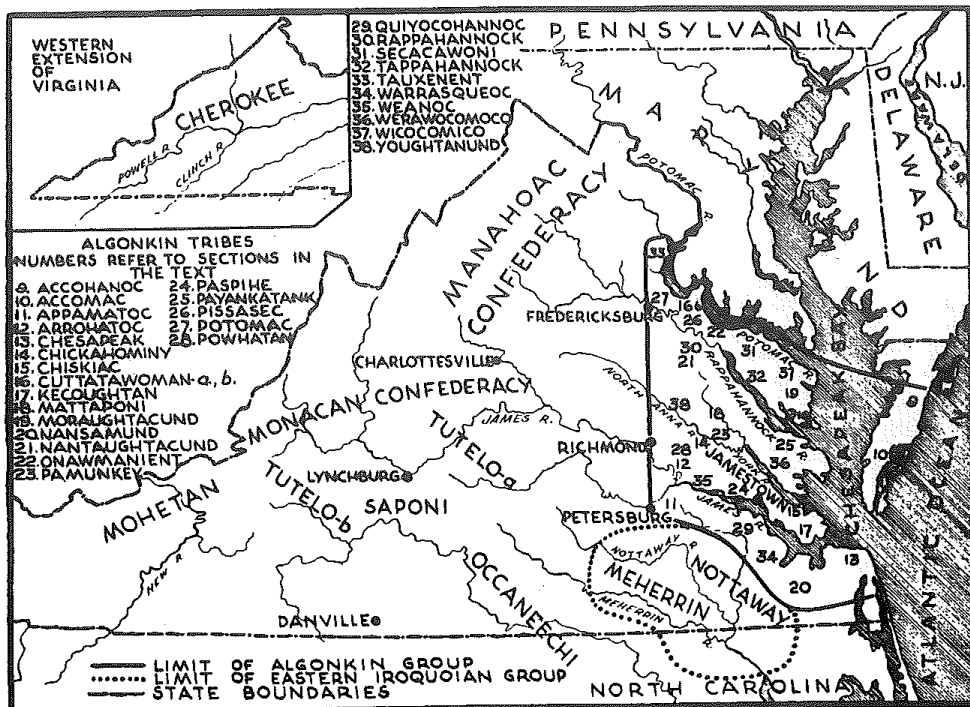


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DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN ART

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THE VIRGINIA INDIAN TRIBES: 17th CENTURY

Names, Locations and Population



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1. LINGUISTIC STOCKS. In the 17th century the area now included in the state of Virginia was inhabited by tribes belonging to 3 linguistic stocks, Algonkin, Siouan and Iroquoian.

2. POPULATION figures for the state are very largely guesswork. The early colonists counted the fighting men only and not the whole population. For the tribes which were far inland there are only estimates. The population of the eastern and central parts of the area seems to have been about 15,000. The mountainous areas to the west were held by the Cherokee to the south and by various wandering tribes in the north and central parts of this section. The number of these people is not known and seems to have fluctuated considerably. Probably a few thousand could be safely added to the figure given above.

3. HISTORY. The tribal locations and populations listed in this leaflet are those of the early 17th century. The arrival of the Jamestown colonists and the rise of the Iroquois confederacy began a series of wars, shiftings of peoples and reductions of populations which radically changed matters long before the end of the century.

4. TRIBE. This word is loosely used as a convenient title for the many little groups of Indians living in Virginia. The question of whether a group was really an independent tribe or merely a collection of people gathered about a village in the territory of a larger tribe is a difficult one to answer from the available information.

5. SURVIVING POPULATION. About 2000 mixed bloods still live in the state. These groups are mentioned in sections 9, 10, 14, 18, 20, 23, 27, 30, 36, and 37.

ALGONKIN TRIBES

6. LOCATION. These tribes held the coast line and the south bank of the Potomac river from just west of Washington down almost to the southern boundary of the state. Their territory extended inland as far as a line running from Washington south through Fredericksburg and Richmond to Petersburg, where it turned east to the sea. This is the "fall line" where a geologic fault causes waterfalls and cascades in the rivers crossing it. The tribes also held the narrow southern portion of the peninsula which forms the eastern shore of Chesapeake Bay.

7. POPULATION. In the Algonkin section the population figures are for 1607.

8. POWHATAN CONFEDERACY. All the tribes in the Algonkin group were to some extent members of the confederacy organized and ruled by the Chief Powhatan. (See section 28).

9. ACCOHANOC. Accomac and Northampton counties, about the northern half of the eastern peninsula. Population 150. A few mixed bloods live near Drummond town.

