Chapter 1: The Ghost-men of the Woodlands

Anciently the Siouan speaking groups originated in the Ohio River Valley. They began moving to the Piedmont of Virginia around 800 A.D, possibly following migrating buffalo herds in the directions they went. (1) Siouan groups migrated north and west into the Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Wisconsin areas, some moved west to the Great Plains, some stayed in the Ohio River Valley, between the Licking River and the Ohio River, and along Scioto River and further west along the Kanawha River. Some settled into the Piedmont regions of the Quirank and Appalachian Mountains. (2) The Menominee are an Algonquin tribe that resided on the north shore of Lake Michigan at European contact. In the Menominee oral tradition there is a Winnebago arrival narrative. The Winnebago, or Ho Chunk (Hotcâgara, people of the parent speech), are a Siouan speaking tribe and are sometimes credited with the effigy mounds in the Wisconsin area as well originating in the pre-Columbian Ohio River Valley. The Winnebago came to the Menominee in the form of ravens or blackbirds across Lake Michigan to Red Banks on Green Bay. This story at least indicates a westward moving Siouan speaking population preserved in oral tradition. (3) James Mooney concluded that the Siouan speaking tribes originated in the Ohio Valley based on his study of the dispersal of the language along with informants among the Plains Dakotans. The Siouan speakers on the Great Plains maintained oral traditions which stated that they came from the east and near to the Great Lakes. (4) W.J. McGee states that the Plains Siouans came from the Siouan tribes of the east. (5) Dr. Heriberto Dixon noted that the Mandan have a tradition of coming out of the East. (6) The great wars between the Northern Iroquoian, Algonquin, and the Southern Muskogean tribes sandwiched and pressured large groups of Siouan speakers eastward into the forest, westward on to the Great Plains, and northwest into the deeper portions of the Great Lakes region. (7)

When Jamestown was founded in 1607, most Native American Indians in the eastern and northern forests had evolved confederacies and chiefdoms to strengthen and share in protection and resources. The Powhatan Confederacy was an example of a complex chiefdom which was highly stratified. The Monacan Confederacy along with the Tutelo-Saponi and Manahoac Confederacies were different in that they had no centralized government at that time, yet were beginning to taste European trade relationships with Spain. Changes in governing likely
accelerated as a reaction to inter-tribal conflict, disease, and the exacerbation of these by the Spanish first made in 1540 under Hernando Desoto. The colonial Spanish expansion under Juan Pardo in 1566 at Santa Elena in South Carolina and 1567 at Fort San Juan at Joara in North Carolina (Morganton, Burke County, N.C.) would add to the areas complex history. Joara was the Sara/Cheraw capital town that had been established at about 1000 A.D. and had been a thriving trade town. Joara was a great spot for Captain Juan Pardo to establish Fort San Juan in January of 1567 and which he named the Spanish settlement there Cuenca. (8) The Jesuit Mission of Ajacun in 1570 on the York River in Virginia simply continued a presence in the area with mission work that accompanied the Carolina Spanish settlement attempt. The Saponi were first noted by Captain John Smith and John Lederer, in the village of Monasukapanough among four other Monacan towns. They belonged to the Yesah, Tutelo-Saponi linguistic branch of Ohio Valley Siouan speakers. (9) The other four towns mentioned by Smith and geographically verified by David I. Bushnell are Massinacack, Mohemencho, Rassawek, and Monahassanugh. Some have associated the town of Moneton in West Virginia near the Kanawa River as strong allies of the Monacan. The names of these towns are recorded in the Algonquin language of the Powhatan except Moneton which the Powhatan called Mohetan associated with another town of the Moneton tribe.

There were four key Southeastern Siouan alliances affecting the Saponi; the Monacan Confederacy, the Tutelo-Saponi Confederacy, the Manahoac Confederacy, and the Catawba Confederacy. The Monacan Confederacy held control of the eastern regional copper mines of the Quirank or Blue Ridge Mountains. The Powhatan, Cherokee, Iroquois, Erie, Huron, and the Susquehannock were dependent upon the Monacan for trade in copper. In 1570 the Jesuit Mission of Ajucan had been placed among the Powhatan on the York River. The Pamunkey and Mattaponi Rivers feed into the York River. The Powhatan tribes had already rejected European encounters as Ajucan Mission was dispatched and laid waste by the Indians there in 1571. (10) & (11) The famine by drought at the time, the demands of the mission for food, and constant conversion attempts perhaps caused the Powhatan to kill the priests thinking that this would end the drought as a test of self sacrifice for the Jesuit God. The prime focus at Ajucan was missionary in nature and perhaps as an extension of expeditionary reconnaissance. The Powhatan took the opportunity in 1607 to establish a treaty with the English in order to break the copper
monopoly of the Monacans and to buffer against coastal Susquehanna attacks. It is perhaps the only reason that the English were able to establish Jamestown. (12) In 1611 Powhatan had told John Smith that there were European clothed people at a town called Ocanawahan/Ocananhowan. This town’s name was in the Tutelo-Saponi language and Powhatan would have probably known it by the Algonquian name for it as Occaneechi town. This town site was located at the falls of the Roanoke River which has been stated as being five days south of Jamestown. The names that have been reported for this town are as follows: Ocamahawan, Hocamawananck, Oconohowan, and Occaneechi. This town was described by the Zuniga map as a Mangoak town. The Mangoak are synonymous with the Monacan and thus the Tutelo-Saponi by extension. Commander Ralph Lane of Raleigh’s Roanoke Colony went on an expedition in 1586 to the pearl farms of the “Mangoak”. (13) Statements have surfaced that reveal that the metal the “Mangoak” were mining was called in their language wassador with the color of copper yet was lighter and softer. The location of this place is called, by the Chowan, Chaunis Temoatan and later on as Monacan Town. The name the Monacans and all Yesa people called this land was Amanishuck. (14) Obviously, this was the same as the Monacan Quirank noted by John Smith over two decades later. It had been spoken of as a place where people lived in English-style houses and used brass house wares along with other European manufactured items.

