The Secretary to the Continental Congress, Charles Thomson, is a peripheral historical face (like one of those figures on the dark margins of a Rembrandt painting) who rarely is seen in more than a handful of pages in the histories of colonial America. In recent years, however, he has been brought into a slightly clearer focus, receiving some attention for his role as a Philadelphia agitator during the decade before Independence\(^1\) and as a political figure during the Revolutionary period.\(^2\) Yet no serious attention has been given to his role immediately prior to the 1760s and the experiences which were to form his political attitudes.\(^3\)

Born in Ulster in 1729, Thomson immigrated to Pennsylvania with his family when he was aged ten. Once having set foot in America, he never left it during the remaining eighty-five years of his life. Educated at Francis Alison's justly famous academy at New London, Pennsylvania, he was brought to Philadelphia in 1750 by Benjamin Franklin as a Latin tutor in the new Academy of Philadelphia. This was the beginning of a relationship between Thomson and the man twenty-three years his senior which was to make a significant contribution to the course of colonial events. With the Academy's change of character—and personnel—in 1755, Thomson moved to become Head of Latin at the Friends Philadelphia School; there he perhaps was unique, since one of the standard expectations of the Quakers was that their schools should be staffed only by their co-religionists. Yet, though never a Quaker,
Thomson quickly affiliated himself with one of the burning Quaker interests at that time: Indian relations.

There is no need to rehearse in detail the history of Pennsylvania’s political saga, which from its earliest days saw the pattern established for a set-piece drama of conflict between the unicameral Assembly, unique to Pennsylvania and Delaware, and the Penn family. It may seen curious that a commonly-held religion had not in any way prevented the Quakers of the province from treating William Penn abominably; yet they made it quite clear that political power and “local” control were of far greater moment to them than shared religious sentiment. Up to the mid-1750s the Quakers expressed their political control through dominance of the Assembly. What was significant to them was the fact that Thomas Penn (and his brother Richard, who held a “minority” interest in the proprietorship) were in the peculiar position of having special property interests in the colony to protect, while at the same time exerting executive power in the province. These two roles left the Penns open to charges of conflict of interest, real and imagined.

It is clear that some of the blame for the sour relationship between the Proprietors and the Assembly must be laid at the feet of the Penns. They devoted an inordinate amount of effort to stating their position that it was the Executive, not the Legislative branch, that had sole power to collect and to spend all public monies. The Quaker-dominated assembly correctly perceived that the Proprietors were pursuing this end by forcing the governors they sent to the province to operate under secret instructions, from 1746 onwards. Most of the instructions were motivated by Thomas Penn’s desire to have his governors gain control over all expenditure bills in the colony, and the single-mindedness with which he operated bred a nest of suspicion which was greatly to complicate efforts to provide a co-ordinated approach to external threats to the province. It is no exaggeration to say that in “the fifteen years before 1755, House and governor were so much embroiled in conflict that government became ineffectual.” The aura of mutual suspicion had become so dense that men on both sides, though frequently in error, were never in doubt.

This ineffectual government led to political shifts and upheavals during the 1750s, with Indian relations the fulcrum upon which all turned. To understand Thomson’s role it is necessary to see why Pennsylvania Indian affairs had turned so contentious by the time he became involved. At the establishment of the colony William Penn had told the Indians that he desired the English settlers to live along side
them with the natives' "love and Consent," and on his first visit to the province he initiated and participated personally in a number of purchases of land from the Delawares. The Delawares were a confederacy made up of several divisions who occupied a large territory concentrated in eastern Pennsylvania and in New Jersey. But by the time Pennsylvania was founded the powerful Iroquois had claimed hegemony over them and were attempting to take upon themselves the right to dispose of Delaware lands. Penn's sons desired to build upon the good will created by their father and in 1733 instructed their Governor: "You are to be particularly careful to keep a good Understanding with the Indians & see as far as lies in your Power that they be honestly dealt with."5 However, uppermost in these dealings was the maintenance of peaceful relations with the Iroquois—the Six Nations—and that, of necessity, meant the threat of conflict with the Delawares. At a treaty conference in Philadelphia in 1742 the Six Nations solemnly directed the Delawares that they were forbidden, "You, Your Children and Grand Children, to the latest Posterity, for ever, medling in Land affairs."6 A rather bitter pill for Delaware throats to swallow, whose name for themselves—"Lenni Lenape"—meant "the original people."

Indian affairs in Pennsylvania always had been clearly and legally the prerogative of the Proprietor, and from the outset William Penn had feared that local prejudices against the natives would win the day if the popularly-elected Assembly supervised these affairs. By the mid-eighteenth century "Probably no one in England was better informed on Indian affairs"7 than Thomas Penn. Thus it was unfortunate that he was challenged in his responsibility for their conduct by an organized and determined group of Quakers, who, distrusting him over his financial claims, were now deeply suspicious of all aspects of provincial life touched by proprietorial fingers. A crucial part of this conflict between Assembly and Proprietor was the refusal of the Quakers to consider making provision for defense against Indian raids on the province's frontier. If Quakerism meant anything, it was argued, it was pacifism; and many Friends took this to mean no resistance under any circumstances. This moral position was exacerbated by the practical considerations of the conflict over the question of Pennsylvania's finances. Thus when by 1751-52 French activities among the tribes in the Ohio area threatened to involve the Pennsylvania tribes and Penn offered money for defense if the Assembly also would contribute, here was a splendid opportunity for the dominant Quakers in the Assembly: not only could they stress their pacifism, but they could also demonstrate
their continuing political control. They became determined to direct relations with the Indians—an activity which was the colonial equivalent of foreign affairs.

The leader of the Quakers in these developments was Israel Pemberton, "an intransigent pacifist," who "was detested and feared ... more than any other person in Pennsylvania" by proprietary leaders on both sides of the Atlantic. He was one of the two most powerful Friends in Pennsylvania and as clerk to the religious life of the colony's Quakers, just as Isaac Norris managed their political interests as Speaker of the Assembly. While such a religious oligarchy had long since disappeared from every other colony, it appeared to be alive, well, and flexing its muscles in Pennsylvania at mid-century. The Quakers, as individuals or in small groups, informally had attended in previous years many of the conferences at which treaties had been struck; but now they moved to take control. Late in 1755 the Assembly presented the Governor with a bill to regulate the Indian trade, the intention of which, wrote Richard Peters to Penn, was that of "Excluding the Governor out of all Transactions with the Indians." By this bill they intended to have the Assembly set up official Indian "Commissioners," who would supervise all the province's Indian agents and interpreters. In April of the following year, 1756, Pemberton gathered a conference in his Philadelphia home to agree to a peace treaty with the marauding Indians, a treaty to be sponsored, and executed, by the Quakers. This was, in effect, the birth of "The Friendly Association for Regaining and Preserving Peace with the Indians by Pacific Measures" (mercifully known simply as "The Friendly Association").

Curiously, it was Franklin—a man who clearly was not a Quaker—who galvanized this Quaker resistance to the proprietary cause. As a member of the Assembly, Franklin had attempted to steer a middle course between the Proprietors and their governors on the one side and the Quaker Party on the other. Up to 1755 Franklin had been more or less successful in avoiding a political commitment to either faction and had been intent to seek practical means for inter-colonial unity in the face of the threats posed by the French and the Indians allied to the French cause. This had culminated in Franklin's Albany Plan of Union of 1754. But by the summer of 1755 he was openly anti-proprietary, though he could not accept the Quaker ideal of pacifism when it was applied to the reality of colonial defense. Thus he cobbled together a workable grouping, a new coalition of anti-proprietary non-Quakers with the so-called "Old Party," the Quakers, combining now to form the new "Assembly Party." The solder to make the weld hold was to be
Indian affairs, which was to play a major part in “Mr Franklin’s Declaration of War against the Proprietaries.”

This was an attractive idea to many Quakers, since recent events on the frontier had demonstrated that their hindering of Pennsylvania’s defense plans urged by the Proprietor and his governors had left the colony exceedingly vulnerable to French and hostile Indian attack. The bringing of the war quite so close to home had the effect of forcing a number of the most pacifistic Quakers to resign from the Assembly during 1756; this, in fact, facilitated Franklin’s bobbing to the top of the political pool in Pennsylvania. The newly-formed Friendly Association could, however, provide the surrogate for a number of Quaker activities. It would seek to shift attention from the Quakers’ own shortcomings in colonial defense by accusing the Proprietors of devious—and worse—practices against the natives. It also would have the benefit of showing the Indians that the Friends were their true Pennsylvania friends. Fully justified in many of their charges against the Proprietors when it came to the province’s political and financial affairs—especially in connexion with Thomas Penn’s stubborn refusal to allow his extensive lands in the colony to be taxed—the Assembly Party now stepped on to far less secure ground when they charged the Penns with unscrupulous conduct towards the Indians. As for the Proprietors, they now saw every action of the Quaker-dominated Assembly and its allies to be motivated by malicious intent, when very often the Assembly was merely taking its role in the drama being played in all the colonies: the natural conflict with British authority—Royal or proprietary—which came through the maturing of American political institutions.

The unwitting tool of the plan to discredit the proprietary interest was a remarkable Indian, Teedyuscung. The Delawares were a scattered people, with no central co-ordinating body, and during the 1740s and early 1750s a vacuum had occurred in their leadership; this made it possible for individual Indians to lay claim to authority for which they had no right and to which they had never been assigned. Thus, Teedyuscung, a colorful, gullible, childlike—and often childish—man, who styled himself “King of the Delawares,” was merely a spokesman of most questionable leadership and was, in fact, “almost completely ignorant of Delaware ceremonial protocol.” In him we find one of the best colonial examples of that “cultural schizophrenia” that affected many Indians: he was constantly torn between wanting to assert his Indian nature and passionately desiring to be white. Sometimes he would dress as one, sometimes the other. Sometimes he would rail against the colonists, other times profess his undying friendship and
fealty. And sometimes his red hands would be red with the white man's blood. Every move that Teedyuscung and his followers made shows the desperation of a demoralized people caught in the pincers of fate.

