

Pennsylvania

INSTITUTE FOR

Exploring Diversity in Pennsylvania History

Native-European Contact

Primary Source

At a Conference held at Fort August the 19th of July 1763, with Telonemet, a Six Nation Wawpaway a Muncey Chief...

This document records the opening statements of diplomatic negotiations held at Fort Augusta, which was located near the now-abandoned Indian town of Shamokin, near present-day Sunbury, in central Pennsylvania. Fort Augusta was a major point of contact between Indians and whites on the frontier by the late 1750s, serving as the site for trade, diplomacy, and military actions.

The negotiations recorded here took place against the backdrop of escalating violence in the wake of the French and Indian War, and concerned a series of retaliatory attacks between Native Americans and European settlers. It was common for these negotiations to involve both interpreters and individuals who transcribed the proceedings. What does this transcription of Telonemet's words tell you about his rhetoric, his perceptions of the event, and his diplomatic aims?

Present Colonel James Burd & Jn. McGaughan Interpreter Telonemat spoke as Follows –

Brother. We hope there will be no Misunderstanding in what we are going to say, for we look on ourselves to be nothing we are but Children & poor People.

As you desired us to let you know who it was who struck you we will now do it. The Messinger we sent to Allegany return'd two day ago and brought the News, that they was Seven Sundry Nations who struck you particularly the Wawwayocktenos & French the Names of the other Nations we do not remember. They are now coming this way on threes, fours, tens, & Thirtys. Therefore take care.

Gave a string.

Brother. Old Nutimus desires me to tell you that he is old and the World in a bad condition. That he does not know what to say. He desires that as our Forefathers were in ancient Friendship, and He desires me to wash & brighten that Friendship yet. That as we have now one another fast by the Hand, whoever will attempt to break them asunder, we should both lay hold of them & prevent them.

Gave a belt of 6 Rows.