In 1614 Jamestown deserters were often reported as running off to Ocanawahan in which place dwelt Spaniards with the Indians there. (15) Francis Yeardley gives the narrative about a Spanish trade family that lived in or near the Tuscarora and Saponi-Tutelo territorial border lands. This family had been among them for about seven years which would have placed their arrival in the area at about 1607 the founding date of Jamestown Colony. The narrative goes on to state that the family had a negro that they sent to live with the Neusiok of the Neuse River perhaps in order to become a translator on a route line of communications with Spanish Florida and the interior trade with surrounding tribes. (16) By 1654 this Spanish family that lived at Ocananhowan, a.k.a. Occaneechi town, had about thirty members of their family including about seven negro slaves as per a report given by a Tuscarora chief. (17) The Monacan Confederacy consisted of the Monacan, Meipontsky, Mohemencho, Moneton, Tutelo/Nahyssan and Saponi. Another key alliance, the Manahoac Confederacy helped to support Monacan dominance in the region through alliance. The Manahoac Confederacy consisted of the clans or tribes of Ontponea, Whonkentia, Tanx Nitania, Tegninateo, Stegaraki, Shackaconia, and Hassinunga. The Manahoac
villages were located west of the fall line between the North Anna River and the Potomac River. (18) More specifically, the Ontponea were located in present day Orange County, VA. The Whonkentia were located in present day Fauquier County, VA near the head of the Rappahannock River. The Tanx Nitiania, or Little Nitiania, had their location on the north side of the upper Rappahannock River in Fauquier County, VA. Tegninateo was located at the head of the Rappahannock River in present day Culpeper County, VA. The Stegaraki were located on the Rapidan River in Orange County, VA. The Shackaconia were situated on the south bank of the Rappahannock River in present Spotsylvana County, VA. The Hassinunga were found at the headwaters of the Rappahannock River in the mountains at present Chester Gap in Rappahannock County, VA. It may be pointed out that there is a striking resemblance between the Hassinunga and Monahassanough. It would seem that a root word hassin or hassan is the same as the root word for Nahyssan (hyssan). Is this part of a clan connection between towns? The Manahoac were located in present Stafford and Spotsylvania Counties, VA according to Thomas Jefferson’s writings. They gathered mainly “near the Rappahannock and Rapidan Rivers in the present counties of Culpeper, Fauquier, Orange, Spotsylvania, and Stafford”, Virginia. This area was in the vicinity of the Massanutten area and extending southwards down to the Monacan and Saponi villages. (19) The Manahoac were at times referred to as the Mahock. It has been said in some sources that their culture centered on the buffalo and the tribe had followed the buffalo herd migrations into the area, however Dr. Elizabeth Moore, the Curator of Archeology at the Museum of Natural History in Martinsville, VA states that no archeological evidence has been found that bison were ever in Virginia, Maryland, or North Carolina. (20) It may be possible that buffalo hunts went on further afield in the Ohio River Valley area and northern Kentucky in Tutelo hunting grounds during the 18th century, but to date there is no direct scientific evidence that the Manahoac would have been bison based. It is more probable that they relied heavily and primarily on deer, turkey, and bear. This information does go against other accounts of Indian trails being made of old buffalo trails throughout the area. I am more inclined to believe that the Southeastern Siouans went to their old town lands and hunting grounds for buffalo and other game between the Licking River and the Ohio River in Kentucky as the game began to become scarce in the Piedmont. This was probably the case until being curtailed or limited after the Beaver Wars when the pressures of the Iroquois where being felt. The Manahoac have at times been dubbed the “Virginia Cherokee” which may have been confused with the report by Fallam
regarding the Mohetans location and the Gabriel Author report about the Moneton. The Moneton and the Mohetan are different towns of the same tribe which is Siouan according to Mooney. Mooney states that the word Moneton is Siouan and this is most likely the name the Monacan tribe had for the town. (21) The Moneton village may have been a pivotal Indian trading town for the Moneton, Monacan, Tutelo-Saponi, Susquehannocks, Shawnee, Erie, and Huron leading into or out of the Yesa territorial Piedmont region. While Mohetan was further southward in Salt Pond, VA, Giles County, Sitteree was just across the way in present West Virginia in Summers County at Mercer Salt Works, key trading posts for salt. The Moneton village was located on the Great Kanawha River to the northeast of Moheton and Sitteree in present Kanawha County just a few miles east of Charleston, West Virginia. It may be well to note that this river turns into the New River in the southern part of West Virginia before entering Virginia and North Carolina.

*The Tutelo-Saponi Confederacy consisted of the Tutelo, Saponi, and Occaneechi. Although they are named as a confederacy it may be more appropriate to call them clans of one tribe. It is clear in the record that after the 1654 to 1670 period these three tribes acted more or less in unison one with the other. The name variations on all these tribes are legion and I will attempt a small listing of these in the index. For instance the name Saponi has been thought to originate in the town name of Monasukapanough as a corruption of the town name. Interestingly the word in Algonquin for boiled Indian meal is Supawn or Sa-pon and translates into “softened by water”. (22) Swanton says the following, “Evidently a corruption of Monasiccapano or Monasukapanough, which, as shown by Bushnell, is probably derived in part from a native term “moni-seep” signifying shallow water, Paanese is a corruption and in no way connected with the word "Pawnee." (23) The old William Johnson, most prominent Indian agent of the Iroquois, said that the Iroquois and others use the term “Pani” to indicate an Indian slave. (24) Although Swanton states that Paanese is not connected to the word Pawnee, Pani and Panis is a direct corruption of Pawnee as shown in Robert W. Venable’s explanation concerning the Indian slave trade and the accompanying trade jargon. (25) Tutelo has variants such as Totero, Totera, Totteroy, Tatteroa, Shattera, Chatteroi, and Chatterwha. The Tutelo, Saponi, Occaneechi, Monacan, Moneton, and Manahoac all called themselves Yesa-Nahyssan proper. All Siouan speaking people had relatively the same gentes or clan and moiety system. The Algonquins took this example and utilized it over time as well. The link between other Dhegiha groups;
Winnebago/Ho Chunk, Ponca, Osage, Kansa, Quapaw, and Omaha have been shown by way of language evolution to originate from the Ohio River Valley. One tribe, particularly the Winnebago - Ho Chunk – Hotcâgara, share common language with the Tutelo-Saponi.