Yet here also was a "common Indian" who through the opportunity of circumstance—and some cunning—had scrambled his way up. Teedyuscung could not have begun lower down the Delaware social ladder, having been a miserably poor basketweaver in a branch of the tribe in New Jersey. In 1750, at the age of fifty, he had been baptized and had joined a group of Moravian Indians living in a community in Pennsylvania that was in many ways a reincarnation of John Eliot's experiments of the preceding century. Here five hundred Indians had begun to adopt the white man's mode of dress and his culture. Yet after General Braddock's defeat in 1755 it seemed to many natives that safety lay in support of the French; and by late autumn of that year Teedyuscung had forsaken the Moravians and with his faction of Delawares had settled at Wyoming—the site of present-day Wilkes-Barre—from where they mounted attacks on the scattered white settlements. Though it is not possible to be certain of his motives at any stage of his career as a Delaware leader, Teedyuscung probably was induced to switch now to the French through his belief in an ultimate French victory. For a small, vulnerable tribe, safety lay in correctly choosing the winning side. By March of 1756 they had killed some two hundred Pennsylvania settlers and captured an equal number.

Yet by July Teedyuscung appeared to be ready to discuss peace with Pennsylvania, at a conference held at Easton, a former Indian trading post sixty miles north of Philadelphia. Here he made no mention, nor even did he hint, that grievances against the English had played any part in causing his Indians to take up the hatchet against them. The French had incited his people, he claimed. It looked now as if some real accommodation could be made, and the gathering was adjourned to meet again at Easton in the autumn. However, when it resumed in November, to the amazement of all but one group present—the Friendly Association—Teedyuscung exploded a bombshell. Almost from the outset he was full of talk of dark offenses committed in the past by the Proprietors: most particularly, he claimed, was the "Walking Purchase" of 1737, by which the Proprietors had purchased land measured by the distance a man could walk in a long day. It virtually had been run, he pronounced, and then went on to charge the Six Nations with fraud in a purchase of 1749. And what of further lands purchased at Albany in 1754, he demanded.

Even if there had been cause for grievance in 1737, the issue had
never before been raised, and this was twenty years later. Moreover, no one had ever before questioned the transactions over land made at Albany in 1754. Benjamin Franklin had participated in those agreements at Albany; now, present at this Easton conference as one of the Assembly’s four “Commissioners,” he joined in denouncing the purchase. It takes little imagination to discover why Teedyuscung came to Easton in November with every intention of singing a song of peace, only to change his tune so discordantly. With his tendency to burst into tears in public for no apparent reason and his florid oratory where “sincerity, candor, and artifice were so ingeniously blended” that he himself probably “could not know where one ended and the other began,” Teedyuscung had been sized-up by Pemberton at the July Easton meeting as a perfect pawn to be used in a game actually to be played out in London. Indeed, having co-operated with Pemberton in orchestrating this intrigue, Franklin was shortly to pack his bags to move to England, armed with this Indian’s potentially damaging charge that the Proprietors had been the ones to alienate the Delawares. Franklin, Pemberton, and the Quaker Commissioners thereby manipulated a delicate situation, and, rather than burying the hatchet, the ironically christened “Friendly Association” was handing their Indian front man a spade and calling upon him to dig up any and all past grievances, actual or fancied. It also offered Teedyuscung a way of avoiding the humiliation of having to admit that he had been duped by the French to wage war on Pennsylvania. The Quakers, in the form of the Friendly Association, were “in effect seceding from the established order and were trying to manipulate the Proprietors by manipulating the Indians.”

Into this manipulation the Friendly Association now began to inject men whom they believed could serve in key capacities in their plans, and to this Easton conference in November of 1756 Pemberton personally brought Charles Thomson. It is most likely that Thomson had come to the attention of the Association through Franklin’s recommendation and through his own position as Master at the Friends Latin School. The Quaker schools were closely supervised by the Quaker meetings, and we can well suppose that Pemberton saw the potential in the young teacher, even though we must doubt the claim that Thomson knew shorthand. In any case, he certainly had the blessing of Quaker leaders for his involvement in Indian affairs, since he was to spend an inordinate amount of time during the next two years engaged in long and tedious journeys dealing with such affairs and expending a large quantity of ink in writing about them.
We find him the following spring at Lancaster, where on 7 April 1757 George Croghan reported that Thomson, together with several others, went out with Croghan “to meet the Indians...to bid them welcome to Lancaster.” Perhaps the Quakers already had devised the plan for Thomson to be appointed by Teedyuscung as his personal secretary; yet the fickle Indian never appeared. Following the 1756 conferences he had undertaken to travel north to ensure peace with other tribes. Instead, he had inspired a mutiny at Fort Allen, replete with sex-crazed and deranged soldiers, and now in April, at the very moment when he was pledged to meet the English at Lancaster, Teedyuscung was traveling to Niagara to promise fealty to the French. To them he vowed “that he and all his tribe would be closely allied with the French and would make war against the English,” wrote the Marquis de Vaudreuil to France. In the event, everyone waited a month for Teedyuscung’s arrival at Lancaster, until it was clear that he would not appear. Thomson stayed nearly to the end.

Teedyuscung’s ardor for the French lasted about as long as his ardor for anything normally did, and once again he returned to Easton, for yet another conference, whose formal sessions lasted from 25 July to 7 August 1757. Here about three hundred Indians met with Governor William Denny, Croghan, six members of the Governor’s Council, numerous Assemblymen, interpreters, and about a hundred Quakers headed by the egregious Pemberton. During this meeting Thomson lodged with Pemberton, and the Quaker leader continued to coach him to become Teedyuscung’s secretary. Teedyuscung had indicated to Croghan that he was quite satisfied for the official secretary, Richard Peters, to take sole responsibility for the minutes, as usual. However, on the 22nd two of the Assembly Commissioners, Joseph Galloway and William Masters, told Croghan that “if the Governor did not allow the Indians a Clerk, they would set off home, and take the Provincial present with them and not give a single shirt to the Indians.” Finally, Croghan learned that the Quakers had prevailed upon Teedyuscung and had provided him with their hand-picked amanuensis:

I found he had chosen a quaker schoolmaster for his Clerk. As to his having a Clerk or not having one I think it a matter of little consequence, but the having a Clerk was not the thing. Those People, by his having a Clerk, they had a Counsellor for themselves, to put Te[fed]yuscung in Mind what they wanted him to say, and it appeared very clearly one day when he had got his Speech drawn up in writing, and desired his Clerk to read it off as a lawyer would put in a plea at the bar.
Such a move was unprecedented, since the secretary to the Provincial Council, Peters, was the official scribe. But by encouraging Teedyuscung to demand his own clerk, Pemberton was able to impugn the integrity of the official recorder. Thus, on the first day of the meeting, "Teedyuscung sent his Interpreter to call Mr. Charles Thomson to the Table, whom he had appointed his Clerk, to take down the Minutes of this Treaty." Another source records the event:

As soon as the Governor and Council and Indians had taken their seats, Teedyuscung . . . called for Charles Thompson, Master of the Publick Quaker School in the City of Philadelphia; placed him . . . at the Table, and said he had chosen him for his Clerk; Whereupon he sat down and began to take Minutes, without asking Permission of the Governor, who took no further notice of it.

But this was not enough for Pemberton, who wanted Thomson's appointment to be official; therefore, later in the day Teedyuscung, "the first Indian to demand the right to have his own clerk to record the minutes of conferences," was induced to make a formal request of the Governor: "I aim, by having a Clerk of my own, to exceed my Ancestors, by having every Thing for the best." Although Denny attempted to forbid this move, Pemberton put pressure on Teedyuscung to insist. He told the Indian privately that Denny was "leading him by the nose," a metaphor that apparently was new to the man and one which impressed him—for he told Conrad Weiser, the provincial interpreter, that the Governor was trying to lead him by the nose; as he said this, he grabbed hold of his own nose and shook it vigorously. If anyone was going to lead Teedyuscung by the nose it would be Teedyuscung.

The next day the demand for an officially recognized clerk of his own was an ultimatum: no clerk, no treaty. He got his clerk, and as Thomson himself put it: "I was obliged to enter deep into their politics and investigate their claims. This led me to enquire touching the state of this nation, and to examine all the treaties and conferences with them from the first settlement of the province." Surely, there must have been times when the twenty-seven year old schoolmaster wondered precisely what he was doing in this unlikely situation. The volatile Indian leader must have made life rather uncomfortable, with his turbulent personality so starkly contrasting with that of the sedate Thomson. Now he would be supine, pliant and accommodating; the next moment he would threaten to massacre the proprietary officials. Then, just when he would have totally debased the coinage of vituperation, the Six Nations would openly challenge his haranguing about supposed past grievances, and he
would proclaim peace and thus threaten to undercut the Quaker cabal. Perhaps, in a perverted way, the very vulnerability of his personality made him all the more attractive to the anti-proprietary faction, and he often was to be seen at Easton earnestly talking with Pemberton and going as a frequent visitor to Pemberton's lodgings. "Under the tutelage of Pemberton and Thomson" he continued to renew the charges of fraud against the whites and directed abuse at the representatives of the Six Nations. Thomson charged that the Governor and his supporters deliberately made Teedyuscung drunk so that he could not understand what was happening; yet from every contemporary source it is abundantly clear that the Indian leader was extravagantly adept at making himself drunk, with no assistance from others.

