

Tuscarora War 1711-1718

Beginning in 1711, the Tuscarora people and their allies on one side, and European American settlers, the Yamasee, and their allies on the other, fought the **Tuscarora War**, considered to be the bloodiest colonial war in North Carolina.

As the English settled Carolina and began interacting more frequently with the Tuscarora, conflicts arose over competition for resources, shared hunting grounds and cultural differences. The Tuscarora believed that explorer, naturalist, and writer John Lawson was responsible in part for the settlers' expansion into their territory. Lawson's writings emphasized the potential that the lands held for European settlement, which caused resentment for his perceived role in the founding of New Bern, a settlement that encroached on Tuscarora territory.

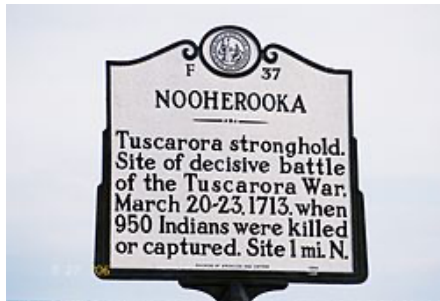


There were two groups of Tuscarora in North Carolina in the early 18th century, a northern group led by Chief Tom Blount and a southern group led by Chief Hancock. The southern Tuscaroras led by Hancock and their allied tribes conducted wide-ranging attacks over a brief period. Beginning on September 12, 1711, they attacked homesteads along the Roanoke, Neuse, and Trent rivers and in the town of Bath, killing hundreds of settlers, including key colonial political figure John Lawson, while driving off others.

The execution of John Lawson on September 16, 1711. By possibly Christoph von Graffenried (1661-1743) - Burgerbibliothek of Berne, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=115436972>
(caption below photo)

In 1711, weakened by Cary's Rebellion (an uprising against the Deputy Governor of North Carolina led by Thomas Cary, who refused to give up his governorship to Edward Hyde), Governor Hyde asked South Carolina for assistance. Colonel John Barnwell with a force of 30 white officers and about 500 Native Americans from South Carolina, including Yamasee, traveled over 300 miles, arriving in January 1712. The force, supplemented by 50 local militiamen, attacked the Tuscarora, who retreated to Fort Neoheroka in Greene County. The Tuscarora negotiated a truce and released their prisoners.

Barnwell's subsequent return to South Carolina displeased the North Carolina settlers who wished for a total victory over the Tuscarora. In turn, the South Carolinians were unhappy that there was no payment for their help. Additionally, actions by some South Carolina officers incited the Tuscarora into a new wave of attacks, which came amid a yellow fever outbreak. These pressures weakened the North Carolina colony, causing many settlers to flee. Governor Thomas Pollack requested further aid from South Carolina.



Colonel James Moore with a force of 33 colonists and nearly 1,000 Native Americans, arrived from South Carolina in December 1712. The settlers offered northern chief Tom Blount control of the entire Tuscarora tribe if he assisted them in defeating southern chief Hancock. Renewed warfare ensued. In March 1713, the southern Tuscarora lost Fort Neoheroka, one of several Tuscarora forts of that time. (North Carolina colonists destroyed all the Tuscarora forts during the conflict.) About 950 people were killed or captured and sold into slavery in the Caribbean or New England by Colonel Moore and his South Carolina troops.

Fort Neoheroka historical marker near Snow Hill, North Carolina (caption below photo)

The Tuscarora signed a treaty with colonial officials in 1718 and settled on a reserved tract of land in Bertie County, North Carolina. Many Tuscarora began a migration to New York, where the the Five Nations of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy accepted them as the Sixth Nation in 1722. Some Tuscarora bands remained in North Carolina with Blount for decades, with the last leaving for New York in 1802.

References/Additional Reading

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuscarora_War

La Vere, David. (2013). *The Tuscarora War : Indians, settlers, and the fight for the Carolina colonies* (1st ed.). Chapel Hill [North Carolina]: The University of North Carolina Press. [ISBN 978-1-4696-1257-7](#). [OCLC 856017210](#)

Von Graffenried and Todd, Christoph Von Graffenried's Account of the Founding of New Bern