

## BOOK REVIEWS

William J. Campbell. *Speculators in Empire: Iroquoia and the 1768 Treaty of Fort Stanwix* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press 2012). Pp. 212. Illustrations, notes, works cited. Paper. \$39.95.

*Speculators in Empire* is written by an academic historian for other academic historians, particularly those whose interest is the Six Nations of New York. Campbell utilizes the entire universe of Iroquois studies for this book and, while some of this ground has been plowed before, he has compiled a comprehensive study that is well written, thoroughly researched, and well documented.

The title of this book makes reference to the Treaty of Fort Stanwix, yet the content includes more, such as the history of European entry into the North American continent and the resulting collision with the Stone Aged indigenous peoples. Campbell also describes the greed and duplicity of the European countries and men who hoped to profit from this collision.

The author exhibits a real empathy for the Iroquois and all indigenous people by describing what made them special. He describes their native intelligence illustrated by the commonsense creation of the Grand Council to limit wars and the

elaborate traditions centered on “longhouse” values, ancestral spirits, and a holistic relationship with the cosmos.

In any history of the American Indian a dichotomy exists in understanding the true nature of indigenous peoples. The history of the Indigenous peoples has been written by Europeans and excerpted from the journals of the explorers, traders, missionaries, and government officials who were closest to them, yet, there are no perspectives provided by indigenous peoples. In many cases, the history was written to cover up and justify atrocities, and also written by Indian agents and missionaries who had their own agenda in creating the image of the “noble savage.” This book continues the confusion about the nature of the indigenous people, a point Campbell acknowledges in his introductory notes.

The Iroquois depicted in *Speculators in Empire* were feared for their ferocity, but this image was chastened by a matriarchal system of census governance. Campbell presents a compassionate story of the Iroquois. He describes the history and tradition, as well as their enlightened use of the longhouse and the creation of the Grand Council. He describes a sophisticated political thought process, and, he talks of Native statesman traveling to the courts of Europe as diplomats. The book alludes to many eloquent speeches delivered by Indian spokesman at the signing of the many treaties. The speeches expressed intelligent ideas on matters of trade, land, and the politics of the time. Campbell says that they were adept at identifying their interests, at devising remedies, at putting pressure on other parties, and at stating matters eloquently. In diplomatic arts, they equaled the colonizers.

To the European settler, on the frontier of this new country, the Indian had a different persona, one in which they made savage attacks on settlements, butchering men, woman, and children. Their barbaric practices and savage behavior made them feared and in some ways was used as justification for their eradication.

In their journals, traders, Indian agents, and missionaries describe child-like creatures who placed great value on trinkets and were easily manipulated by these gifts, resulting in being swindled out of their land. Campbell’s depiction of the indigenous people is the official version and is certainly authenticated by the various references he makes to previously published accounts. Hundreds of books and articles have been written about the Six Nations; the hyperbole includes bits and pieces that have been endlessly recycled and are then used as a basis for new interpretation. Between the paucity of actual events and the woeful unreliability of the prose, the reader is left to

wonder if the indigenous peoples actually were as sophisticated as Campbell and other historians describe them.

This history turns on one event, the coming of the European to the North American continent. So this book discusses treaties and describes Indian agents, special interest of the French, English, Germans, Dutch, and the newly independent States of America. The book presents a well-documented and interesting examination of these events. We know from the outset that the indigenous people are doomed because this same scenario has happened to the indigenous peoples all over the world. The title "*Speculators in Empire*" tells us that there is more, and that more is a study of greed and political interests.

This study includes narratives and maps of the arteries and waterways throughout the Eastern Seaboard and westward into the Ohio Valley and Great Lakes Region. These descriptions help the reader grasp the vastness of the Six Nations empire before the European's arrival. Campbell describes how those arteries and associated waterways were used for the swift invasion of European people, their commerce, and the resulting forts at strategic points along the routes.

The period leading up to the 1768 Treaty of Fort Stanwix is described in detail by the author, such as how the Indian Agent Johnson fed the thousands of Indians who came to participate and witness the largest land cession in early America. For the most part, the treaty was drafted by William Johnson and most historians depict the events at Fort Stanwix as Johnson's brainchild. He was quite skillful at accommodating the interests of Pennsylvania, Virginia, Connecticut, and New York, while drawing a boundary line that he hoped would protect the Six Nations lands from the encroachment of settlers. This diplomatic achievement was Johnson's shining moment.