On the 4th of August, as the conference was in its last days, it was recorded that the "Deeds shewn Yesterday were again produced, and Teedyuscung was told, that Mr. Charles Thomson, his Secretary, had got Copies of them, and compared them with the Originals; and was asked if he chose to see the Originals. The King said, I am satisfied, as my Secretary has seen the Copies compared. If he is satisfied that they are true Copies, I am satisfied." These were five deeds, dealing with land purchases from the Indians between 1686 and 1749, and including the Walking Purchase. The following day Teedyuscung said: "The Copy of the Deeds, and the Transactions of this Treaty, we entrust to our Clerk. We believe him to be an honest Man. Every Thing is done to Perfection. We hope you will not be against his making out a Copy, and giving it to Mr. Isaac Norris, whom we also appoint for us, to transmit to the King [of England] a Copy of the Deeds and Minutes of the Treaty."

Denny left Easton in 1757 more embittered than ever with the manoeuvrings of the Quakers. We may assume that the Quakers had come sincerely to believe that they were protecting the Indians' interests against the rapacity of the Proprietors; yet they also must have been sorely tempted to frustrate, temporarily, white-Indian relations in Pennsylvania so that the Crown would conclude that the Penns were incapable of maintaining order or of providing justice for the natives. Whatever patience Denny might have possessed (and patience never had ranked high on his rather short list of virtues) he now was totally disenchanted with Teedyuscung. Relations between them hardly were sweetened when later in the summer of 1757 on a visit to Philadelphia the Indian innocently—perhaps—asked after the Governor's wife at the very time she was in the process of running off with another man.

Nor is it surprising that Thomson did not figure among the
Governor's favorites. While the conference was still in session he had written to Denny to inform him that upon examination of all the deeds and treaties which had been placed in his hands he had discovered that one from 1718 was missing. The clear implication was that the Governor, acting on behalf of the Proprietors, somehow was attempting to deceive the Indians. But, said Thomson, I have “a printed copy of the said Deed and treaty in my custody” and told Denny, rather pompously, that “I could not, consistent with my duty under my present circumstances, nor the real interest of the Province, omit thus submitting the Premises to your honours consideration.” In fact, Denny and his advisers appear to have reached the conclusion fairly early on in the conference that Thomson was one of the main villains in the drama—a logical conclusion, since he quite openly was the main link between the Quaker lobbyists and Teedyuscung.

Thomson apparently now was totally immersed in Indian affairs, and his activities on behalf of Teedyuscung continued apace even after his return to Philadelphia. Later in August he wrote again to Denny, requesting copies of the Proprietor’s letters to the Governor bearing on Indian relations, “As Teedyuscung desired to have a Copy of those letters . . . inserted in the Minutes.” But, said Thomson, “I think it my Duty to inform you that I have not yet received them.” However, what actually was Thomson’s “Duty” was the preparation of a scathing written attack on the Governor and the proprietary interest as a whole. Teedyuscung had not wanted such material: Thomson did and already was feverishly engaged in the project. One of the most astute moves made by the Friendly Association at the close of August, 1757, Easton meeting was the apparent defusing of animosities by suggesting that the matter of any land grievances should not be tackled there, nor even by Sir William Johnson, but that it all should be determined by the King of England. The plan was to forward all materials that Friendly hands could secure to Franklin in London, who then would use the “treachery” thus disclosed to convince the Crown that proprietary government should be ended in Pennsylvania and a Royal governor appointed. This reflected the belief held by Franklin and the Assembly Party that the Proprietors had too much time on their hands and thus were able to take too close an interest in their colony, while Royal colonies were more fortunate, since the King and his counsellors were too otherwise occupied to concern themselves with their running. Thus it was reasoned that the lower houses of assembly in Royal colonies had an easier time getting their own ways. In any case, the underlying purpose of the Franklin/Quaker alliance was to manipulate the 1757 Easton
conference to forward the matter of land disputes away from any
determination in the colonies to determination by the Crown. Just
before Franklin's sailing for England earlier in 1757 Thomson had been
sending him reports of the abortive meeting at Lancaster, and two
months after the Easton conference Isaac Norris was writing to
Franklin in London that "The Committee [of Correspondence] by
Order of the last Assembly will by this Conveyance transmit the Indian
Minutes and Deed as laid before the House by Charles Thomson their
Secretary." 3

But Thomson primarily was interested in the preparation of a full
and detailed account of Indian affairs in the province up to the Easton
Treaty of July/August 1757. This was intended to be a major contribu-
tion to Franklin's ammunition when he petitioned the Crown to remove
the Proprietors. Thomson's anonymously-published An Enquiry into
the Causes of the Alienation of the Delaware and Shawanese Indians
from the British Interest, etc., was, if nothing else, a virulent attack on
the proprietary dealings with Pennsylvania's Indians. He viewed
various treaties struck with the natives from 1722 to 1757 and,
naturally, devoted a large section to the Walking Purchase: "And indeed
the Unfairness practised in the Walk, both in regard to the Way where,
and Manner how, it was performed, and this Dissatisfaction of the
Indians concerning it, were the common Subjects of Conversation in our
Neighbourhood for some considerable Time after it was done," and he
referred to the "Iniquity of the Walk, and other unfair Advantages
taken." Thomson was quite critical of the sale of liquor to the Indians
and of individual white traders who had cheated them when selling
provisions: "suffering a Parcel of Banditti, under the Character of
Traders, to run up and down from one Indian Town to another,
cheating and debauching the Indians, we have given them an ill Opinion
of our Religion and Manners, and lost their Esteem and Friendship." 3

In this overlong and occasionally tedious work, Thomson built up a
catalogue of persistent encroachment upon tribal lands; though, while
attempting to make it appear that somehow the Proprietors and
Governors of Pennsylvania were responsible for this, he betrayed the
unpleasant fact that no colonial administration could adequately control
the rapacity for land of individual white settlers. He quoted one Indian
chief addressing a former Pennsylvania governor: "white People are no
more obedient to you than our young Indians are to us." It was this
quest for land which marked out the difference in approach to the
Indians between the English and the French, wrote Thomson, for "The
English, in order to get their Lands, drive them as far from them as
possible, nor seem to care what becomes of them... whereas the French... use all the Means in their Power to draw as many into their Alliance as possible.” Moreover, the military abilities of the English were very unimpressive to the Indians, said Thomson. He was quite critical of George Washington, who, though “a good natured Man... had no Experience; he took upon him to command the Indians as his Slaves.”

Thomson went on to give a defense of the Delawares in general and Teedyuscung in particular and then claimed that it was the Quakers who had worked for peace in the 1756-57 conflict and the Proprietors who had scotched it. He described the struggle over a clerk for Teedyuscung and reported the appointment of “one Charles Thomson... of whom, it is likely, the Indians had conceived a good Opinion from the close Attention he gave to the Business” at the Easton conference the preceding November. He accused Denny of tricking the Indians by not producing all the deeds which actually existed, “which shewed there was no Design of doing Justice, or of making a full and candid Enquiry into the Complaints of the Indians.” With regard to this 1718 deed, “Mr. Thomson... thought he could not, consistent with his Duty, do less than inform the Governor there was such a Deed.” And, finally, Thomson related that the Commissioners from the Assembly decided not to make a commotion over this omission, since “it was not to be imagined the Governor would join in deceiving the King and his Council in a Matter of so great Consequence.”

This “Enquiry” was transmitted to London in January, 1758, but it was some time before it reached Franklin’s hands. Pemberton wrote to Dr. John Fothergill that “I desire B Franklin may soon see [the “Enquiry” and supporting documents], but hope neither he nor his Son will make any Public use of them: but what thou... and other Friends approve.” London Quakers were passing round the only copy and discussing it with various interested parties: it even was read by a member of the Privy Council; however, it appears that Franklin still had not seen it by the end of May. All of this shows fairly clearly that for a time the Quakers hoped to make the coup their own—that they alone desired to convince the British government of the evils of Pennsylvania’s official Indian policies.

During 1758 Franklin accumulated an abundance of anti-proprietary material, and during this period Thomson wrote several letters supplying him with constant detail: “This is the third Letter I have lately wrote you. With the two last, one dated the 5th: the other 16th: of April I sent you a Copy of two Conferences between Teedyuscung and this Government.” This elaborate eight-paged letter described the
continuing tensions along the frontier and appeared honestly to believe that all participants in the drama except Pemberton and the Friendly Association were intent on creating havoc. He even referred to the Royal Indian Superintendent as one who “greatly thwarts the Measures taken in the Province for obtaining and securing Peace. This no other than Sir William, who for fear of shewing his own want of Influence is unwilling any other should have an Influence, and rather than any thing should be done with the Indians without passing thro his hands he would chuse it should be undone.”

Franklin wrote to Joseph Galloway in September that “Mr. Thomson has, as you desired, sent me constantly Copies of the Treaties with Tedyuskung. They are very Satisfactory, and must be of great Use when the important Affair of doing those People Justice comes under Consideration here. Sundry Circumstances have prevented it for some time, but it will now speedily be brought on.”

