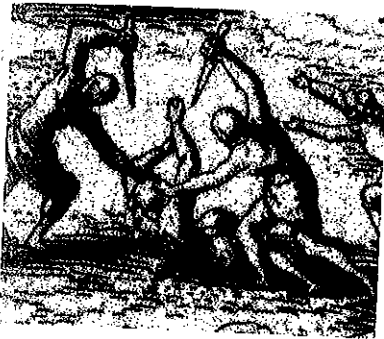


11 Indians vs. Colonists



If the European settlements were to grow, they had to have the Indians' land. And the Indians weren't about to give it up easily.

From the time of Columbus the pattern was the same. The newcomers and the Indians would meet as friends and trade with each other. Then something would happen. Often an Indian was killed or sold into slavery, and the Indians would strike back. Sometimes they showed remarkable patience. Sometimes they were just waiting for the right moment. For the Native Americans

were much like the New Americans: good and bad, fierce and gentle. Warriors on both sides went too far. The massacres were horrible.

At first the Indian leaders tried to live in peace with the settlers. But some of them realized that it would not work, that it would be the end of Indian ways. The Europeans used up land. They cut the forests and filled the land with people. Indians were hunters. To keep their way of life, the woods had to be protected. Wild animals need woods to live in, and hunters need wild animals.

Most Europeans understood that, too. One Virginia governor said, "Either we must clear the Indians out of the country, or they must clear us out." The members of the House of Burgesses ordered three expeditions to drive out the Indians "in order that they have no chance to harvest their crops or rebuild their wigwams."

There was another problem: arrogance (which means thinking you are better than others). In the 17th century arrogance was often tied to religion.

The Powhatan
Indians played football with a small ball and a goal. The men played one set of rules, the women and children another. But for all the players, speed and dexterity were important. The Indians also enjoyed a game called "chunkey," which was played with a disk-shaped stone and slim poles eight or ten feet long. The idea was to roll the disk as far as possible and then throw the pole and try to hit it—or knock your opponent's pole away from its target disk.

What do you think about this Native American cartoonist's version of the Pilgrims' Thanksgiving story?



Fields of Blood

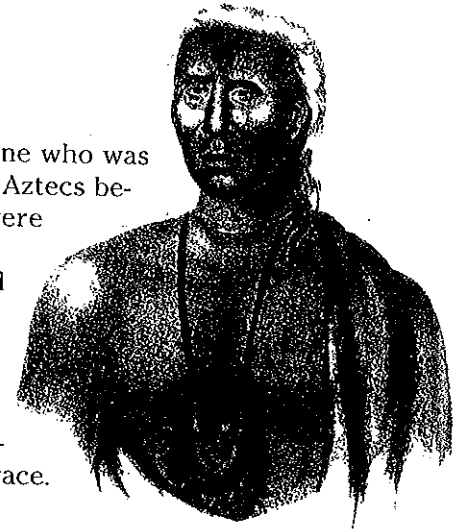
Not all white people feared and hated Indians. John Lawson, a traveler in Carolina in 1700, wrote in a book about his journey: "We look upon them with Scorn and Disdain, [yet] ...for all our Religion and Education, we possess more Moral Deformities and Evils than these savages do....We make way for a Christian Colony through a Field of Blood, and defraud, and make away with those that one day may be wanted in this world." John Lawson founded a new settlement himself. He was later captured and killed by Tuscarora Indians.

This engraving, called *William Penn's Treaty with the Indians*, is based on a famous picture painted by Benjamin West in 1771. Edward Hicks borrowed some of West's ideas for his picture of the same event, shown on page 108.) Artists often had engravings made of their most popular works. Engraving was cheap: it allowed ordinary people who couldn't afford oil paintings to have art in their homes, and it allowed artists to reach a wider public. Why do you think this image—of whites and Indians at peace—was popular enough to be engraved?

Many Christians believed that anyone who was not Christian must be inferior. (The Aztecs believed those who weren't Aztec were inferior.)

Before long, that arrogance would become racism. Some whites believed themselves better than all Indians. Some believed themselves better than all blacks. History shows that racists are troublemakers and often the worst of their own race. There were bigots and racists in early America and they made trouble. Some of them wanted to kill all the Indians. (And some Indians wanted to kill all whites.)

However, the real problem was the fight for control of land. Even when Indians and settlers were friendly, it usually didn't last long. The newcomers wanted Indian land, and naturally the Indians didn't want to give it up. Some fair-minded white leaders respected the Indians and wanted to share the land, but they were never able to control the land-hungry settlers.



In 1737 the Delaware Indian chief Lappawinsoe signed an agreement that gave Pennsylvania colonists all the land they could cover on foot in a day and a half. Instead of walking leisurely, as the Indians expected, the colonists sent runners. Lappawinsoe was shocked and felt the Indians had been swindled.