10. ACCOMAC. The principal village was near the present Cheriton on Cherrystone Inlet in Northampton county. Population about 300. A few survivors live near Fishers Inlet.

11. APPAMATOC. This tribe centered about the site of the present Bermuda Hundred, in Prince George county southeast of Richmond. Population about 200.

12. ARROHATOC. The principal village was 12 miles below Richmond on the James river in Henrico county. Population about 100.

13. CHESAPEAK. A tribe on the Linnhaven river in Princess Anne county, southeast of Norfolk. The tribe had vanished by 1669. Population 350.

14. CHICKAHOMINY. One of the leading tribes of Colonial times, numbering about 900. The home of the tribe has always been on both sides of the Chickahominy river in New Kent and Charles City counties. About 400 mixed bloods survive, centering about Samaria, Windsor Shades and Boulevard.

15. CHISKIAC. A tribe which lived in York county along the south side of York river. Population, 200.

16. CUTTATAWOMAN. There were two tribes of this name. One, 16a, numbering about 120, lived in Lancaster county on the Rappahannock river at the mouth of the Corotoman river. The other, 16b, with about 80 members, lived in King George county on the Rappahannock about Lamb creek.

17. KECOUGHTAN. A tribe at the mouth of the James river in Elizabeth City county. Population 75.

18. MATTAPONI. (Accent on final i, pronounced eye). A small tribe, perhaps a branch of the Pamunkey, who lived in colonial times on the Pamunkey and Mattapony rivers. Today about 150 mixed bloods live in two settlements on the Mattapony river in King William county. The two villages are Indian Town and Adamstown. The latter group

are called Adamstown Indians and may be a surviving vestage of the Nantaughtacund Indians of colonial times.

19. MORAUGHTACUND. This tribe lived along the north bank of the Rappahannock river in Lancaster and Richmond counties. Their center was at the mouth of the Moratico river. Population 300.

20. NANSAMUND. An important tribe in colonial times. Population about 750. Their territory lay along the south side of the lower James river in Nansemond and Norfolk counties. The main town was at Chuckatuck, in the former county. About 200 mixed bloods survive today around Bowers Hill in Norfolk county.

21. NANTAUGHTACUND. This tribe lived in Essex and Caroline counties south of the Rappahannock river. Population about 750.

22. ONAWMANIENT. A tribe which lived about Nominy Bay on the south bank of the Potomac river in Westmoreland county. Population 400.

23. PAMUNKEY. The largest of the Algonkin tribes in colonial times. The population was about 1000. They lived in the country about the junction of the Pamunkey and Matapony rivers in King William county, with the principal town where West Point now stands. About 150 mixed bloods live today on a reservation near Lester Manor, about 20 miles east of Richmond. About as many more are scattered through the region.

24. PASPIHE or PASPAHEGH. This tribe was the one in closest contact with the Jamestown settlers. Their lands lay in Charles City county between the James and Chickahominy rivers. Population 200.

25. PAYANKATANK. This tribe lived on the Piankatank river in Middlesex county. Population 200.

26. PISSASEC. A tribe of Westmoreland county, on the north bank of the Rappahannock river in the neighborhood of the present Leedstown. No population figures are available.

27. POTOMAC or PATAWOMEKE. An important tribe centering about a town of the same name in Stafford county on a peninsula formed by the Potomac river. Population about 800. Today perhaps 150 mixed bloods live in the neighborhood, about 8 miles north of Fredericksburg. It is not certain that this group is a remnant of the old tribe, though it bears the same name.

28. POWHATAN. This name, so celebrated in the early history of Virginia, was first applied to the town of a small tribe, numbering about 150, which was located near the falls of the James river near the present Richmond. The chief of the tribe when discovered was Wahunsonacock. This man came to be called Powhatan because of his place of residence, and as such is known today. The name is also applied to the confederacy of all these little tribes which the chief built up by conquest and inheritance.

29. QUIYOCOHANNOG. A tribe which lived about Upper Chipok creek in Surry county. Population 125.

30. RAPPAHANNOCK. A tribe of about 400 members who lived along the south shore of the Rappahannock river in Richmond county. Today perhaps 500 mixed bloods live in the neighborhood. In this group are included the decendants of the Nantaughtacund and perhaps other tribes of the region.

31. SECACAWONI. A tribe which lived along the Coan river, a tributary of the Potomac from the south, in Northumberland county. Population about 120.

32. TAPPAHANNOCK. Probably a variation of Rappahannock and applied to the members of that group which lived on the north side of the Rappahannock river in Richmond county and nearby. At this late date confusion of names is inevitable and exact accuracy impossible.