Right through 1758 Thomson remained deeply involved in Indian affairs and even was to receive payment for this work from the Pennsylvania Assembly. He wrote at some length in two letters to William Franklin, early in the year, describing the difficulties in the divided authority being exercised: “The Indians expect an Invitation from this Government, the Government again refers them to Sir Wm. Johnson.” He reported in this letter that on 11 March Tedyuskung had come to Philadelphia. He had been arguing with officials in New Jersey over some lands he disputed there and “pressed” Thomson “strongly to go with him, but my other Engagemts. would not permit.” Thomson met him in the street, just after Tedyuskung’s arrival, and “As I perceived he was in Liquor I endeavoured to shun him, but could not; for he no sooner saw me than he stops me and after taking me by the Hand introduced me to another Indian who he told me was a Chief just arrived from the Ohio. . . . He farther told me that he had sent for an Interpreter & when he came would want my Assistance in taking down Minutes. To day I have not seen him.” Yet the next day Tedyuskung sent word that he was ready to meet with Denny and wanted Thomson to attend with him. But, as Thomson “did not care to intrude myself upon the Govr. (especially as the Conference was to be at his House) without previous notice,” Tedyuskung sent word to Denny requesting permission to bring his secretary. The Governor stalled for three days, then finally agreed to the request after arranging that the meeting be held in public, in the Council Chamber of the Pennsylvania State House.

One of the more energetic, and braver, aspects of Thomson’s interest in these matters during 1758 came in June. In his lengthy letter to
Benjamin Franklin the preceding month he had complained that Denny had refused Teedyuscung's request that some white man be sent to meet with the Indians on the Ohio who were most hostile to the British. "This cannot be for want of Persons who would cheerfully undertake the Service," he wrote. "I myself know one who offered to go and who is still ready. One to whom I believe no Objection could be offered as to his Ability or faithfulness in executing the Task, except that he has not been a very warm friend of the Proprietors or their Measures." Clearly, this was Thomson himself. Yet within three weeks he found himself on the trail. Franklin received word that "Our Friend Thomson has left his School for a while, Upon a Message to These Delawares at Wyoming, and from Thence, I am Told, To Tiahoga, with a friendly Message from the Cherokee's to the Delawares, and an Invitation from this Government to the Seneka's." The background to this journey was one of the more bizarre developments in Pennsylvania Indian negotiations. Teedyuscung had persuaded the provincial authorities to build for him an entire town, from scratch, at Wyoming in the spring of 1758, in return for his efforts to pacify the hostile Ohio tribes. This foolish move created wild rumors among various Indians that the English had built a fort and had garrisoned it with hundreds of soldiers. Besides, the Six Nations resented the construction of European-styled dwellings on what they rightly considered to be Indian land; and, said the Six Nations, it actually is our land: Teedyuscung and his people live there only by virtue of our sufferance.

To defuse this potentially explosive situation Denny thought it wise to send messages of reassurance to the restive tribes. On the recommendation of a Moravian bishop, the Governor chose Prussian-born Christian Frederick Post, a missionary who spoke the Delaware tongue fluently. It may appear surprising that Denny allowed Thomson to accompany Post, but obviously this was done to provide a friendly face for Teedyuscung as the white messengers made their way through the Wyoming territory on their mission. In the event, this journey was of much shorter duration than had been expected, and the two never got even as far as Wyoming, since Teedyuscung came down to meet them some miles south of his settlement. Post and Thomson had set out from Philadelphia on 7 June, "having received the Messages for the Indians, & Instructions from the Governor." Their way was through dangerous territory, and Thomson reported that the Indian guides they were traveling with nearly turned back when they received intelligence that there was in the vicinity "a party of Enemy Indians, about 78 in number." As they advanced further, reports reached them that "strange
Indians were thick in the woods about Wyoming; that a party was seen but four days ago, whose Language none of the Delawares there understood, nor did they know of what Nation they were." But Post and Thomson persisted, until friendly Indians told them that they had seen "fresh Tracks crossing the Path in two or three places between this & Wyoming, & at one place not half a mile from where we then were.” Whereupon wisdom overtook the valorous explorers.

When Teedyuscung came to meet them the following day, the 12th, they learned that the Senecas were causing most of the trouble and were attempting to persuade other tribes to go over to the French. It was agreed that Teedyuscung would attempt to bring together all the disaffected tribes for a conference with Denny as soon as possible, though Thomson wrote in his report to the Governor that he was not confident that the dipsomaniac Delaware leader would remain sober enough to do so. However, he still held a sanguine view of Teedyuscung’s sincerity. This view might have been somewhat tempered had Thomson known that the basic reason he and Post were stopped from proceeding further on their mission into the Ohio was not concern for their personal safety but that one of Teedyuscung’s sons was just then attempting to negotiate with the Ohio tribes and that the Delaware leader desired above all else to be able to claim single-handed credit for pacifying them. Thomson also might have been peeved had he learned that Teedyuscung had already met at Wyoming with a large party of two hundred Seneca warriors who had come to make war on Pennsylvania. Realizing that he would be held responsible, he had induced the Senecas to leave Pennsylvania and to concentrate their attacks on white settlements in northern New Jersey, for which he could not be blamed.

During the one-week journey Thomson wrote a rather innocuous letter to Richard Peters, which, to remind the Governor and the proprietary supporters who really was in control of Indian affairs, was delivered personally to Peters by Pemberton. And, astonishingly, Pemberton actually showed this letter to leading Philadelphia Quakers before he took it to the addressee, Peters. Though they returned to Philadelphia on the 15th, the complete and lengthy report of the mission, written by Thomson and in his own hand, was presented to Denny the next day. Thomson continued to portray Teedyuscung’s actions in a favorable light, and, in that vein, he probably was one of the contributors to a series of short arguments on Indian policy which appeared in the Pennsylvania Journal.

Teedyuscung returned to Philadelphia for another conference held
TRAINING FOR RESISTANCE

from 6–12 July, but his hands were empty of any accomplishments; thus it was decided to ask Post to make the exceedingly dangerous journey all the way to the Ohio region, to meet with hostile tribes around Forts Duquesne and Venango. Although he informed Denny “that Charles Thomson offered his Service to go with him,” the Governor told Post that “he might take any other Person.” Denny felt that he could not jeopardize the delicate relations at this crucial juncture of the British-French conflict. It was essential to neutralize Indian assistance to the French, and “Paramount in this formula was the presence of an honest, white, bilingual messenger.” Though Thomson certainly was white, the absence of the other two qualities, in Denny’s perception of the man, was enough to embolden him to issue this prohibition. Putting it at its least emotive, Denny needed to have white representatives for this task who had no axes to grind, and he thus was justified in rejecting Thomson.

Thomson appears to have taken his disappointment—for such it surely was—with resignation, writing to his friend Susanna Wright that he had offered his services because he had hoped to help to secure the release of white hostages held by the Indians,

not doubting at this critical Time of being instrumental towards bringing home the Captives, & perhaps some farther Service to my Country. However the Govr & Council taking my Offer in Consideration were of the opinion I should not be permitted to go, for fear it seems I should mention something to the Indians of Land Affairs. They are conscious of Guilt & afraid of an Enquiry. Notwithstanding the Danger & fatigue I should have been satis-fyed to have gone, but as they have prevented me I am content.

However, it does seem a trifle churlish of Thomson to refuse even to mention Post’s name in the letter and to refer to him—twice—merely as “The Moravian.” Also, the phrase “The Moravian who went with me before” is revealing. Elsewhere, Thomson was to describe Post as “a plain, honest, religiously disposed Man,” though “not a Scholar.” Charles Thomson spurned was not a particularly inspiring sight. He recognized something of this in himself, as he observed to a dilatory correspondent: “My Pride (for you know I have some share of that) was a good deal piqued at your seeming Neglect.”

The stage now was set for Thomson’s final involvement in colonial Indian affairs: the Easton meeting of 7–26 October 1758. This was by far the most crucial, the most difficult, and the most significant of the conferences. Most of the familiar actors were there, playing their
well-learned parts, and, including the informal sessions, this conference lasted for over a month. As usual, it had as its purpose keeping the favor of friendly Indians and coaxing as many others as possible into deserting the French. Its success is shown in the fact that a month later General Forbes was able to force the French, for lack of support amongst the Indians, to abandon Fort Duquesne, the capture of which by the English effectively brought to an end this round of hostilities on the Pennsylvania frontier. One of the major contributing factors to this success was that during the conference the Governor, in the name of the Proprietors, restored to the Indians all lands in Pennsylvania west of the Alleghenies. Thus, “The Easton settlement signalized the beginning of the end for the French in the Ohio.”

However, the process of reaching such a conclusion was hectic in the extreme. Denny was nearly distracted—some would say demented—and, beset with fits of temper, “in general exhibited a moroseness that very probably was pathological.” For his part, Teedyuscung reached the heights of buffoonery. He railed against the officials of the Six Nations and called himself their King. Moreover, he said, he was the King of the Quakers. For good measure he demanded that all Pennsylvania submit to him as its King, and he could also be heard “swearing that he was King of all the nations and of all the world.” Nor can we overlook the activities of the Quakers and their Friendly Association. A proclamation had been issued forbidding the sale of rum to the Indians, but the Assembly Quaker Commissioners proceeded to cater to Teedyuscung’s tastes at provincial expence. In fact, the Quaker party was acting in an almost hysterical manner at this conference, raising before Teedyuscung “every grievance he had or could imagine having.” By the eve of this meeting there was a strong feeling in England that the Pennsylvania Friends had been responsible for the entire chaos in Indian relations by refusing to support the Indians against the French and that the Indians therefore had had no option but to side with the French. “In turn,” wrote the leading London Quaker to Pemberton, the argument went that “the Quakers tried to cover this up and keep the Delawares’ quiet by inciting them to blame Thomas Penn for fraudulent land purchases.

