in *Die Zürcher Täufer, 1525–1700*, ed. Urs B. Leu and Christian Scheidegger. (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag Zürich, 2006), 203–6.

[14] Hans Ulrich Pfister, *Die Auswanderung aus dem Knonauer Amt, 1648–1750: Ihr Ausmass, ihre Strukturen und ihre Bedingungen* (Zurich: Verlag Hans Rohr, 1987), 170–73; Urs Leu and James Stayer, "'The Evil Seducer from Edikon': Biographical Sketch of the Zurich Anabaptist Teacher Hans Muller," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 95, no. 2 (Apr. 2021): 149–51.

[15] Swiss Anabaptist Refugees, Palatinate, to the Congregation at the Lamb, Amsterdam, Feb. 12, 1672, in *Documents of Brotherly Love: Dutch Mennonite Aid to Swiss Anabaptists*, vol. 2, *1710–1711*, ed. James Lowry (Millersburg, OH: Ohio Amish Library, 2007), 416–21.

[16] Rosalind J. Beiler, "Dissenting Religious Communication Networks and European Migration, 1660–1710," in *Soundings in Atlantic History: Latent Structures and Intellectual Currents, 1500–1830,* ed. Bernard Bailyn and Patricia L. Denault (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 214–18.

[17] Denis Diderot, ed., *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, vol. 13 (Paris, 1765), s.v. "Réfugiés." "This is what people called the French Protestants whom the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes forced to leave French soil and to look for sanctuary in foreign nations in order to hide from the persecutions that a blind and rash zeal made them endure in their own country."

[18] For a comprehensive account of this process, see B. J. Cottret, *The Huguenots in England: Immigration and Settlement, c. 1500–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 2.

[19] See, for example, Stephen Warren, *The Worlds the Shawnees Made: Migration and Violence in Early America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 181. Warren argues that Shawnees and Lenapes were refugees when they migrated to the Ohio Valley in the 1730s and 1740s and learned that "their legal status emanated from the British perspective on Iroquois history" that essentially denied them the right to land.

[20] Notarial documents from Alsace and Lorraine use this exact word in describing the legal status of Anabaptists. For more information on the experience of Anabaptists in Alsace, see, Robert Baecher, "La communauté anabaptiste du bailliage de Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines, 1690–1730," *Souvenance anabaptiste/Mennonitisches Gedächtnis*, no. 6 (1987): 57–90, and the additional publications of Baecher in the same journal.

[21] For overviews of Anabaptist migration into Alsace, see Jean Séguy, "The Bernese Anabaptists in Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines," trans. Mervin R. Smucker, *Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage* 3, no. 3 (July 1980): 2–9 (excerpted from Jean Séguy, *Les assemblées anabaptistes-mennonites de France* (Paris: Mouton, 1977), 126–36); Pfister, *Die Auswanderung*, 25–64. Series 4E and 6E of the Archives départmentales du Haut-Rhin (Colmar, France) are littered with notarized loans and recognition of debts between Anabaptists and their neighbours. We know this because notaries were careful to note if one of the agreeing parties was Anabaptist. In contrast with other lenders, who secretly violated laws against usury by hiding a loan's interest in the principal listed in the loan contract, Anabaptists in Alsace refused to lend with interest. For more information on the integration of Anabaptists with the economy of Alsace, see Charles Mathiot and Roger Boigeol, *Recherches historiques sur les*

anabaptistes: de l'ancienne Principauté de Montbéliard, d'Alsace et du Territoire de Belfort (Namur: Le Phare, 1969), chaps. 2–3.

22 Beiler, "Dissenting Religious Communication Networks," 214–18; Meinrad Schaab, *Geschichte der Kurpfalz*, vol. 2, *Neuzeit* (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1992), 136–38; Pfister, *Die Auswanderung*, 176–84. For the decree of Elector Karl Ludwig, see Document 33, Aug. 17, 1664, *Documents of Brotherly Love: Dutch Mennonite Aid to Swiss Anabaptists*, vol. 1, *1635–1709*, ed. James Lowry (Millersburg, OH: Ohio Amish Library, 2007), 368–71.

23 Robert Baecher, "1712: enquête sur une date capitale," *Souvenance anabaptiste/Mennonitisches Gedächtnis*, no. 11 (1992): 35–49; Robert Baecher, "1712: Investigation of an Important Date," trans. Kevin J. Ruth, *Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage* 21, no. 2 (Apr. 1998): 2–12. The "royal domain" consisted of the lands, rights, and privileges held by the French crown. This portfolio of properties was leased by the crown and served as the basis of much of its revenues.