Winnebago came from the Algonquin word Winnebago, Wiinibiigoo, Wuinebagoes, Ouinepegi, Ouinipiegouek, and Winipeg meaning people of the stinking water referring to Green Bay. You will see the French in their maps list them as Ouinepegi etc. The following are spelling variations of the Ho-Chunk name: Hocak, Ho-Chunk, Hotanke, Houchugarra, Hotcangara, Ochungaraw, Ochungarah, Hochungra, Hochungara, and Ochangara. The Indian guide Tonti in 1690 called the Mosopelea in Ohio the Chonque. Variants of Mosopelea are Ouesperie, Ossipe, and Ushpee. The Mosopelea in Ohio were located along the Scioto and Ohio Rivers in eight towns that stretched from the Ohio River north towards the Honniasont and along what is today the Scioto River. The Mosopelea by 1673 had settled on the Cumberland River probably about the confluence of the Ohio and Cumberland having been driven out of southwestern Ohio by the Iroquois. After this date the Mosopelea appear to have settled with the Quapaw, the “down river” branch of the Mosopelea. Then, for a period of time, the Mosopelea settled among the Taensa. After leaving the Taensa, most likely due to the slave raids by the Natchez, they appear as the Ofo among the Tunica-Biloxi; Ofo and Ofogoula being the Mobilian name the Mosopelea were known by. Are the names Chonque, Ho-Chunk/Ochangara, and Chatterwha the same people? The language of the Mosopelea, Ho-Chunk, Tutelo-Saponi, and the Biloxi are the same according to Horatio Hale, James Mooney, and Guilia R.M. Oliverio among others. All these groups broke down moiety into two groups; Sky and Earth. They further broke the clans down into four groups so that each corresponded to the two main Sky and Earth moieties. One exception to this was the Omaha having 10 clans with five each in one of the two moieties. Although the cultural aspects that shaped the Plains Siouans developed their differences from the Eastern Division, the language link is sufficient enough to deduce at least some basic culturally shared traits. In this instance clan relationships from the Siouans were adopted by their Algonquin neighbors and we can deduce further that there probably was an exchange of cultural traits depending on proximity from both groups. The Eastern Siouans undoubtedly maintained at least a skeletal framework of clan relationship similar to their western cousins. We know they retained the mound building culture of their forbearers and we know they maintained the language base. If we use the logic that language is culture, and that religion and art are the cultural foundation cornerstones, then
we can make some startling revelations concerning the Saponi people and by extension that of the Southeastern Siouans. The Saponi would have two key divisions of moiety, namely Ati Matoi and Mona/Ama Hena, (i.e. Sky and Earth). Within the two divisions we will see the breakdown of each town or tribe described in clan relationships. The Occaneechi for instance have been shown to use the clan symbol of serpent or snake. Using the Winnebago/Ho Chunk and Quapaw models we then can place this clan in the lower moiety of Mona/Ama Hena (Earth). The lower moiety would have been broken down into two separations. The right side was the water or Mani/Moni sub-division containing the Waterspirit, frog, fish, and snake designations. The left side would be the land or Ama sub-division containing the bear, buffalo, deer, and wolf designations. The entire tribe, or clan, of the Occaneechi represented by the serpent was in the Mona/Ama Hena moiety, Ama sub-division, Serpent clan. The upper moiety Ati Matoi or just Matoi consisted of two separations. The First Thunderbird sub-division placed on the right contained Thunderbird clan and the Second Thunderbird sub-division on the left contained the Eagle, Hawk, Turkey, Duck, Snipe, and Pigeon clans. This is of course a skeletal framework based on the Winnebago/Ho-Chunk and Quapaw models. Finding the animal designations of each of the confederated tribes should then give us a visible road map to the clans of the Southeastern Siouans or each alliance. (26)

The marriage interactions often show exogamic patterns in that a Saponi would usually marry a Tutelo or a person from one of their confederates. Inter-clan marriage was considered incest often punished by beatings, ostracizing, and death. This did not change until after the Christanna phase and more so after the dissolution of the Tutelo-Saponi reservation at Christanna in the 1720’s. Whether or not the Saponi and Tutelo were matrilineal or patrilineal is debated. It is my contention that the Saponi were originally patrilineal, as would be reflective of their Siouan speaking cousins the Quapaw/Mosopelea, but that over time the society changed into a bilateral system of clan relationship and heredity due to out-marriages with other tribes. If we look at the religious material that Bearskin relayed to William Byrd we find that women brought labor to mankind and that in the left hand path description it is women that torment everyone in the badlands. While in the right hand path of the good, men are venerated as those that bestow blessings. (27) This would seem to countermand a generalization that the Saponi were matrilineal. One argument that has been used to show a possible matrilineal usage regards
the story concerning the daughter of a Tutelo chief that went south to the Catawba, “but fearing that she would not receive the treatment due her rank, she poisoned herself with the root of the trumpet plant.” (28) This narrative does not imply a matrilineal disregard on the part of the Catawba or mistreatment by the Catawba of the Saponi. Rather denotes a probable depressive state brought on by war, death, and the loss of tribal or clan structure in which the woman had high status within her group. Living among the Catawba she would have been out of place and rank trying to figure out her new role among what she would have considered alien to her tribal life. Frank Speck states that the Tutelo and the Catawba had no sign of matrilineal clans which is in agreement with Guy Gibbon’s assessments of other Dhegiha speaking tribes. Gibbon states, “…polygyny is common in societies that lack commercial exchange and have a high male mortality rate (e.g. Ember 1974)…consequently a particular unit might historically have been a band at one time, a sub-tribe at another, a tribe at still another, and so on. When associated with the Sioux, the word “nation” does not refer to a set of political units united under a centralized government; it refers instead (in pre-reservation days) to “a large socio-political unit with common language, which frequently acted as military allies, rarely engaged in internal warfare, and sometimes shared a hunting territory (Hurt 1974:14). Bilateral residence was common in hunting-gathering and tribal communities with fewer than 100 people.” (29) Although speaking about the Plains Siouan this would have also applied to the Eastern Siouan division with polygamy and exogamy changing over time not only with their environment, but also with influences from their surrounding neighbors and their assimilation into colonial society. Differences did occur such as utilizing an advanced trade network and occasions of what appeared to be monarchial power. It should be understood that these clans were led by heads of families and their ultimate loyalties would have been with the parent family. Understanding this relationship will easily explain why this may have been misunderstood as monarchial. Mooney on page 33 of “The Siouan Tribes of the East” states that the Saponi “…had a system of four gentes, called by the names of four women, Pash, Sepoy, Askarin, and Maraskarin, from whom they derived their origin, and who were believed to be the common ancestors of the human race.” Perhaps these represent the four sisters, corn, beans, squash, and sunflower or possibly tobacco; as opposed to the three sisters of the Iroquois. Mooney goes on to say that marriage within the clan was considered incest and punished with great severity. He further goes on to state that clan affiliations were by the female line, however other sources show this to be
debateable and may have varied or changed over time and with each pocket of families or clans. It is more probable that some Saponi families were matrilineal while others were patrilineal and still others bilateral. Consider out marriage to other surrounding tribes such as the Pamunkey that were also under going splintering and may have been matrilineal while the Saponi themselves were patrilineal. He does continue by stating that the men were the speakers of the tribe. Generally in the record only men are found to lead the Saponi with one or two exceptions perhaps explainable by way of war casualties when the occasion may have necessitated. This evolution of relationship patterns would have occurred over time and profoundly changed during the period leading up to and within the Christanna phase between 1680 and 1730. These relationships evolved from being polygamous to monogamous, from exogamic to endogamic, and from unilateral to a bilateral and sometimes an Eskimoan lineal system. (30) Irregardless, by the time of assimilation the Saponi people were utilizing a bilateral clan/relational system meaning that both the mother and father's clans held equal sway in clan structure. This bilateral system worked by male children belonging to the father's clan and the female children belonging to the mother’s clan. If a man married outside his tribe the children would all fall under the father’s clan, and the same would be the case with the women marrying outside the tribe.