It became clear at this conference that the Friends had hitched their wagon to a most erratic and fast-sinking star, for everyone but the Quakers and Thomson were falling over themselves to denounce Teedyuscung. Pemberton began a program of mass bribery, distributing a substantial largess among the Indians present in order to try to keep the King of the Delawares—and of anything else he fancied, it
seemed—in some position of power, or at least influence, among the natives. It failed. The Six Nations flatly rejected all Teedyuscung's accumulated charges. They reaffirmed their conviction that the Walking Purchase land had been fairly bought by the Penns and totally denied his accusation against them regarding the purchase of 1749. In a breathtaking reversal he suddenly agreed that the 1749 purchase had been properly made. Since the rug was being pulled out from under him, Teedyuscung had no difficulty in executing a volte-face; but it was far too late to gain any sort of respect from the other Indians present, and he was left quite isolated. All this makes Thomson's astonishing claim, that at this conference Teedyuscung "established himself at the Head of five Tribes," totally incomprehensible. Actually, Thomson himself had not yet arrived when the meeting began on 7 October, but Teedyuscung did not insist on a temporary clerk, and this led Pemberton to claim that the official minutes were rigged against the Quaker interest. Thomson did arrive by the 11th and was to write to Franklin that the "Intimacy I had with several of the Indians, and the Confidence they have been pleased to repose in me, gave me an Opportunity of being acquainted with what passed at the private Council." It was sometime during this Easton conference that Thomson, as he himself said, "still retaining the confidence of the Delawares," was "by a solemn act adopted into their nation and called to assist in their councils." Thus, he "had an opportunity of presenting any inquiries, and gaining some knowledge of their internal policy, customs, and manners. At the same time, as he was to tell John Watson, he was given an Indian name. Since this name—"Wegh-wu-law-mo-end," is translated "The Man who speaks the Truth," eulogistic historians often have given it much play, quite consistent with the fast-setting cement of historical mythology. However, such naming of whites by Indian tribes, for various motives, was a fairly frequent practice; moreover, Thomson himself seems never to have mentioned the fact until very late in his life. Indeed, he had totally forgotten the Indian name and had to have enquiries made of an expert in Indian languages in order to discover its orthography. This fact alone is enough to refute the fanciful and totally unsubstantiated claim that we find Thomson "eventually learning their [i.e. the Delaware] language."

Yet his "adoption" into the Delawares marked the completion of his active involvement with the tribe; for him it was an ending rather than an initiation. It may be surmised that Thomson saw all too clearly that the time of the Quaker/Teedyuscung intrigue was at an end, and he
never again was to be involved in any of these conferences, even though there were several which he easily could have attended and at which Teedyuscung, Pemberton, and the Friendly Association would be present. But since overt hostilities with the Indians in the Pennsylvania region virtually had ceased by 1759 the edge was removed from much of the problem. Not to Pemberton, for whom it appeared by now that the edge of any potential conflict was there for the sharpening. In 1759 Pemberton would be concocting a plan to hold a grand conference in Philadelphia, at which all Indians who once had lived in eastern Pennsylvania and in New Jersey would make a treaty declaring their independence of the Six Nations and elect Teedyuscung their emperor. This new nation under Emperor Teedyuscung would then publicly announce its refusal to have the Royal Indian Superintendent, Johnson, judge their case. The Quakers later actually engaged in forging letters in a blatant attempt to scuttle British attempts to develop a co-ordinated and coherent Indian policy.

Thomson effected his exit just in time. He certainly was fortunate not to have been involved in the last Easton conference, in 1762, where Pemberton and the Friendly Association were openly humiliated. Among other things, they publicly before the Indians and with “much noise and clamour” charged Johnson with lying and announced that the Indians could not expect any justice from him. Yet Teedyuscung now stated that he withdrew his complaints about the Walking Purchase and admitted that he had been mistaken about the charge of forgery against the Proprietors, and went on to tell Johnson “that he never should have troubled the Proprietors about these Lands had he not been instigated so to do by the Quakers.” At this, the Quakers began “trowing ye blame on Each other,” and now were being openly ridiculed by the Indians. Israel Pemberton was the keeper of a flame that had long since gone out, and by the following year the Friendly Association had declined and died. So had the unfortunate Teedyuscung, for in April of 1763 he was brutally murdered by persons unknown: burned alive in the very house in Wyoming that Pennsylvania had built for him.

By June of 1758 Franklin finally had received the manuscript of Thomson’s Enquiry, yet it would be several months longer before it found its circuitous way into print. Naturally, the longer it took to be printed the more dated it became, since the Enquiry ended with the conference of the preceding summer. Thus Franklin decided to add further material, and that accounts for the inclusion of two letters of December, 1758, from Thomson and Pemberton, together with Frederick Post’s Journal of his journey to the Ohio, when he had had to leave
behind the disappointed Thomson. Franklin added Post's Journal because, "being more generally interesting, occasions the other [i.e. Thomson's *Enquiry*] to go into more Hands and be more read." To print the work, Franklin called on his old friend, the London printer William Strahan, the publisher of the *London Chronicle*, and the printer of a number of famous books, including Dr Johnson's "Dictionary." Strahan printed one thousand copies of the pamphlet at the beginning of March, 1759, and Franklin sent three hundred to Philadelphia, "50 of which are to be deliver'd to the Assembly, 25 to Messrs. Israel Pemberton and Charles Thomson, and the remaining 225 to be dispos'd of in Pennsylvania and the neighbouring Governments." Thus seven hundred copies must have been retained for sale and distribution in England, and Franklin reported to Galloway that it was "more read than I expected. It will, I think, have a good Effect."

What the immediate effect was is difficult to gauge. The timing, of course, was carefully calculated, its publication coinciding with Franklin's formal petition to the Board of Trade, supporting Teedyuscung's (read: Assembly Party's) claims against the Proprietors. For four full months the matter was under consideration. Franklin's propaganda machine continued to pump at full speed, and the *Enquiry* was but one of several printed efforts to influence the British government to take Pennsylvania away from the Penns, the chief one being Franklin's own *An Historical Review of the Constitution and Government of Pennsylvania*, published in May. In all of this work, as Hanna says, Franklin had "little regard for the facts of history or a just presentation of the causes of the political disputes." Thomson's *Enquiry* was sent to leading government Ministers; however, though the claim has been made that its "contemporary effectiveness" was "immediately recognized," there is no evidence to support it—other than that Franklin thought it would have an impact, that it irritated Thomas Penn, and that one London review of it was published.

Penn scribbled into his copy of the *Enquiry* his objections to many of Thomson's jibes. The month after its publication Franklin was writing to his wife: "Tell Mr. Thomson that I have just heard the Proprietor is writing an Answer to his Book, and will pay off him and the Quakers." Yet there is no evidence that Penn's pique found written expression "beyond the stage of exasperated annotation." As for the review, which appeared in the London *Monthly Review*, it began by attempting to sound balanced and impartial but quickly revealed its true colors: total adherence to Franklin's campaign. It concluded that the information contained in the *Enquiry* "is the more seasonable at this time, while an
appeal here is depending” and argued that the way to avoid such conflicts for the future was for the Crown to take the government “of this province into its own hands, and to settle it upon the same footing with the rest of our most flourishing colonies.” These sentiments are hardly surprising, for the review was written by the paper’s editor, Ralph Griffiths, a man completely in Franklin’s pocket. Moreover, the *Monthly Review* was printed by none other than Strahan.

The Board of Trade made its report on Franklin’s petition on 1 June 1759 and was severely critical of the actions of “some Members of the Assembly of Pennsylvania” who raised “Jealousies and Suspicions” in the minds of the Delawares. They made clear that the fractured and divided councils had come close to wrecking any chance for a coordinated policy and had been a grave threat to Great Britain in its struggle against France in North America. The report reaffirmed that Johnson should conclude matters “upon the Spot” without interference from obviously self-interested parties. All this was to lead to Teedyuscung’s final retraction of his charges and the collapse of the Quaker Indian design. Franklin’s petition and his efforts regarding the Indian claims had proved a notable failure, and it was dawning in the minds of a number of Pennsylvanians who previously had supported the Assembly Party that a change from proprietary to Royal government might just be a leap from frying pan to fire; London now was making it clear that, under either form, the Assembly’s wings should be clipped.

Modern historians though recognizing Thomson’s *Enquiry* as an interesting work still see that it contained a large number of errors, both of fact and of interpretation. It is clear that it followed a “partisan pattern” and was “a patently biased witness.” It may be possible to exonerate Thomson to some extent by observing that he was “young and idealistic,” and therefore accepted “without question the sincerity of the Quakers’ concern for the Indians.” It certainly is true that he was honestly sympathetic to many of the Indians’ plights and was in no sense out of the same mould as the roaring Ulstermen on the Pennsylvania frontier who often out-savaged the savages. Yet it may not be too cynical to suggest that he was astute enough to see that the Quaker political influence in Pennsylvania was becoming a spent force; within only five years he would emerge as a vigorous opponent of the general Quaker approach to imperial relations. In the meantime it would be necessary for him not only to cease his collaboration with the Friendly Association but also to leave the employ of the Quaker school, which he did the following year.

In 1768 he was commissioned by his own Presbyterian Church to
help to develop a plan of Indian evangelism, but nothing ever came of it;2 and during the 1780s, when Secretary to Congress, he entered into correspondence with the Reverend John Ettwein, a Moravian missionary in Pennsylvania, primarily regarding attempts to have the Congress provide aid for destitute Christian Indians.3 Also, he collected some material4 for his comments on Jefferson's 1787 Notes on the State of Virginia—comments mainly concerning Indians—which Jefferson published as the first Appendix to that important work.5 Yet these were minor, sporadic efforts calling for little time and no serious effort. And when in 1793 President Washington wrote to Thomson in his retirement requesting him to be one of three official United States Commissioners to meet with the western Indians "and treat with them on Peace," and though he stressed to Thomson the vital nature of the mission, upon which the "prosperity and tranquility" of the nation "are intimately connected,"6 Thomson refused.