24 Richard K. MacMaster, *Land, Piety, Peoplehood: The Establishment of Mennonite Communities in America, 1683–1790* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1985), 56.

25 Marianne S. Wokeck, *Trade in Strangers: The Beginnings of Mass Migration to North America* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999); MacMaster, *Land, Piety, Peoplehood*, 59–62; Aaron Spencer Fogleman, *Hopeful Journeys: German Immigration, Settlement, and Political Culture in Colonial America, 1717–1775* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996). For the estimated number of German-speaking immigrants to the British colonies, see the table in Fogleman, *Hopeful Journeys*, 2.

26 Wokeck, *Trade in Strangers*, 137–40. Naturalization in Pennsylvania was contested and the process changed over time. Rosalind J. Beiler, "'Smuggling Goods or Moving Households?': The Legal Status of German-Speaking Immigrants in the First British Empire," in *Menschen zwischen zwei Welten: Auswanderung, Ansiedlung, Akkulturation*, ed. Walter G. Rödel and Helmut Schmahl (Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 2002), 9–24; Sally Schwartz, *"A Mixed Multitude": The Struggle for Toleration in Colonial Pennsylvania* (New York: New York University Press, 1987), 27–9, 81–119, 160–64.

27 Donna Bingham Munger, *Pennsylvania Land Records: A History and Guide for Research* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1991), 40–56.

28 For a brief history of the Indigenous peoples of the area that became Pennsylvania, see Daniel K. Richter, "A Framework for Pennsylvania Indian History," *Pennsylvania History* 57, no. 3 (July 1990): 236–61.

29 Jean Soderlund, *Lenape Country: Delaware Valley Society before William Penn* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 6–8; quotation, 7.

30 Richter, "A Framework," 247. Richter claims it was in this context that all of these refugee Lenape groups began to embrace for the first time an ethnic identity as "Delawares."

31 Richter, "A Framework," 247.

32 See Fred Anderson, *The War That Made America: A Short History of the French and Indian War* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), including chapter 1 for an overview of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy as a key power broker in the region. For discussions of the "covenant chain," see the essays in Daniel K. Richter and James H. Merrell, eds., *Beyond the Covenant Chain: The Iroquois and Their Neighbors in Indian North America, 1600–1800* (Syracuse,

NY: Syracuse University Press, 1987), particularly Richard L. Haan, "Covenant and Consensus: Iroquois and English, 1676–1760," 41–57.

[33] Paul Wallace, *Indians in Pennsylvania*, 2nd ed. (Harrisburg, PA.: PHMC, 1993), 118–28; Patrick Spero, *Frontier Country: The Politics of War in Early Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 50–55. Warren, *Worlds the Shawnees Made*, 1–24, argues that in the period between 1630 and 1680 migration became a critical part of Shawnee identity that continues into the twenty-first century.

[34] Soderlund argues that this practice differed from English precedents in Virginia, Massachusetts Bay, and New York. Penn, in contrast to those colonial governments, followed the lead of the Dutch and Swedes and recognized Indigenous sovereignty rather than attempting to claim land by conquest.

[35] Daniel K. Richter and William A. Pencak, "Introduction," in *Friends and Enemies in Penn's Woods: Indians, Colonists, and the Racial Construction of Pennsylvania*, ed. William A. Pencak and Daniel K. Richter (University Park, Pa.: Penn State University Press, 2004), xii.

[36] Wallace, *Indians in Pennsylvania*, 129–33.

[37] Francis Jennings, "Brother Miquon: Good Lord!," in *The World of William Penn*, ed. Richard S. Dunn and Mary Maples Dunn (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), 195–214; Munger, *Pennsylvania Land Records*, 6–10.

[38] Rosalind J. Beiler, *Immigrant and Entrepreneur: The Atlantic World of Caspar Wistar, 1650–1750* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008), 111–24; Philip Otterness, *Becoming German: The 1709 Palatine Migration to New York* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004), 139–41. According to Patrick Spero, nearly half Pennsylvania's population consisted of non-English colonists in 1740. Spero, *Frontier Country*, 34.

[39] Francis Jennings, "'Pennsylvania Indians' and the Iroquois," in Richter and Merrell, *Beyond the Covenant Chain*, 86–91.

[40] William Sarna, "The Diplomatic Career of Canasatego," in Pencak and Richter, *Friends and Enemies*, 144–63. Sarna also points to the fact that in the 1730s and 1740s, the illusion of Haudenosaunee power was beginning to fall apart as the French were encroaching on their territory from the west and the Catawba were threatening from the south. They suffered from famine, disease, and alcohol abuse.