Reading the past documents it is obvious that Saponi fathers had a very clear roll in hereditary tribal leadership. Even if we submit a scenario where in a white man marries a Saponi woman the children would automatically become Saponi by way of the mother’s clan affiliation. In the reverse situation circumstances may have played a key factor in how the children of a white mother and Saponi father may have related to the Saponi clan of their father. In one example, if the white mother’s family were more pronounced in the children’s lives they may not have associated with the Saponi father’s tribe or clan. It would very much depend on the inclinations of the couple involved, the families they came from, the social pressures of the age they lived in, and whether or not the Saponi father had the will to ensure his own clans survival through his offspring. In this latter scenario we can see how assimilation and social pressures could have weakened the clan system of the Saponi depending heavily on individual inclinations as to the preservation and continuance of Native bloodlines. In coming pages we will see how the Saponi responded to these pressures and how their Indianess depended on their strong bond.
between families regardless of geographic location as shown by Dr. Richard Allen Carlson in his work “Who’s Your People: Cumulative Identity Among the Salyersville Indian Population of Kentucky’s Appalachia and the Midwest Muckfields, 1677-2000.

After the assimilation, Saponi families made do with who was left. Often this led to improvisation of the interchangeable roles each parent's families played in the lives of the children. The anguish of a total change in structure must have caused great family difficulties passing on information which only certain clans may have had knowledge. In this way it then becomes explainable why traditions were lost and why in some cases fathers may have distanced themselves from family life. In a sense the confusion as to how to approach these dilemmas may have driven a wedge in some families lacking a better or stable model upon which to base the family unit. Christianity thus became a saving grace to fill in the gaps left and perhaps may actually have precipitated the need for its own structures by degrading traditional ways.

Traditional Saponi religious life included the Sacred Pipe, the Stone House Sweat, elaborate mound building denoting an extensive mortuary system, agricultural and hunting ceremonialism, and a general inclusion in the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex. Beverley states that the Saponi greeted strangers with the Sacred Pipe of peace and being of larger size than the ordinary pipe or personal pipe. (31) The Sacred Pipe was the Calumet Pipe. This pipe was indeed different than the “ordinary pipe”. The Calumet or Sacred Pipe had two forms, the peace pipe and the war pipe. Both types were adorned with wings and other feathers of specific birds as well being adorned with paint, beads, hair, and ribbon. These pipes were Calumets in that they had segments with the bowl and two or more stems. The peace pipe usually was painted blue while the war pipe was painted red. Personal pipes usually were of the platform variety or perhaps the more common forms of elbow pipes. Personal pipes can usually be identified by the direction an effigy was facing, and without stems, being one piece. If the effigy was facing the smoker then this implies a personal pipe. If the effigy is facing away from the smoker then this implies a ceremonial pipe. The chief of the village would conduct the ceremony with the visitor. Refusing to smoke the pipe was a sign of hostility. (32) At the village of Pintahae near Salisbury, VA stone sweat lodges were observed by Lawson in 1700 to 1701. The more permanent Sweats, of Saponi construction, were made of stone and built in a circular shape not unlike that of the ovens utilized by Southwestern Indians for cooking clay pots. The less permanent Sweats were small circular houses with a central pit made of bent saplings and sometimes a foundation of stones.
The outside of these less permanent sweat lodges were usually covered with skins or bark with one opening in the eastern part of the sweat lodge. Lava rocks would be heated in a fire outside and then brought into the sweat lodge to the central pit. Water would then be splashed on the rocks along with herbs in order to produce steam. The door would be closed and a heavy steam would build up in the sweat lodge. This ceremony was utilized for several purposes not limited to the following: communion with the ancestors and spirit world, cleansing and activating sacred objects, cleansing the body of toxins, and medicinal purposes such as treatment of rheumatic ailments. These stone sweat lodges were most likely similar to earth lodges built for the burial mounds. Instead of being covered with stones and other objects these lodges would be covered with skins or bark. The mound building process will be discussed below. [*The importance of war, hunting, and agricultural ceremonialism was a central theme throughout the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex. The Southern Cult or the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex was shared in various degrees of adaptation with most if not all the tribes in the Southeastern Woodlands. The Southern Cult consisted of Sun worship and veneration of the departed or ancestor worship. The Sun provided the life giving force for growing plants. It brought the winds and storms during the heating of the day. The Sun brought the Calumet stems to the people and it was the Sun that determined the seasons. The Sun was the power from above while the Earth was the power from below and giver of the Sacred Pipe bowl. The Earth was the ruler not only of life upon her but the dead below her.*]

The final confederacy of the four important alliances was the Catawba Confederacy. The Catawba Confederacy was perhaps the most important and largest of the alliances and consisted of the following tribes; Catawba, Esaw/Issa, Cheraw/Sara, Saponi, Tutelo, Monacan, Moneton Manahoac/Mahock, Wateree, Congaree, Enos, Pee Dee, Waxhaw, Natchez, Kusso, Yamassee, Sugere, Etawah/Itewa/Etiwa, Winyaws, Coosa, Coosawbo, Edisto, Keyauwee, Cape Fear, Waccamaw, Occaneechi, Stuckanox, Santee, Congaree, Edisto, Westo, Stono, Sissipahaw, and others. The Catawba Confederacy was the most important alliance in that it united all the Southeastern Siouans from the Ohio River Valley to the South Carolina Coastal Plains. The Saponi and their allies called this crescent of territory Amanishuck. The relationship of all these Southeastern Siouans was ancient and by no means static or perfect. The Monacan and Manahoac Confederacies were used by the colonies on the north against the Susquehannocks and
the Iroquois; a port of entry to the South. The Saponi and Catawba held the Southern trade routes of the Occaneechi Trading Path and buffered against the tribes to the south and west, such as the Cherokee and Creek, and helping to confederate other Siouan tribes to act as buffer nations on the early frontier often mustering warriors to attack less accommodating Indians for the colonial government. (34) The alliances afforded protection from the Iroquoian and Algonquian tribes and afforded trade alliances that stretched from Mexico to the Canadian tundra and from the Great Plains to the Eastern Shore.

Monasukapanough as mentioned above was the earliest historical location for the Saponi at European contact. Located on the Rivanna River, David I. Bushnell in “The Five Monacan Towns in Virginia, 1607”, writes, “…in Albemarle County, directly north of the University of Virginia and one-half mile up the river from the bridge of the Southern Railway…”, where the river makes a bend, the water flows in an easterly direction out of the west. Bushnell further says, “On the right or south bank there is a wide, fertile bottom, bounded on the north by the river and on the south by cliffs sloping to the low grounds. On the left or north bank of the stream the bottom is far less extensive than on the opposite side, but it is rather higher and less liable to be overflowed, and the cliffs are nearer the river.” (35) There is a shallow ford in this location in the river that makes it possible to walk across easily. The town was split in half by the river at this point. Canoes would have been utilized along the river for fishing and travel. Monasukapanough was also the home of a significant communal Saponi mound now called the Rapidan Mound. Thomas Jefferson would note a number of Indians passing through directly to the mound in 1753. Jefferson says, “a party passing, about thirty years ago, through the part of the country where this barrow is, went through the woods directly to it, without any instructions or enquiry, and having staid about it some time, with expressions which were construed to be those of sorrow, then returned to the high road, which they had left about half a dozen miles to pay this visit, and pursued their journey.” (36) We could infer from this that they may have been Saponi, but they could have been Monacan or Tutelo as well. One reason that the Indians could have been from any of these three tribes has to do with the communal nature of the large mound at Monasukapanough otherwise known as the Rapidan Mound. This mound was utilized by all the surrounding Monacan, Manahoac, and Tutelo-Saponi towns. (37) Bushnell speaks to the location of this mound as follows, “it certainly stood on the low ground, on the right bank of the
Rivanna, evidently nearer the river than the cliffs, and it may have been some distance above the ford.” (38)