During the 1760s and 1770s Charles Thomson was to go on to serve as an implacable foe of British intervention in colonial affairs and was to become Philadelphia's prime mover for organizing resistance against parliamentary attempts to raise revenue in the colonies. In this he was to see earlier than did Franklin the need for total rejection of any British attempts for colonial taxation.7 He also began to sense the danger of Royal government for Pennsylvania and by the mid-1760s had completely rejected such a change, while Franklin was to cling stubbornly to that cause long after it had become a dead issue. Though they remained on reasonably friendly personal terms, these issues caused their political paths to diverge. Franklin still was courting Quaker support through Joseph Galloway, while Thomson cast his lot with John Dickinson, Galloway's bitter personal and political rival. This caused a realignment of Pennsylvania's provincial politics, with Dickinson and Thomson spearheading a new "Presbyterian" or "Whig" faction after 1765.8 Yet, in spite of these differences Thomson and Franklin found their political interests re-converging as the decade of resistance progressed, and occasionally Thomson was to be an important source of Franklin's colonial information.9

The propaganda campaign of the late 1750s co-ordinated by Franklin—including Thomson's Enquiry with many of its arguments and facts more ingenious than accurate—had proved a failure. Yet it had been Franklin's first press campaign in the realm of imperial politics, and the experience was to prove quite useful in the coming political skirmishes. As for Thomson, through Franklin's agency he had gained experience in producing a type of writing with a specific political goal in
mind. That, too, was a lesson which would prove to have been well worth the learning.\textsuperscript{100} As Indian affairs was the springboard for Franklin's London lobbying, so it had served as Thomson's entrée into the cut and thrust of provincial politics. It has been said of Franklin that he was "in his scientific activities . . . and his public service enterprises, honest and fair; but, in politics he quickly discovered that deception was sometimes necessary."\textsuperscript{101} That, in its general import, can also be said of Thomson. There was a consistency in Thomson's political actions that was dictated by a lack of sympathy for any external political authority which attempted to regulate colonial affairs. That end was vital enough for him on occasion to justify certain dubious means.\textsuperscript{102} He was, in fact, formulating a theory of resistance to external authority,\textsuperscript{103} and both the concept and the tactics of that resistance had emerged on the curious battlefield of Pennsylvania Indian relations.

\section*{Notes}


3. During the 1750s Thomson was actively involved in the formation of the so-called "young Junto," modeled upon Benjamin Franklin's then-defunct earlier club, and some of his political views were taking shape at these intellectual meetings. See James E. Hendricks, \textit{Charles Thomson and the Making of a New Nation, 1729-1824} (Rutherford, New Jersey, 1979), 31-32. During this period he also made notes in his rough Memorandum Book (Gratz Collection, HSP [Historical Society of Pennsylvania]) which reflect his general Whiggish political orientation.


5. Proprietors to Governor Patrick Gordon, 26 January 1732/3, Penn Papers, HSP. This was written following Thomas Penn's belated visit to the province in 1732, when he had discovered that James Logan had abused his power as proprietary agent in dealing with the natives. Penn quickly stripped him of his authority in Indian affairs. See Francis P. Jennings, "Incident at Tulpehocken," \textit{Pennsylvania History}, 35 (1968), 335-355. As main Proprietor Thomas Penn was to strive to act upon the highest principles of his father

6. Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, 16 vols (Philadelphia, 1838–1853), 4:580. The Delawares had more reason to complain of their treatment by the Iroquois than by the Pennsylvania authorities. Francis P. Jennings, “The Delaware Interregnum,” Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, 89 (1965), 190-192. The alliance between Pennsylvania and the Six Nations had been struck in 1732. See Paul A.W. Wallace, Conrad Weiser (Philadelphia, 1945) chapters 6, 9, & 16. The basic reason for the proprietary leaders following this course of action was that it seemed the only alternative to the Quaker-dominated Assembly’s refusal to adopt even a minimum system of military defense.


10. Richard Peters to Thomas Penn, 26 June 1756, Peters Letter Book, HSP. Thomson followed Franklin’s lead very closely at this time: in his first extant letter we find him strongly supporting Franklin’s position over the raising of a militia in Philadelphia. He looked for a situation where Pennsylvania would be “secure . . . from the insults of our haughty aspiring neighbours the French, and make our security independent of the fickle humour of our Indian allies.” Charles Thomson to Joseph Shippen, Jr., 31 January 1755, [Thomas Balch (ed)], Letters and Papers Relating Chiefly to the Provincial History of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, 1855), 32–33.

11. See Votes and Proceedings, 5:3979, 3998, 4124–25, 4159, 4298–4306. This conflict was coming to a head in 1756, just as the question of responsibility for Indian relations was emerging most visibly.


13. For minutes of both the July and November conferences, see Van Doren & Boyd, Indian Treaties, 135–166. Teedyuscung was instructed by the Delawares prior to the November meeting to state that, in addition to the French enticements, the threats of the land-hungry Susquehanna Company of Connecticut to settle the Wyoming territory had unsettled the natives. The Susquehanna Company had been formed in 1753, as it said, “To Spread Christianity and also promote our Own Temporal Interest.” All this was merely a gloss for what was a “mania for land speculation.” C.A. Weslager, The Delaware Indians: A History (New Brunswick, N.J., 1972), 211. For details of the Walking Purchase see L.W. Labarce et al (eds), The Papers of Benjamin Franklin, in progress (New Haven, 1959– ), 7:19n. The Delawares, says Boyd (“Indian Affairs,” xxviii), were only using the Walking Purchase as “a casus belli after the fact.” For a view critical of the Proprietors’ policy, see Francis P. Jennings, “The Scandalous Indian Policy . . . Deeds and Documents of the Walking Purchase,” Pennsylvania History, 37 (1970), 19–39.

14. After the November Easton conference had ended, Franklin prepared a report supporting the charges of land fraud against the Proprietors, which was printed and distributed in Philadelphia the following January. For the full text, see Papers of Benjamin Franklin, 7:112–114.

15. Wallace, King of the Delawares, 95.

16. Ibid., 109. “Pemberton was prepared to make Indian relations the means to revive the
Quakers' exclusive political leadership." Hanna, Benjamin Franklin, 108. In January, 1757, the Pennsylvania Assembly resolved to send Franklin as their Commissioner, "to go Home to England . . . to solicit a Removal of the Grievances we labour under by Reason of Proprietary Instructions." Papers of Benjamin Franklin, 7:107.

17. Thayer, Israel Pemberton, 125.

18. The claim was first made by John F. Watson, "Biographical Memoir of the Hon. Charles Thomson, Secretary of the First Congress," Collections of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1 (1853), 90, and repeated by Lewis Harley in "Charles Thomson, Patriot and Scholar," The Historical Society of Montgomery County (Norristown, 1897), 17; yet three years later when Harley published the book The Life of Charles Thomson (Philadelphia, 1900), he omitted it. The claim has been resurrected, without substantiation, by Hendricks in Charles Thomson and the Making of a New Nation, 16. It is clear that claims for Thomson's knowledge of shorthand stem solely from Watson; but since his statements were based on personal interview with Thomson, the possibility must not be excluded. However, it should be noted that we have found no evidence in any of Thomson's papers, at any stage of his life, of his use of shorthand.

19. "Minutes of Conferences, held with the Indians, at Harris's Ferry, and at Lancaster, in March, April, and May 1757," in Van Doren & Boyd, Indian Treaties, 172. Croghan was the deputy to Sir William Johnson, who had been appointed by the British government in 1755 as Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the northern colonies. Though Croghan had not been present at the Easton conferences of 1756, Teedyuscung's accusations caused Johnson to send Croghan to the treaty conferences in 1757 and 1758.


22. Israel Pemberton to Mrs. Pemberton, 21 July 1757, Pemberton Papers, HSP.


24. Van Doren & Boyd, Indian Treaties, 191. For the entire conference, see 189-212, 307; also Minutes of the Provincial Council, 7:649-714.


27. Van Doren & Boyd, Indian Treaties, 200.


29. Anthony Wallace, King of the Delawares, 157. The bemused Denny, though weak, was attempting to be fair and called for Teedyuscung to put his charges in writing. Pemberton leapt at this opportunity: the charges were dictated by him, written by Thomson, and signed by Teedyuscung. Thayer, Israel Pemberton, 142. See also Minutes of the Provincial Council, 7:677.

30. "On Monday night the King was made drunk by C. Weiser. On Tuesday by G. Croghan . . . I for my part wish myself at home." Charles Thomson to Samuel Rhodes, 28 July 1757, Society Collection, HSP.
31. Van Doren & Boyd, Indian Treaties, 206, 208. There were occasions during this conference when Teedyuscung would consult Thomson during the negotiations, to confirm that certain transactions actually had taken place. See, for example, 207. As early as January of this year Denny had refused a request from the Friendly Association to allow Pemberton and another to search the minutes of the Governor's Council for evidence "of the true State of the Indian Claims." Minutes of the Provincial Council, 7:394-395, 397-398.

32. Charles Thomson to William Denny, 4 August 1757, Pennsylvania Archives, 1st series, 3:256. Thomson delivered this letter to the Governor by hand. [Charles Thomson], An Enquiry into the Causes of Alienation, etc. (London, 1759), 119. He also wrote a similar letter to Croghan, 120.