[41] Spero, *Frontier Country*, 6.

[42] Karen Guenther, "Berks County," in *Beyond Philadelphia: The American Revolution in the Pennsylvania Hinterland*, ed. John B. Frantz and William Pencak (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), 69–71. By 1776, German settlers (both Anabaptist and non-Anabaptist) comprised the majority of the Berks County population in every township.

[43] By 1773 five-sixths of registered taxpayers in Reading were of a German background. See Laura L. Becker, "The People and the System: Legal Activities in a Colonial Pennsylvania Town," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 105, no. 2 (Apr. 1981), 135–149.

[44] Thomas Penn founded Reading in 1748 as one of the six "proprietor towns"—towns located in newly opened areas of the colony's interior and founded by the Penn family. See Judith Ridner, "Building Urban Spaces for the Interior: Thomas Penn and the Colonization of Eighteenth-Century Pennsylvania," in *Early American Cartographies*, ed. Martin Brückner (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 306–38.

[45] Matthew C. Ward, *Breaking the Backcountry: The Seven Years' War in Virginia and Pennsylvania, 1754–1765* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003), 10–21; Gregory Evans Dowd, "Indigenous Peoples without the Republic, *Journal of American History* 104, no. 1 (June, 2017), 19–41. Metropolitan governance was not limited to European settlements. Jacob Hochstetler Sr. observed Indigenous settlements and centres of trade while captive, impressions described in vivid detail in his later interview with Colonel Henry Bouquet.

[46] Spero, *Frontier Country*, 8.

[47] Anderson, *War That Made America*, 3–9; Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). Anderson argues that the Haudenosaunees, like the British and the French, created an empire—"an extension of dominion, or control, by one group over others"—and that understanding their role in the conflict over control that historians call the "French and Indian War" provides for a more complex and accurate interpretation of the competition in eighteenth-century northeastern North America. Anderson, *War That Made America*, xxiv.

[48] The essays in Richter and Merrell, *Beyond the Covenant Chain*, explore the complexity of the covenant chains Haudenosaunees created with various neighbours—Indigenous and European. Several of the authors also stress the fact that the groups within the confederacy were often fractured, not unified. For the Haudenosaunees and the English, see Haan, "Covenant and Consensus," 41–56.

[49] Anderson, *War That Made America*, 9–10.

[50] Paul R. Misencik and Sally E. Misencik, *American Indians of the Ohio Country in the 18th Century* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2020), 33.

[51] Ward, *Breaking the Backcountry*, 25–6.

[52] Walter R. Borneman, *The French and Indian War: Deciding the Fate of North America* (New York: Harper Collins, 2006), 153.

[53] Borneman, *The French and Indian War*, 162–164.

[54] Ervin R. Stutzman, *The Hochstetler Story: With Photographs, Maps, and Historical Background* (Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2015), 28. The two oldest children were Barbara, married to Christian Stutzman, and John, married to Catharine Hertzler. Both of the married children lived close to their parents at the time of the attack.

[55] Examination of John [Jacob] Hochstetter, May 30, 1758, by Colonel Henry Bouquet, in Marks, *Our Flesh and Blood*, 16–19. Bouquet was a Swiss frontier guide employed by the British. He became a land speculator in Pennsylvania following the French and Indian War.

[56] Marks, *Our Flesh and Blood*, 1–2; A. William Wolford and Eli Y. Hostetler, *Amish Origins: The Beginnings of the Hochstetler Family and Their Faith* (Morgantown, PA: Masthof, 2021), 130–131.

[57] Marks, *Our Flesh and Blood*, 1–2; Stutzman, *Hochstetler Story*, 18–19. Marks notes that oral histories among Christian's descendants suggest he was adopted by an elderly Indigenous man who died within a few years of his adoption.

[58] Examination of John [Jacob] Hochstetter, May 30, 1758, by Colonel Henry Bouquet, in Marks, *Our Flesh and Blood*, 16–19.

[59] Matthew C. Ward, "Redeeming the Captives: Pennsylvania Captives among the Ohio Indians, 1755–1765," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and*

Biography 125, no. 3 (July 2001): 161–89. Ward estimates that around 2,000 captives were taken from Pennsylvania over the course of the French and Indian War.

60 James Hamilton to Thomas Penn, Nov. 21, 1760, Penn Manuscripts, Official Correspondence, 9:184–86, as quoted in Matthew C. Ward, "Redeeming the Captives," 177.

61 Marks, *Our Flesh and Blood*, 2, 26–28.