

**Analysis of Place Names in Table 1 of  
Byrd and Heath, 1997**

by: Blair A. Rudes

**Preface**

Several of the pairs of place names show variants, one with <t> and the other with <n>. This is an expected feature of Carolina/Virginia Iroquoian. The Carolina/Virginia Iroquoian languages are distinguished from their northern relatives by, among other things, two distinctive sound changes. First, Proto-Northern Iroquoian \*n became Carolina/Virginia Iroquoian /t/ before non-nasal vowels and the glides \*w and \*y. This change is present in Nottoway and Tuscarora. Subsequently, Proto-Northern Iroquoian \*t became \*ʔn before non-nasal vowels and the glides \*w and \*y. This initial /ʔ/ is lost when the \*t was originally word-initial or followed another consonant. An example illustrating these changes is: Tuscarora né·kti· 'two' compared to Seneca tekhnih 'two'. The change of \*n to /t/ occurred everywhere in Carolina/Virginia Iroquoian, although there are a few individual words that are exceptions. The change of \*t to /ʔn/, however, apparently only occurred among the Tuscarora who lived in villages on the Contentnea Creek drainage, i.e., the villages from which most of the initial refugees to the Iroquois Confederacy came after the Tuscarora Wars. Apparently, some early authors got the names for villages in the Contentnea Creek drainage from the residents -- the forefathers of the modern Tuscarora speakers in New York and Ontario -- while other early authors got the names either from Tuscarora from more northerly towns or from Meherrin or Nottoway speakers.

I have presented my analysis of the modern equivalents of each name in phonemic transcription with morphemic analysis. Only one name, viz., Conneghta is with the wrong set in Table 1 (see analysis). A couple of the other names defy analysis for one reason or another.

---

**Table 1. Tuscarora community names of the Contentnea Creek drainage identified in the historical record. (from: John E. Byrd and Charles L. Heath. *The Rediscovery of the Tuscarora Homeland: A Final Report of the Archaeological Survey of the Contentnea Creek Drainage 1995-1997*, pp. 20-21. David S. Phelps Archaeological Laboratory, East Carolina University. August 15, 1997)**

---

NAME	SYNONYMS
Toisnot	Tosneoc (Lawson [1709] 1967) Tosnect (Von Graffenried map) Tostohant (Treaty with North Carolina, November 25, 1712)
Torhunta	Norhunta (Von Graffenried map) Naur-hegh-ne (Lawson [1709] 1967) Narhontes (Barnwell, in Barnwell 1908) Tarhunta (Treaty with North Carolina, November 25, 1712) Taughoutnith (Treaty with Virginia, December 11, 1711)
Kenta	Kenthe Eno (Von Graffenried map) Kenta, Kentanuska (Lawson [1709] 1967) Conneghta (Moseley map) Keuta (Treaty with North Carolina, November 25, 1712)

Neoheroka	Kinthaigh (Treaty with Virginia, December 11, 1711) Anna-Ooka (Lawson [1709] 1967) Tonarooka (Barnwell, in Barnwell 1908) Nooherooka (Moseley map) Toherooka (Treaty with North Carolina, November 25, 1712) Touchairouka (Treaty with Virginia, December 11, 1711)
Innennits	Chunaneets (Lawson 1967) Juninits (Treaty with North Carolina, November 25, 1712) Chounanitz (Treaty with Virginia, December 11, 1711)
Caunookehoe	Conauh-kare Harooka (Lawson [1709] 1967) Consotobe (Treaty with North Carolina, November 25, 1712)
Catechna	Contah-nah (Lawson [1709] 1967) King Hancock's Town (Barnwell, in Barnwell 1908; Moseley map) Caughteghnah (Treaty with Virginia, December 11, 1711)