33. Charles Thomson to William Denny, 23 August 1757, Minutes of the Provincial Council, 7:724. A week later a copy of these letters was prepared and placed in Thomson's hands. The next day, 31 August, Thomson relayed to the Assembly Teedyuscung's request that Thomson's minutes of the treaty conference and the copies of the deeds be submitted "to his Majesty, for his Royal Determination." Votes and Proceedings, 6:4623. Thomson had provided the Assembly's Speaker, Isaac Norris, with copies of the five treaties, minutes of fifteen meetings, and three maps showing lands which Teedyuscung wished reserved to his tribe. All this was sent to Norris with a covering letter, Charles Thomson to Isaac Norris, August, 1757. All are in American Philosophical Society Manuscripts.

34. Charles Thomson to William Franklin, [May or June] 1757, American Philosophical Society Manuscripts (a letter written primarily for Benjamin Franklin's attention); and Isaac Norris to Benjamin Franklin, 17 October 1757, Papers of Benjamin Franklin, 7:266. In a postscript to this letter, Norris tells Franklin that he is "shorter upon Indian Affairs than I should otherwise think necessary as C. Thompson informs me he has wrote on that Subject fully to Wm. Franklin," ibid., 7:269. Norris's statement regarding the Assembly's committee effectively refutes the suggestion (see Zimmerman, "Charles Thomson, 'The Sam Adams',") 466) that the Assembly never formally designated Thomson as an official secretary. Because of discrepancies between the official minutes of the 1757 Easton conference and Thomson's minutes, the Assembly ordered that his be printed, together with a report by the Assembly Commissioners to the meeting. Votes and Proceedings, 6:4672. For a discussion of the different versions, see Van Doren & Boyd, Indian Treaties, 307. For further references during 1757 and 1758 to Thomson's submission to the Assembly of official papers relating to Indian affairs, see Votes and Proceedings, 6:4634, 4649.

35. [Thomson], An Enquiry, 38-39, 44, 75. Criticism of unscrupulous white traders was a constant theme of those writers sympathetic to the Indians' plight.

36. Ibid., 62, 48, 80, 82-87, 89, 112, 119, 121.

37. Israel Pemberton to John Fothergill, 6 January 1758, Pemberton Papers, HSP. The political alliance between Franklin and the Quakers was always a tenuous one; the "orthodox" Quakers, led by Pemberton, were suspicious of Franklin's motives, and he, for his part, found it difficult to work with men who appeared quite happy to operate outside the framework of an elected Assembly, when necessary. For a discussion of the background to the growing Franklin-Pemberton rift, see James H. Hutson, "Benjamin Franklin and Pennsylvania Politics, 1751-1755: a Reappraisal," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, 93 (1969), 313-314.

38. Papers of Benjamin Franklin, 7:376n-377n.

39. Charles Thomson to Benjamin Franklin, 14 May 1758, ibid., 8:69, 76. The April letters are lost. The conferences referred to doubtlessly are those of 15 March and 12-13 April. See below, note 42.
40. Benjamin Franklin to Joseph Galloway, 16 September 1758, *Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, 8:150.

41. On 20 June 1759 he was voted £37.13.3 “for Indian Expenses” incurred during 1758. *Votes and Proceedings*, 6:5056.

42. Charles Thomson to William Franklin, 2 January and 12–16 March 1758, both in American Philosophical Society Manuscripts. It is curious that the minutes of the meeting on 15 March do not record Thomson’s attendance, though he made it clear to William Franklin that he was present and taking minutes for Teedyuscung. At a subsequent meeting on 12–13 April Thomson was duly entered in the minutes as the Indian leader’s secretary. *Minutes of the Provincial Council*, 8:87. Perhaps there is some significance in the fact that Denny was away from Philadelphia and therefore could not attend this second conference. The minutes of both meetings are printed in *ibid.*, 8:32–35, 86–96. See also Wallace, *King of the Delawares*, 169–173. After the Indians’ departure, Thomson found himself having to write down Teedyuscung’s demands that the Governor pay various lackeys for their services: “Brother: Here is our Messenger . . . I leave it to your generosity what you shall give him. When a Man is travelling he must eat & drink. He may also lose his Horse, which is the Case with this Man, who lost a very stately Horse in coming down. There were nine other Messengers who came down with this Man, all these should be rewarded, they make in all ten.” And, also, there were Teedyuscung’s own debts, which “I have been obliged to run in . . . at two or three houses in Town in treating my People. I hope you will enable me to discharge it.” Teedyuscung to Richard Peters, 24 March 1758, Society Miscellaneous Manuscripts, HSP.

43. Charles Thomson to Benjamin Franklin, 14 May 1758, *Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, 8:77.

44. Isaac Norris to Benjamin Franklin, 15 June 1758, *ibid.*, 8:103–104.

45. *Minutes of the Provincial Council*, 7:770–771; 8:101, 110, 114, 134–135; and *Pennsylvania Archives*, 1st series, 3:304, 316, 318–319, 385–386. Thomson seems to have been closely involved in having Teedyuscung press for the construction of the houses: on 5 May, at a meeting of the Governor’s Council, Denny “received an answer from the Commissioners respecting Teedyuscung’s Demands, which being read, and the Indians who were attending with Charles Thompson called in,” Denny addressed them and said that “All that you requested will be cheerfully complied with, and with utmost Dispatch. Mr. [John] Hughes, one of the former Commissioners . . . has acquainted me that he is willing, and will soon be ready to go . . . You may be assured that this Business shall be performed to your satisfaction.” *Minutes of the Provincial Council*, 8:114.


47. The suggestion (see Hendricks, *Charles Thomson and the Making of a New Nation*, 19) that perhaps Denny thought the experience might sway Thomson to the proprietary position is unconvincing, since there is no indication that Thomson was anything during this period if not an implacable opponent of the Proprietors.


49. Champion, “Christian F. Post,” 316; and Anthony Wallace, *King of the Delawares*, 190. Teedyuscung’s understandable desire to claim credit for pacifying the hostile tribes caused much confusion at this stage in the conflict with the French. At the Philadelphia conference in April he had told the Governor’s Council: “‘I see you look towards the Westward . . . I desire you, Brother, you would leave that peace of Meat for me. You see I have it between my Arms and betwixt my Legs. Leave it for me to eat it and I shall take it Bit by Bit, and I hope I shall in a Little Time eat it all.’ Being asked what he meant by the
Peice of meat Teedyuscung replied: 'I desire you and the rest of the English not to trouble yourselves against the Ohio: I will do it myself. They are all within my Dish; Leave them for me.' "Minutes of the Provincial Council, 8:88.

50. Anthony Benezet wrote to a correspondent in New Jersey: "The account of a number of Indians having passed the Delaware was yesterday [13 June] confirmed by a letter from Fort Allen, written by Charles Thompson, so that we may expect to hear of the destruction of numbers of our back settlers." Anthony Benezet to John Smith, 14 June 1758, printed in Wilson Armistead, Anthony Benezet (London, 1859), 84. Thomson's letter is inscribed: "Delivered by Israel Pemberton, 14th June, 1758." Charles Thomson to Richard Peters, 10 June 1758, Pennsylvania Archives, 1st series, 3:422.


52. Minutes of the Provincial Council, 8:147. See also Isaac Norris to Benjamin Franklin, 25 July 1758 & 15 January 1759, Papers of Benjamin Franklin, 8:113-114, 230. For the full minutes of the conference, see Pennsylvania Archives, 1st series, 3:456-469.

53. Champion, "Christian F. Post," 321-322. Post apparently offered no objection and "was Satisfied" with Denny's decision. Minutes of the Provincial Council, 8:147. During this period Denny was particularly distressed about the way Indian affairs were going: "This unhappy Situation makes it absolutely necessary, that we should know for certain who our Enemies are, what Teedyuscung has been doing, [and] what Nations and Tribes ... he is connected with ... it is impossible for me to obtain this necessary Knowledge, since every thing is transacted by Teedyuscung, and some disaffected People here with whom he is much connected." William Denny to Sir William Johnson, 27 June 1758, The Papers of Sir William Johnson, 13 vols (Albany, 1921-1962), 2:865. Jennings's claim that Thomson "was disqualified by the governor because of [his] too great sympathy for the Indians" begs too many questions to enable its being taken at face value. See Francis Jennings, "A Vanishing Indian: Francis Parkman Versus His Sources," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, 87 (1963), 310.


55. [Thomson], An Enquiry, 129-130.


57. Wallace, King of the Delawares, 207.


60. Anthony Wallace, King of the Delawares, 194, 196.

61. John Fothergill to Israel Pemberton, 25 September 1758, Pemberton Papers, HSP.

62. Van Doren & Boyd, Indian Treaties, 237. The minutes of the entire conference are printed on 213-243.

63. Charles Thomson to Benjamin Franklin, 10 December 1758, Papers of Benjamin Franklin, 8:200. It also forces Jennings's claim that "The diplomacy of the Indians themselves, epitomized in the Easton treaty [of 1758] which they organized and managed from first to last, was the crucial factor in bringing peace to the Ohio," into the category of special pleading for the Indians. See Jennings, "A Vanishing Indian," 323.
64. Israel Pemberton to Benjamin Franklin, 11 December 1758, *Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, 8:212. Thomson expressed a similar view in his letter of 10 December.

65. Charles Thomson to Benjamin Franklin, 10 December 1758, *ibid.*, 8:200-201. The "private Council" was observed on the 11th, surreptitiously, by Benjamin Chew, Attorney General of Pennsylvania, who managed to avoid detection by several look-outs who had been posted in the street by the Quakers. Chew was able to peer through the window of the Lutheran Church, where the secret meeting was being held. There, he said, was Israel Pemberton and "On his right hand sat Daniel Stanton, the English preacher ... Amos Strickland and Daniel Roberdeau and members of the Assembly, Thompson the Indian Secretary and many others," including a large number of Indians. "Benjamin Chew's Journal," Van Doren & Boyd, *Indian Treaties*, 313.