Monasukapanough and Monahassanough partially abandoned their Albemarle County, VA towns sometime prior to 1670. (39) Before the majority of the inhabitants of Monasukapanough migrated, the town was a cross roads on the Trading Path to the Catawba and the Occaneechi. Some of the reasons for the removal southwards to the Otter River may have involved the encroachments of the Five Nations and the untenable relationships between the colonists, the Cherokee, the Susquehannocks, and the Powhatan. Swanton suggests 1650 to 1660 as the migration time frame. Lederer mentions the Cherokee attack on the Saponi in alliance with the Virginia colonists occurring between 1654 and 1656. It may be noted that in 1656 Virginia passed legislation to use the militia, the nearby Indians, and all those that had treaties with the Colony to attack the “many western and inland Indians.” (40) The Saponi are later found living on Otter River at Sapon in 1770 by John Lederer and by Thomas Batts in 1771. The Hassinunga/Hanohaskies were at Pintahae 25 miles northwest on an island in the Saponi/Yadkin River close to present day Salisbury, VA in Bedford County at these dates. (41) The Tutelo had two towns. One was at Tutelo Town proper near the Roanoke River in present day Salem, VA in Botetourt County. The Thomas-Sawyer site is the location of the town and is currently under the Moyer Sports Complex while others have stated it to be at the confluence of Masons Creek and the Roanoke River. The second was located at this time at Tolera/Yadkin Town. This was located 100 miles southwest of Pintahae. From Pintahae the Batts and Fallam Expedition of 1771 crossed the Saponi/Yadkin River several times coming to the headwaters of the Roanoke at Dan River. This area was described as being surrounded by mountains and southwest of present day Stuart, VA in Patrick County. It is also possible that this location may have been within the limits of North Carolina as the description speaks about the border area between Virginia and North Carolina. Batts and Fallam came across a Moheton/Moneton at this area who told them that they had crossed close to Moheton Town. The Moheton were a part of the Moneton. The town of Moheton, although sometimes confused with the town of Moneton, was located near the headwaters of the New River on the western border of present day Virginia. There are two suggested locations for Moheton in this area. One at the Mercer Salt Works in Summers County, West Virginia and the other at Salt Pond, Giles County, VA. (42) This was a trading village for salt and appears to have been trading salt with the Tutelo. It is further possible that this same
town is the Sitteree of the Needham and Arthur Expedition of 1673. The Five Nations war path leading to the Catawba crossed the Dan River at the position between the headwaters of the Smith and Mayo Rivers at the piedmont; directly in line with the Tutelo residence. This fact made Tolera/Yadkin Town a prime target for the Five Nations in their push southward for hunting and war.

In their book, “West Virginia”, Otis K. Rice and Stephen W. Brown speak about The Sandy Creek Expedition, also referred to as The Big Sandy Expedition. This expedition was sent out to clear out the Indian threat entering Virginia from Ohio in order to open up the western frontier to settlement and stop foreign Indian attacks. French control of the Ohio Indians would have to end in order for English settlement of the western frontier to proceed. The Ohio Valley Indians in the 1650’s included the Shawnee, Huron, Erie, and Iroquois tribes predominantly with a few other minor tribes allied with these such as the Westo. Let us turn our attention for a moment to the Massanutten Mountain range since the migration and war party paths into the Appalachians had a significant outlet at this location. The Indian Trading Post of Massanutten/Mesinetto town lay at the foot of Massanutten Mountain in present Shenandoah County, VA. Near the Shenandoah River William Beverly, an early settler calls Massanutten Town the “Old Field” in his request for a grant of 15,000 acres dated April 30, 1732. “Old Field” often refers to a flat treeless land area more commonly today called prairie lands. This was along the river bottom area of Shenandoah River, South Fork. John Lederer, in 1669, labels this area as Savannae, presumably a geographic descriptor. These areas were covered with grass when the area was first settled by Europeans. (43) It may be noted that the Manahoac are mentioned as following the buffalo into the eastern woodland following the herds in their migration route out of the Ohio River Valley. (44) The only buffalo herd recorded went through Indiana through Ohio into western Pennsylvania and western New York during the 18th century. The settlers of Massanutten had lived with the Indians there in peace until “the spring of 1754”, Strickler writes, “western Indians induced the Valley tribes to join them in this war so that in the spring of 1754 the Indians suddenly and unexpectedly moved off, and entirely left the Valley.” (45) Although it is still yet unclear as to whom the Massanutten may have been, there are at least four candidates; the Senedo, the Shawnee, the Susquehanna, or the Manahoac. After the failed attempts at sending expeditions against the French Fort Duquesne and Indian Territory, then Governor Dinwiddie authorized a more concerted effort against the Shawnee in Ohio. After George
Washington had recommended Major Andrew Lewis to lead this militia effort they gathered at Fort Frederick close to Ingles Ferry on the New River with about 130 “Cherokee warriors” and a total of 340 men. (46) They left on February 18, 1756 to deal with the Shawnee and the Westo/Yutchi invasion under the name Rickahocan. Lederer speaks about the Pamunky chief Totopotomoi being killed fighting with the English against the Mahock/Manahoac and Nahyssan/Tutelo etc. This occurred at the time of the Rickahocan Westo/Yutchi invasion of 1656. Mooney thought the Rickahocan were Cherokee in this instance, however the Cherokee had gathered at Fort Frederick with Major Lewis’s militia to deal with the interior Indians. (47) The two terms must be looked at carefully in order to ascertain the correct tribal affiliation. Common references to the Yutchi tribe are Tomahittan and Rickahocan. The term Tomahittan was used by the eastern Siouans for Yuchi. Rickahocan was used to denote the Yuchi by the Powhatans as well and this word means over the mountain Indians, however another translation is cavelander. The Yutchi language is classified unto itself as Uchean. This language has elements of Siouan and Muskogean languages. M. J. Norton made a posting on Rootsweb.com Aug. of 2005 concerning the Indians in the area covered. He states that Indians were frequently in the Blue Ridge area between 1710 and 1734, but gone by 1754. The majority would leave the area in 1754 as tribes began taking sides for the French and Indian War. Further this notation says that settlers and presumed remaining Indian allies to the colony, moved to North Carolina for safety. This lists three Shawnee town sites, one near to Winchester, VA, one on the North River in Shenandoah County, VA, and one close to Moorefield, VA. The Tuscarora had a home in Berkeley County, VA at this time frame and the Senedos camped in Shenandoah County. The Catawba and Delaware were noted as being in the local area as well. The Susquenoughs supposedly separate from the Susquehanna, and the Cenelas were on the tide water and Cherokee made passes through the area. “All of these were in the Valley through 1750.” (48)