33. TAUXENENT. A tribe which held the territory in Fairfax county along the south shore of the Potomac river in the neighborhood of the present Mount Vernon. Population 150.

34. WARRASQUEOC. A tribe, the numbers of which are unknown, which formerly lived in Isle of Wight county at the mouth of Warrasqueoc creek on the south bank of the James river.

35. WEANOC. This tribe lived in Charles City county on the north bank of the James river. Population about 500.

36. WERAWOCOMOCO. A tribe of 200 persons who lived in Gloucester county on the north bank of the York river nearly opposite the mouth of Queen creek. Perhaps 100 mixed bloods still live in the region.

37. WICOCOMICO or WICOMOCO. This tribe lived on the south side of the Potomac river at its mouth in Northumberland county. Population about 500. Several hundred mixed bloods are said still to live in the region.

38. YOUGHANUND. A tribe of about 250 members which lived on the Pamunkey river in Hanover county.

IROQUOIAN TRIBES

39. CHEROKEE. The narrow westward extension of Virginia, on the west side of the Blue Ridge mountains, was in the hands of the Cherokee.

40. MEHERRIN. A tribe which formerly lived along the river of the same name in southeastern Virginia and northeastern North Carolina. They seem to have numbered about

700 in 1600. Later, remnants of the Conestoga, or Susquehanna, from upper Maryland settled among them.

41. NOTTAWAY or MANGOAC. A tribe of considerable size which lived along the river of the same name in southeastern Virginia. The population in 1600 was about 1500. The tribe was closely allied with the Meherrin. A few survived as late as 1825.

SIOUAN TRIBES

42. MANAHOAC. The name of a group of tribes occupying northern Virginia from the fall line of the rivers to the mountains, and from the Potomac south to the North Anna river, a bit north of Charlottesville. The population was perhaps 1500 in 1600. Of the tribes the names of 8 are known, as follows: Hassinunga, Manahoac, Ontponea, Shackaconia, Stegarakes, Tanxnitania, Tegninateo, and Whonkenti.

43. MONACAN. A tribe and a confederacy which held the upper valley of the James river and its tributaries from the falls of the James west to the Blue Ridge. Five names connected with this group are given but from available information it is hard to tell whether the names should be applied to towns or tribes. Locations also differ in the various sources. The following names are given. Massinicac was apparently about 25 miles west of Richmond on the south bank of the James in Powhatan county. Mowemcho or Mohemencho, also called Monacan Town, was 12 to 15 miles west of Richmond on the south bank of the James in Chesterfield county. This was the center of the Monacan tribe. Monahassano is a form of the word Yesang, the native name of the Tutelo (see below). According to one source the tribe lived in Bedford and Buckingham counties, while another places the center in Nelson county. Monasiccapano also is placed in two areas, one being near Charlottesville in Albemarle county and the other just east in Louisa and Fluvanna counties. Rasaanek, called by all the chief town of the confederacy, was at the fork of the James and Rivanna rivers in Fluvanna county. The population in 1600 of the confederacy is estimated at 1200.

It is possible that the tribes named in this and the following sections may have been one people, to whom several names were given at different periods.

44. MOHETAN. This tribe, of unknown size, lived on the upper waters of the New River in the western mountains.

45. OCCANEECHI. Until their discovery in 1670 this tribe of about 1200 people lived on an island in the Roanoke river near the present Clarksville, in Mecklenburg county.

46. SAPONI. This name, applied rather confusingly to a number of groups, here refers to a tribe which until sometime after 1670 centered about a village on Otter creek, a tributary of the upper Roanoke from the north, southwest of Lynchburg in Campbell county. The rest of the 17th century the tribe spent near the Occaneechi (see above). Population figures are not available but perhaps 1200 is near the figure for the early 17th century.

47. TUTELO. This name, applied here to a single tribe, was one form of the Iroquois name for the southern Siouan tribes. The single tribe known by the name called themselves Yesang. This is the tribe called Monahassano by the Jamestown colonists. For the debatable location of their center see section 43. The tribe spent the last years of the 17th century with the Saponi and Occaneechi. Their numbers can only be guessed to have been towards a thousand. Under the name Tuteli the tribe survives today in the persons of about 100 mixed bloods living with the Iroquois in Ontario, Canada.

Compiled from the following sources by F. H. Douglas:

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The Algonkin groups, 17th century and modern, 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8; the Siouan groups, 2, 3, 9; the Iroquoian groups 3; maps, 2, 4, 8.

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