68. See, for example, Harley, *The Life of Charles Thomson*, 49-50; and Hendricks, *Charles Thomson and the Making of a New Nation*, 16.

69. John Heckewelder to Peter DuPonceau, 19 February 1820, American Philosophical Society Manuscripts; and same to George Logan, 11 February 1820, Thomson Papers, Library of Congress.

70. Rotater, "Charles Thomson, 'Prime Minister,'" 323.


73. Sir William Johnson to the Lords of Trade, 1 August 1762, *Papers of Sir William Johnson*, 3:847; "Minutes of a Meeting at Easton with Delawares, June, 1762," *ibid.*, 786; Sir William Johnson to the Lords of Trade, 1 August 1762, *ibid.*, 847; George Croghan to Sir William Johnson, 10 July 1762, *ibid.*, 826; and same to same, 4 September 1762, *ibid.*, 874.

74. Wallace, *King of the Delawares*, 258. For a discussion of who may have been responsible—most likely the white "invaders" from Connecticut's Susquehanna Company—see 259-260.

75. Benjamin Franklin to Israel Pemberton, 10 June 1758, *Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, 8:99.

76. See above, notes 63 & 64. Though these letters as they are printed are unsigned, a letter of Franklin's leaves no doubt of their authorship: "I received your Favour of December 11 ... By those Ships you will receive some of the printed Enquiries, to which Post's first Journal is added ... Extracts of your and Mr. Thomson's Letters are also added." Benjamin Franklin to Israel Pemberton, 19 March 1759, *Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, 8:297-298. Post's Journal is printed in [Thomson], *An Enquiry*, 130-171.

77. Benjamin Franklin to Israel Pemberton, 19 March 1759, *Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, 8:298.


79. Benjamin Franklin to David Hall, 8 April 1759, *Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, 8:322; and same to Joseph Galloway, 7 April 1759, *ibid.*, 313. Though it was published anonymously, there has never been any doubt regarding its authorship: "Mr. Thomson's Piece on the Causes of the Indians Uneasiness he [John Hunt, London Quaker] has just
TRAINING FOR RESISTANCE

receiv'd." Benjamin Franklin to Joseph Galloway, 17 February 1758, *ibid.*, 7:376.


82. Benjamin Franklin to Deborah Franklin, 12 April 1759, *Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, 8:324.


85. *Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, 8:384. For the full report, see 379–389. On 29 August the Privy Council proclaimed such an Order.

86. Boyd, "Indian Affairs," lxxxii n., lxxxviii; Nicholas B. Wainwright, George Croghan: *Wilderness Diplomat* (Chapel Hill, 1959), 130; and Wallace, *King of the Delawares*, 251. Wallace's "investigation of the history of the charges on which Thomson based his book," reaches the conclusion that the Walking Purchase had always been a red herring. When Conrad Weiser read the section in the *Enquiry* relating to the Walking Purchase, he made the written comment: "This charge is false. The whole Page is nothing but Falsehood." "Observations, made on the Pamphlet . . . 'an Inquiry,' etc.,” in the Moravian Archives, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, quoted in Wallace, *Conrad Weiser*, 72. Paul Wallace then proceeds, 72–75, to show "conclusively that Weiser was right."

87. James E. Hendricks, "Charles Thomson and the Making of a New Nation," mimeographed article (n.p., 1971), 5. Over a century later, when a number of humanitarians were becoming increasingly alarmed at the brutal treatment of the western tribes, the *Enquiry* was reprinted, in an attempt to arouse sympathy for the Indians. In 1867, John Campbell, a Philadelphia bookseller and publisher, issued two hundred and fifty copies of what he titled *Causes of the Alienation of the Delaware and Shawanese Indians from the British Interest*. For further details, see Hendricks, above, 7–8. Wroth, *American Bookshelf*, 131, suggests that the *Enquiry* was a "strongly partisan statement in which humanitarianism and political expediency were curiously mingled."

88. Though he certainly was not a pacifist: "I hope his [i.e. Governor Denny's] going to Fort Allen] may be of some service, & that he will give orders to the Officers to scour the woods & not lye skulking in their forts while their neighbours are killed . . . without ever going to their relief." Charles Thomson to William Franklin [May or June] 1757, American Philosophical Society Manuscripts. In referring to Colonel Henry Bouquet's struggles with the Indians during Pontiac's Rebellion and its aftermath, Thomson expressed the opinion that it may "require another Campaign to bring them to Reason."

Charles Thomson to Benjamin Franklin, 18 December 1764, *Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, 11:523. And elsewhere he referred to colonists having "borne the attacks of barbarous savages." Same to same, 24 September 1765, *ibid.*, 12:279.

89. See Zimmerman, "Charles Thomson, 'The Sam Adams,'” especially 467-471.

90. Thomson did not find it easy to have this chapter of his life kept closed, and his association with the Quakers dogged his steps into the next decade. During the hysteria surrounding the "Paxton Boys" in late 1763 and early 1764 the whole issue of
Teedyuscung's having been used as a tool of the Quakers against the Proprietors was openly aired in a furious and vitriolic pamphlet campaign. See, for example, [Thomas Barton?], The Conduct of the Paxton-Men, etc. (Philadelphia, 1764), printed in John Dunbar (ed), The Paxton Papers (The Hague, 1957), especially 270, 272–273; and [Hugh Williamson?], The Plain Dealer ... Num.III (Philadelphia, 1764), printed in ibid., 376–377. It was stated that during the 1750s the Quakers had influenced the Indians and "falsely persuaded them that they were cheated ... You attended at public treaties; procured a secretary of state, C____s T____nn, for your Indian King, and furnish'd him with whatever was necessary for his purposes and your's." [Hugh Williamson?], The Plain Dealer: or, A few Remarks upon Quaker Politics, And their Attempts to Change the Government of Pennsylvania, ... Numb. I. (Philadelphia, 1764), printed in ibid., 343.

91. Even with no further Indian work on his hands after his final Easton conference, it could be recorded three months later by the Quaker school overseers that his Assistant "was running the school in the absence of the master, Charles Thomson." Jean S. Straub, "Teaching in the Friends' Latin School of Philadelphia in the Eighteenth Century," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, 91 (1967), 439.


93. There are six letters which were exchanged between the two during the period 1784–1788. See also Charles Thomson to Governor [of the Northwest Territory] Arthur St. Clair, 11 April 1788: "Such is my confidence in your humanity that I am sure they will not plead in vain." All these letters are in the Thomson Papers, Library of Congress. See further correspondence on the subject between Thomson and St. Clair in William H. Smith (ed), The St Clair Papers, 2 vols (Freeport, N.Y., 1970; reprint), 2:36–37, 97–98. See also W.C. Ford et al (eds) Journals of the Continental Congress, 34 vols (Washington, 1904–1937), 4:269–270, for the address of Congress to the Delawares, which was in Thomson's handwriting (10 April 1776); and further reflections on Indian matters in Charles Thomson to John Dickinson, 26 March 1785, R.R. Logan Collection, HSP.


95. William Peden (ed), Notes on the State of Virginia by Thomas Jefferson (Chapel Hill, 1955), 197–208. Here Thomson was generally highly complimentary towards Indians, in particular praising the Delawares' great bravery, 200–201, stating that they were "taller than people in Europe generally are," 199–200. Moreover, he was a trifle shocked with the French writer Buffon's claim that the Indians' "organs of generation are smaller and weaker than those of Europeans. Is this a fact? I believe not; at least it is an observation I never heard before," 200. Thomson's "An Essay Upon Indian Affairs" apparently was a polished version of his comments for Jefferson's book. It appears that Thomson was not well informed about the history and composition of the Delawares and that this has mislead some subsequent writers on Indian affairs. Much of his material here is "garbled." Weslager, Delaware Indians, 32.


97. See their different approaches to tactics relating to the Stamp Act, as revealed in Benjamin Franklin to Charles Thomson, 11 July 1765, Papers of Benjamin Franklin, 12:206–207; and Charles Thomson to Benjamin Franklin, [24 September 1765], ibid., 12:278–280.


99. Though it surely is an exaggeration to claim that "During the next decade [1765–1775] the link between the province and Britain was the Thomson-Franklin
relationship." Zimmerman, "Charles Thomson, 'The Sam Adams'," 471. After a flurry of correspondence between the two regarding the Stamp Act there were no letters exchanged for over two years, between September 1766 and November 1768, after which a further year elapsed between letters. Moreover, the correspondence broke off again completely between March 1770 and October 1774, then only to be resumed by necessary congressional business.

100. See, for example, Thomson's "A Letter from a Merchant in Philadelphia, to his Correspondent in London, dated June 19 [1765]," in the London Chronicle, 17-20 August 1765; printed in Papers of Benjamin Franklin, 12:183-188; and Thomson as "A Freeborn American," in the Pennsylvania Gazette of 12 May 1768; and as "Martinus Scriblerus," in the same of 21 July 1768. These called for support of non-importation of British goods, which was Thomson's consistent remedy for parliamentary attempts to raise money in America.


103. He wrote that "there is a regular system laid down to govern America by Absolute authority. What liberty can that people enjoy whose will is subjected to the absolute will of another, under the notion of regulating it." " Thoughts on the Ministerial measures with regard to the Colonies" [c. 1765], Thomson's Memorandum Book, Gratz Collection, HSP.