(Noted Missed location, [The location of Otter River is off the Roanoke/Staunton River southwest of present day Lynchburg, VA. The Roanoke River has its beginnings in Montgomery County, VA, passes through the Quirank or Blue Ridge Mountains and for an eighty-five mile stretch of the river turns into the Staunton River at the Dan and Staunton confluence located in Mecklenburg County, Va. (49) Starting at Bedford, VA, in Bedford County, if you go north you will come to Centerville, VA. To the north of Centerville is Big Otter River which is fed by North Otter Creek. To the south of Centerville is Little Otter River which is fed by Little Otter
Heading north of Centerville and slightly west is Stony Creek which wraps around Flat Top Mountain and runs between Flat Top Mountain and Sharp Top Mountain. Buzzards Roost is the southern tip or second pinnacle of Sharp Top Mountain. North of these are the Chestnut Mountains. To the east is Suck Mountain and to the south is Sharps Mountain. The four mountains of Sharp’s, Sharp Top, Suck, and Flat Top Mountains make a half C shape together. Due south from this C shape you will find the area that contained the town of Sapon/Sapona.

Sapon was located at the forks of the Staunton and Otter Rivers in Campbell County, VA. The Sapon Town site is approximately 2 miles northeast of present day AltaVista, VA. Stony Creek is also an important area in regards to Stony Creek Baptist Church which figured into the later migrations of the Saponi out of Virginia and into North Carolina, Kentucky, and Tennessee areas.

The cultural aspects attributable to the four key groups of tribes or clans of the Southeastern Siouan; the Manahoac, Tutelo-Saponi, Monacan, and Catawba, can be directly linked to the Indian Knoll Culture, the Mound Builders, and the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex. Dixon shows the correlation of the Indian Knoll Culture found at the Green River site in Northern Kentucky and places in southern Indiana and Ohio. (51) R.E. Banta in “The Ohio”, makes it clear that Indian Knoll Culture had its earliest assignable areas on the Ohio River and that the majority of its people lived on the Kentucky side of the river. Banta further states that “…the men averaged five feet four inches…”, and “…the women five feet one half inch…” in height “…with medium long heads…” i.e. skulls. The Indian Knoll Culture has a unique characteristic where by a village site is built on top of a mound created by piling up refuse such as shells and other discarded materials. They would pile up shell and other material around their wigwams creating a hillock and raising the level of their home above the surrounding grounds. The people also utilized caves and rock shelters both in times of danger and sometimes as a matter of preference. (52) The Indian Knoll Culture should not be confused with Mound Builders although an evolutionary continuum maybe hypothesized and therefore not mutually exclusive. Mound building has a different evolutionary aspect in that the burial of the deceased takes place by piling rocks on top of the bodies and funerary objects at a different location than the home. Subsequent burials are placed on top of one another with more stones and ceremonially broken jars, pots, and arrows. Over time the mound builds up with more burials creating a layered vault.
In the works of Dunham, Gold, and Hantman regarding Saponi mortuary custom they speak to the smaller graves that underlay the larger mounds. Most likely developed during the Indian Knoll period they would dig a pit or earth lodge and place the dead. Then over the top of these pits or earth lodges they placed stones and other ceremonial objects as described previously; i.e. broken pots etc. These were noted as primary and secondary burial antecedents of the larger mounds. Dunham, Gold, and Hantman place these primary and secondary burials occurring between 600 and 900 A.D. during the Middle Woodland period. Some locations were dated from 900 to 1200 A.D. Mound Building developed as the next technological step towards more complex modes of burial and ceremonial expressions. The mounds that were built over the top of these primaries and secondary’s were of two classifications; earth-stone mounds and conical mounds. (53) The dead would have the meat striped off the bone. The bones would then be oiled with red ochre and placed in sacred bundles and occasionally then placed in a ceramic pot. The family would then take the bones to their home and place them under their flooring. At the appointed times, usually after one to five years, the villages would gather and hold ceremonies for the departed, such as the Tutelo Spirit Adoption Ceremony, and all the bones of their departed would then be placed in the mounds. (54)

Ten days after the Jamestown adventurers landed in Powhatan territory, Christopher Newport and a group of 23 men went up the James River. Setting up a camp at the fall line, Newport met with a Powhatan werowance named Pawatah. After dinning together, Newport asked Pawatah from where their copper and metal supplies came. Pawatah spoke of the Monacan copper mines at Quirank and agreed to escort the men to the location, however upon nearing the area Pawatah gave his excuses and promptly left the scene in “….a sudden change of heart...”. (55) The next expedition there would be over a year later in August of 1708 when the Jamestown colonists revisited the fall line. At the high point of the falls the colonists engaged a party of “Piedmont Indians” for about thirty minutes and captured a warrior named Amoroleck. This prisoner was interrogated by John Smith and his Algonquian interpreter Mosco. Smith wrote:

“We asked him how many worlds he did know, he replied, he knew no more but that which was under the sky that covered him, which were the Powhatans, with the Monacans, and the Massowomecks, that were higher up in the mountains. Then we asked him what was beyond the mountains, he answered the Sun: but of anything else he knew nothing; because the woods
were not burnt. These and many such questions we demanded, concerning the Massawomeks, the Monacans, their own country….The Monacans he said were their neighbors and friends, and did dwell as they in the hilly countries by small rivers, living upon roots and fruits, but chiefly by hunting. The Massawomeks did dwell upon a great water, and had many boats, and so many men they made war with all the world.” (56)

Monahassanugh is noted as the town of the Tutelo and has been also noted as the town of the Nahyssan as well the Hassinunga. The Nahyssan, shortened as Yesa, is the name the Saponi, Tutelo, Hassinunga, Monacan, and the rest called their selves. By 1650 Edward Blande noticed a band of the Tutelo had established a town called “Manks Nessoneicks” twelve miles southwest of where Peter’s Point would be built; present day Petersburg, VA and in Dinwiddie County. Peter’s Point was a trading post established in 1675 by Peter Jones the son-in-law of Abraham Wood. Abraham Wood funded the Thomas Batts and Robert Fallam Expedition of 1671 to the western Indians and the James Needham and Gabriel Arthur Expedition of 1673 to establish trade with the Tomahittans/Cherokee. Swanton says that Manks may have been misspelled or “intended” for “Tanks” which was a Powhatan adjective for little or small. Going with Swanton’s assertion, the “Little Tutelo” would have been located, in 1650, in present day Dinwiddie County at the town of Manx Nessoneicks. (57) Remembering that Nessoneicks or Nahyssan is the same as Tutelo it would appear that this was a separate band of the Tutelo that lived apart from the Tutelo or Saponi at Monasukapanough or Monahassanugh. It was four years later that the colonial government of Virginia would send out an expedition against the interior Indians and I have as yet to find information regarding the status of Manx Nessoneicks after that period. It may be possible that when the colonial attacks happened in 1654 that the Little Tutelo retreated to the Staunton River to form the town of Pintahae with the Hassinunga in time for the migration of the Saponi, Tutelo, and Hassinunga from their Albemarle County locations.