This gathering and negotiation provided the Six Nations with a rare opportunity to put forth their grievances and anxieties; it gave them an occasion to bargain and negotiate long overdue boundaries and guarantees. This treaty would have been a fine pragmatic achievement if the promises had been kept. The 1768 Treaty of Fort Stanwix was supported and enforced by the Crown and became tenuous when the war with the colonies resulted in the English withdrawal from North America.

The book's emphasis on the speculators provides an interesting drama to the study. The cast included the European powers, various businessmen hoping for profit, and two main personalities, Sir William Johnson,

superintendent of Indian Affairs, and George Croghan, the assistant superintendent of Indian Affairs.

In any history of the Six Nations, William Johnson will receive a considerable amount of scholarly attention and this book is no exception. Johnson is depicted as a heroic figure who traversed indigenous and white worlds. He learned Indian customs and languages, and married a prominent Mohawk, daughter of a chief. This marriage gave him a considerable amount of credibility and trust with the Native tribes and he usually measured up to the trust. Many Six Nations historians consider him the most famous American in the British empire, eclipsing Benjamin Franklin and George Washington. Campbell did him no disservice in this study and spends considerable time explaining his paternalism while representing the interest of the indigenous peoples to his European bosses.

George Croghan was the consummate speculator and is referred to in this and other books as a "vile Rascal." At various times, he both owned outright or controlled for others vast areas of land in New York and the Ohio Valley, yet was always on the verge of bankruptcy. Croghan also wed a daughter of a Mohawk chief and this union benefited him with access to trade. During the mid-eighteenth century Croghan was almost indispensable for those Eastern business speculators who wanted to influence and profit from the frontier but avoid venturing beyond the clearing. Campbell's descriptions of Croghan are for the most part negative and it is easy to identify him with everything that was bad about greedy Indian agents. Campbell's detailed narrative depicting the speculations and maneuvering of these two men is the glue that holds the entire story together.

Once the American Revolution was won, all of the agreements, treaties, and niceties were gone. Each state in this new Union had an agenda centered on the principles of "Manifest Destiny." By mid-1770, dealings with the Six Nations were no longer negotiated, they were dictated. The Iroquois were relegated to the status of a defeated political identity by the second Treaty of Fort Stanwix. The Six Nations and its Grand Council lost its advocate when Sir William Johnson died, but, even if he lived, he could not have changed the destiny of the indigenous peoples in the new United States. The speculator Croghan lost his influence when his backers and England were no longer in the picture. He lost huge tracts of land to creditors and died a pauper.

The literature on the Six Nations is vast and Campbell consolidated most of it into this book. His writing style is clear with maps and drawings. He also wraps this study of agreements and treaties into a story about speculation

in empire, making the book an enjoyable read and a reference book for any future historian studying the history of the Six Nations.

WILLIAM S. TRESS  
*University of Baltimore*

POLITICIANS, SLAVES, AND TANGLED ROOTS: A REVIEW ESSAY  
 OF *DUNMORE'S NEW WORLD, THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION OF 1776,*  
 AND INDEPENDENCE

James Corbett David. *Dunmore's New World: The Extraordinary Life of a Royal Governor in Revolutionary America—with Jacobites, Counterfeiters, Land Schemes, Shipwrecks, Scalping, Indian Politics, Runaway Slaves, and Two Illegal Royal Weddings* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013). Pp. 270. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$29.95.

Gerald Horne. *The Counter-Revolution of 1776: Slave Resistance and the Origins of the United States of America* (New York: New York University Press, 2014). Pp. 348. Notes, index. Cloth, \$39.00.

Thomas P. Slaughter. *Independence: The Tangled Roots of the American Revolution* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2014). Pp. 487. Maps, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$35.00.

James Corbett David, Gerald Horne, and Thomas Slaughter have produced three different works that offer some insight to major developments within the British empire in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, anchored by the American Revolution. David approaches the task from a narrower perspective by focusing on the life and times of John Murray, the Earl of Dunmore (1732–1809). Horne and Slaughter examine the subject from larger viewpoints. Horne offers an examination of the role that slave resistance played in the events leading to the American declaration of independence from Great Britain, while Slaughter seeks to explain how the desire for independence among those who settled in Britain's North American colonies finally became so radicalized that it led to a separation.

James Corbett David makes a valuable contribution to British and American historiography by writing this biography of Lord Dunmore; he introduces his reader to a remarkably resilient person as his family became