

## Letter from Lt. Gov. Alexander Spotswood About Educating Indians, 1711

The delivering their Children as Hostages will not only prove the most effectual security for their Fidelity, but may be a good Step towards the Conversion of that whole Nation to the Christian faith, and I could not hope for a more favourable Conjunction to make this Demand than now when they are under great apprehensions of our Reckonment for the late Barbarities committed in Carolina, and the impressions made on them by the appearance of so great a Force as I then shew'd them. I took this Occasion to renew a Proposal I formerly made to our Tributary Indians for sending some of their Children to be brought up at the College, and though it has hitherto been judged a matter so impracticable, that the Governors of the College have thought it in vain to attempt it, and have chosen rather to be at a great expence for buying Indians of remote Nations taken in War, <sup>to be</sup> educated in pursuance of a Donation left for that Purpose by Mr Doyle; Yet I have

promised

Citation: Excerpt from Lt. Gov. Alexander Spotswood to Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, Nov. 17, 1711, Colonial Office 5/1316, Public Record Office, Kew, England (available on Virginia Colonial Records Project microfilm at the Library of Virginia).

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prevailed as far by offering to remit their whole Tribute of Skins so long as they kept their Children at the College, that the King of the Nansemonds has already sent his Son and Cousin The Notoway and Mahernes have sent each two of their Chieftains Sons to be brought up to Learning and Christianity, and the Queen of Pamunkey upon seeing how well those Indian Children are treated has engaged to send her Son and the Son of one of the Chieftains upon the same. And I also expect another Boy from the Neshomings. As the remitting their Tribute is one of the Conditions for their keeping their Children at the College, and I believe a strong motive to engage their Compliance, so if it should happen to be disapproved and revoked by succeeding Governors, because it lessens their Income, it may occasion their Recalling their Children and consequently prove a Discouragement to the design of their Conversion. And therefore I humbly offer to Your Lordships

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November the 20<sup>th</sup> 1711

*Present*

The Governor

Edmund Jenings  
Robert Carter  
James Blair  
Philip Ludwell

Henry Duke  
John Smith  
John Lewis &  
William Byrd Esq<sup>rs</sup>

Several patents for Land being prepared were this day signed by the Governor in Council

The Queen of Pamunky having in pursuance of the Governor's proposal this day presented her Son together with two boys, Sons of the Greatmen of that Nation, desiring they may be educated at the College, and that one other boy may be also permitted to attend the Son of the said Queen and have in like manner the benefite of Learning:

The Governor was pleased to ask the advice of the Council whether all the said Indian Children (being more in number than the Hostages demanded of that Nation) shall be received, especially since the House of Burgesses have not yet signified any inclination to settle a Fund for the Conversion and education of such Indians. This Board are unanimously of opinion that it is fitt to encourage this good disposition of the Indians, and that all the said Children be admitted into the College and receive the education of which they seem so desirous, not doubting but the College will be enabled to support that charge either by an Exhibition from the General Assembly or by the private Charity of other well disposed persons for promoting so good a design.

*Citation: Excerpt from Nov. 20, 1711 minutes printed in Executive Journals, Council of Colonial Virginia, ed. H. J. McIlwaine (Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1925-1966), 3:290-291.*