The interruption by alien people from across the Atlantic and the subsequent domination of Native North America spurred an unstable climate for tribal government. Although tribal governing bodies rarely stayed in any static form for too long the time frames and ways the transitions occurred changed. One reason for this change occurred based on the differing tactics that colonial militia and Native warriors fought their wars. Native warfare often was swift, stealthy, and short lived. Colonial or European tactics were of longer duration, slower and less
stealthy, and highly organized. Hunting expeditions also changed dramatically by way of the Fur Trade in general and specifically by the Beavers Wars of the northern tribes. The diseases that periodically swept through villages also changed the way in which wars were fought and with what frequency.

Colonial power and population grew under the English. The Saponi and Tutelo people became dependent upon the will of the Colonials populating and taking up an ever increasing amount of forest and meadow lands. Tribes from the North down to the South were being displaced from the colonization of Canada and the Mississippi Valley by the French, Florida by the Spanish, and the Eastern Seaboard by the English and the Dutch. The Beaver Wars caused inter-tribal wars, slave hunting, and the exhaustion of fur bearing animals due to the Fur Trade. The entire eastern half of North America was in refugee fluctuation. This began to have a vast and devastating impact on Native North Americans not only impacting hunting for food, but also pushing northern tribes into conflict with southeastern and western tribes. (58) Trade would be transformed from the use of finished homemade goods into raw material shipments back to Europe with manufactured goods traveling back to the Americas and throughout the world. The plantation system would arise as a driving force in the mercantile machine of the English. Native Americans became a profitable source of manpower, natural resources, and “untapped” land base. The people became a commodity as much as the land they lived on and for a while this kept them fairly safe until the diseases began. Epidemic plagues began decimating tribes. The Colonials, after coercion of the Natives to over hunt, Christianization, and assimilative indoctrination via the Plantation System, decided that the land itself was more valuable than those that populated it. Indians made poor slaves compared to the Africans with greater immunity to European diseases. The Indians where fundamentally in the way and more profit could be made directly from European land ownership. This started a chain reaction of events which lit the fire consuming all the Native tribes of North America. The plan was always the same. First the food sources must be extinguished. It also helped to be able to profit from this endeavor viz-a-vis the Fur Trade and the Indian slave trade. These tactics were not killing the Natives as quickly as desired and new ones were introduced. Amherst, an experienced general, proposed to infect cloth and blankets with smallpox, measles, and fevers. “Captain Simeon Ecuyer had bought time by sending smallpox-infected blankets and handkerchiefs to the Indians surrounding the fort which started an epidemic among them. Amherst himself had encouraged
this tactic in a letter to Ecuyer”. (59) His plan was to give these items in trade or as gifts to the Native people. This is what would be termed today as terroristic genocide. This was mass genocide the like of which have never been seen since. The red man’s holocaust was greater than any seen in Europe, Africa, or Asia. It is estimated that 130 million Native people were murdered, massacred, starved, tortured, and infected between 1492 to the present.

