

"gives us all the evils, without the advantages of war." Duquesne, in August, 1755, confessed that it was nothing but a lack of pretext, which prevented his attacking this English post.

About the middle of the seventeenth century the Iroquois by conquests had pushed a sort of feudal sway far beyond their ancestral homes. They had destroyed the Hurons in the country west of the Ottawa. They had exterminated the Eries south of the lake of that name, and had pushed their conquests at least as far as the Scioto, and held in vassalage the tribes still farther west. They even at times kept their enemies in terror as far as the Mississippi. Somewhat in the same way they had caused their primacy to be felt along the Susquehanna. Their war parties were known to keep the fruitful region south of the Ohio in almost absolute desolation.

The area included in these conquests is, perhaps, a moderate estimate of what the English meant by the Iroquois claim. As early as 1697, the Commissioners of Trade and Plantations, in formulating the English rights to sovereignty over the Iroquois, asserted something larger in saying that these confederates held "in tributary subjection all the neighboring Indians and went sometimes as far as the South Sea, the northwest passage and Florida, as well as over that part of the country now called Canada." Mitchell, in 1755, claimed that by the conquest of the Shawnees in 1672 the Iroquois acquired whatever title the original occupants of the Ohio valley had, and that their conquest of the Illinois carried their rights beyond the Mississippi.

The English turned these Iroquois conquests to their advantage by assuming that the regions covered by this supremacy fell to their jurisdiction as one of the considerations of their alliance with the confederates. This pretension, in its most arrogant form, allowed there was no territory not under Iroquois control east of the Mississippi,