The future for the Siouan speaking tribes was fore-shadowed after the Powhatan Uprisings of 1622 and 1644, the Susquehannock-Claiborne Alliance, the quasi Slave Rebellion of 1663, and with the actions that took place by Nathaniel Bacon in 1676. The Powhatan Uprising of 1622 had followed on the heels of the Anglo-Powhatan War 1609 to 1613. Powhatan’s death in 1618 placed his successor Opechancanough in the central role of Mamanatowick. Opechancanough had no feeling of friendship for the Europeans. After nine years of abusive behavior by the English towards the Powhatan people, the uprising to drive the English out, or to their grave, was planned. The Powhatan Uprising of 1622 would come as a hard psychological and deadly surprise to the English colony. Later in 1644 another attempt to rid themselves of the colonists failed. The would be Slave Rebellion of September 1663 in Gloucester County, VA was actually thwarted by a servant, however the threat or possibility of a slave revolt in the colony would be almost as bad as an actual one. (60) Subsequent revolts that did take place later on like the Nat Turner Slave Rebellion would further fuel race hate and stratifications including the segregations between Native Americans, Africans, and Europeans. The Susquehannocks known by the French as Andaste, the Dutch and Swedes as Minque/White Mingo, and in Pennsylvania as the Conestoga, resided to the North of the Saponi and Manahoac between the Potomac River in northern Virginia and the southern parts of New York. They were bitter enemies with the Iroquois and allies of the Huron, Erie, and Neutrals in the Ohio country. The Delaware were subjects of the Susquehannock as well the coastal regions Indians subject to attacks from them. Tribes like the Powhatan, Conoy, and Nanticoke would learn to fear their coastal assaults. While the copper trade with the English cemented Jamestown’s existence the protection the English afforded as buffer to the Susquehannock coastal attacks also figured into Powhatan’s strategy for the English colony. The Fur Trade was important in drawing the attention of the Europeans to colonize the Northeast. The Dutch East India Company in 1609 sent Henry Hudson to explore Delaware Bay and the Hudson River for settlement. In 1614 the Dutch had built a trading post on the Hudson River and established trade with the Delaware. The
French had established Quebec by this time along the St. Lawrence River. In 1615 Etienne Brule was exploring to the south of the Huron tribes in the Susquehannock territory. Alliances were soon established between the French, Huron, and Susquehannocks against the Iroquois. The Dutch were alarmed at this alliance seeking out the aid of the Mohawk to attack the Susquehannocks in 1615. The Iroquois wanted a solid trading partner in the Dutch, however in order for this to occur unencumbered they would have to war against the Mohican Confederacy for four years. The Mohawk, a member of the Iroquois League, were triumphant over the Algonquin Mohicans and became the prime partners in trade with the Dutch. In the clamor to gain Dutch trading rights the Susquehannocks began attacking the Delaware in 1626. By 1630 the Susquehannocks had forced the Delaware into the present states of New Jersey and Delaware. The Dutch accepted the turn of events and the Delaware became subjects of the Susquehannocks. The English would enter the fur trade through the efforts of William Claiborne. In 1631 Claiborne established a trading post at Kent Island which was at the mouth of the Susquehannock River and at the northern reaches of the Chesapeake Bay. William Claiborne would have a strong friendship with the Susquehannocks known as the Susquehannock-Claiborne Alliance. This gave the Susquehannocks three allied trading partners; the English through William Claiborne, the French through the Huron, and the Dutch directly at Delaware Bay. The establishment of Maryland became a problem for the Susquehannock-Claiborne Alliance. George Calvert, a.k.a. Lord Baltimore, had arrived in Virginia in 1629. He was a Catholic and had under his reputation a failed colony at Avalon, Newfoundland. Calvert sought out a new charter of land from Virginia territory in what would later be called the Carolinas. In his capacity as Virginia’s Secretary of State, William Claiborne went to England to argue for Virginia’s interests against the Calvert charter. There was a group of London merchants that had already set their sights on the Carolina area for a sugar plantation and Claiborne had also gone to argue for their case which was successful. While in London in 1631 Claiborne would apply also for a charter to settle Kent Island and establish a trading post with the Indians. Claiborne was given the right to trade with all the Indians in the mid-Atlantic “where there was not already a patent in effect.” Claiborne set out to New Kent Island May 28, 1631 to establish the trading post. One of the London merchants that helped Claiborne was Maurice Thomson. For his support Claiborne helped Thomson contract with Virginia guaranteeing a tobacco monopoly. While Kent Island was being settled the Privy Council in London proposed that Calvert charter lands north of
the Virginia Colony in what would become Maryland in order to check Dutch settlement. Calvert accepted the offer, but died before the King could sign it. George Calvert’s son Caecilius Calvert, a.k.a. Baron Baltimore, was then granted the charter for Maryland in 1632. The charter included Kent Island which had already been chartered to William Claiborne. The Virginia Assembly and the Kent Island settlers protested the Maryland Charter as illegal and supported the claim of William Claiborne. Claiborne argued his case that the lands were not unsettled on Kent Island before the Lords of Foreign Plantations in July of 1633. They rejected his claim. By 1634 Calvert settled Yaocomico lands at St. Mary’s City. The Virginia Colony and William Claiborne made it clear to Calvert that his allegiance was to Virginia and royal authority, and not to the proprietary authority of Maryland. In 1635 Thomas Cornwallis swept through Chesapeake Bay for illegal traders. He captured one of Claiborne’s trade vessels named the Pocomoke Sound. Claiborne attempted to retrieve his ship by force and was defeated. Thus the first naval battles in American waters occurred April 23 and May 10 of 1635. The unpopular governor of Virginia John Harvey following orders to support the Marylanders removed Claiborne from office as Secretary of State just prior to the naval battles. In support of Claiborne the Virginia Assembly expelled Gov. Harvey from the colony. Two years later Cloberry and Company sewed Claiborne over revenue losses at Kent Island. They invited Maryland to take over the trading post by force in December of 1637. In March of 1638 the Maryland Assembly had seized all of Claiborne’s property within Maryland giving it to Calvert. Claiborne lost his final appeal to the Privy Council April of 1638 and Kent Island fell from Claiborne’s ownership. Claiborne then went to the Providence Land Company, with help of Maurice Thomson, and created the colony at Ruatan Island off the coast of Honduras in the Caribbean Sea. The Spanish destroyed the colony in 1642. During the English Civil War Claiborne took the opportunity to reclaim Kent Island with the aid of Richard Ingle, another victim of Maryland. In 1644 Claiborne took Kent Island and Ingle took St. Mary’s City. In 1646 Gov. Leonard Calvert retook Kent Island and St. Mary’s City. Gov. Leonard Calvert died in 1648 and Caecilius Calvert appointed a pro-Protestant Parliamentarian to take the governorship. That same year a group of merchants applied to Parliament for revocation of the Maryland charter from the Calverts. This request was rejected. Claiborne was then appointed by the Puritan-controlled Parliament to a commission which was charged with suppressing Anglican unrest in Virginia. Claiborne and Richard Bennett secured the peaceful submission of Virginia to Parliamentary rule, and the new Virginia
Assembly appointed Claiborne as Secretary of the Colony. It also proposed to the Parliament new acts which would give Virginia more autonomy from England. Claiborne and Bennett then turned their attention to Maryland. They argued that the Catholic Calverts could not be trusted and that their charter gave the Calverts too much power. They demanded that Maryland submit to the commonwealth. Gov. Stone briefly refused but gave in to Claiborne and the Commission and submitted Maryland to Parliamentary rule. During the time of the Commission in Virginia, Claiborne signed a treaty with the Susquehannocks that claimed ownership of both Kent Island and Palmer Island. The struggle continued in a back and forth until 1660. Having no more government allies Claiborne retired from politics and went to live at his 5,000 acre estate at Romancoke near West Point on the York River where he died in 1677. (61) Cynthia J. Van Zandt states that, “The Susquehannock-Claiborne Alliance was extraordinarily influential, and its impact had both geographical and temporal dimensions. Geographically, the Susquehannock-Claiborne connection and its demise affected people and events from the Chesapeake to Iroquoia. Temporally, its effects lingered throughout the first half of the century.” Van Zandt shows that William Claiborne, unlike his peers in Virginia after the 1622 Powhatan Uprising, “refused to give up on the premise that alliances with Indian nations could offer English colonists important benefits.” Claiborne would indeed choose differently to ally with the Indians and fight for co-existence. (62) In 1676 a leader of the colonials named Nathaniel Bacon would lead a popular rebellion against Governor William Berkeley. The reasoning behind the support for the rebellion lay in the monopoly and privilege afforded those close to government officials. In Nathaniel Bacon’s employ the Occaneechi, Saponi, and Tutelo served as his hired militia in order to fight the Susquehannocks. Keeping in mind that the Saponi and Tutelo were living with the Occaneechi by this time one can assume that Bacon employed all three clans. The Saponi, Tutelo, and Occaneechi made up the Tutelo-Saponi Confederacy and it would appear that they acted in unison against the Susquehannock enlisting the aid of the Monacan Confederacy. Upon the victorious return of the Occaneechi, laden with Susquehannock captives and seized furs, Bacon tried to take the goods “and enslave a group of Monacan Indians, who had fought as allies of the Occaneechi.” Refusing to acquiesce to these heinous demands Bacon’s militia turned on them. (63) This would temper the rest of the Siouan people to war and show the reasoning behind the distrust that the Siouan speaking tribes held against the Colonial officials’ lack of authority in controlling their citizenry or honoring agreements.
The Colonial period is a very important period of history in understanding how and why the tribes in the Southeast were treated and the policies that grew up around the issues of race. The institution of slavery and its subsequent relationship to the newly forming plantation system, reactions to the Powhatan uprisings of 1622 and 1644 (64), internal conflict such as what is seen in the Susquehannock-Claiborne Alliance, early slave rebellions like the one in Gloucester County, VA in September of 1663 (65), and the general clashing attitudes of Native Americans and Europeans in early Colonial days to inter-racial relationships; instances which greatly impacted Native American life. These events would shape the laws and perceptions of Colonial life and the beginnings of racial stratifications that disenfranchised tribal sovereignty. It was the continuous wars both inter-tribal and with the Europeans, epidemic diseases, and the plantation system that sprang up to process vast amounts of furs, tobacco, and other raw material that transformed the Southeastern Siouans.