**Analysis**

1a.	<Toisnot> <Tosneoc> <Tosnect>	1b.	<Tostahant>	1c.	<Taughoushie>
<i>or</i>	/Thyúynu·kt/ /Teyúynu·kt/	?		/Thyuyhéhéh/ /Teyuyhéhéh/	
a.	Thyúynu·kt thi+yu+(i)ynu·+akT contrastive-third singular neuter patient-river-be next to 'next to an unusual river'				
<i>or</i>	Teyúynu·kt te+yu+(i)ynu·+akT dualic-third singular neuter patient-river 'next to two rivers'				
b.	Etymology unknown				
c.	Thyuyhéhéh thi+yu+(i)yhéh-eh contrastive-third singular neuter patient-river-noun suffix 'an unusual river'				
<i>or</i>	Teyuyhéhéh te+yu+(i)yhéh-eh dualic-third singular neuter patient-river-noun suffix 'two rivers'				

Comments: a. and c. are the most probable etymologies. b. and c. require the assumption that the words were spoken by a Carolina/Virginia Iroquois from the northern area (Nottoway, Meherrin or northern Tuscarora towns) where Proto-Northern Iroquoian \*t did not become /(?n)/ as in modern Tuscarora (which derives principally from the speech of those who fled the Carolinas after the Tuscarora wars). Note that a. is quite similar to the modern Tuscarora word for Lewiston, New York, Uyhēhakt 'Next to the River', differing only in the contrastive prefix (which means 'an unusual kind of') and a different form of the root for river. Tostahant looks to be an entirely different construction, although I am not sure what the proper etymology for it is.

---

2a.	<Torhuntha>	b. <Taughoutnith>	c. <Norhuntha> <Narhontes>	d.	<Naur-hegh-ne>
	/Teyurhēhtha?/	/Teyurhēhne/	/Neyurhēhtha?/		/Neyurhēhne

- |    |  |
|----|--|
| a. | Teyurhēhtha?<br>te-yu-rhēhT-ha?<br>dualic-third singular neuter patient-stay overnight-habitual<br>'it stays overnight' (= 'way-station', 'overnight lodging place') |
| b. | Teyurhēhne<br>te-yu-rhēhT-ē<br>dualic-third singular neuter patient-stay overnight-stative<br>'it stayed overnight' (= 'way-station', 'overnight lodging place')     |
| c. | Neyurhēhtha?<br>ne-yu-rhēhT-ha?<br>dualic-third singular neuter patient-stay overnight-habitual<br>'it stays overnight' (= 'way-station', 'overnight lodging place') |
| d. | Neyurhēhne<br>ne-yu-rhēhT-ē<br>dualic-third singular neuter patient-stay overnight-habitual<br>'it stays overnight' (= 'way-station', 'overnight lodging place')     |

Comments: a. and b. would be forms from northern Carolina/Virginia dialect area (see above) with the dualic prefix /te-/ rather than the expected modern Tuscarora /ne-/. As a place name, the word clearly refers to some sort of way-station -- a place where travelers or hunters stay overnight on their way somewhere. I am not sure what the final <th> of Taughoutnith or the final <s> of Narhontes represents.

---

3a.	<Kenta> <Keuta> <Kinthaigh>	b. <Kenthe Eno> c.	<Kentanuska>	d. <Conneghta>
	/Kēhta?/	/Kēhta? Ì·ne/	/Kēhta? Núhske/	(Kahnēhtu·?)*
a.	/Kēhta?/ ka-iht-a?			

- third singular neuter agent-prairie-noun suffix  
'prairie'
- b. Kéhta? Ì·ne  
ka-iht-a? ì·ne  
third singular neuter agent-prairie-noun suffix far  
'far prairie'
- c. Kéhta? Núhske  
ka-iht-a? núhske  
third singular neuter agent-prairie-noun suffix near  
'near prairie'
- d. (Kahnéhtu·?)  
ka-hneht-u·?  
third singular neuter agent-loblolly pine-be in water-stative  
'submerged loblolly pine'

Comments: kéhta? is an archaic word for 'grass land, prairie', no longer used in modern Tuscarora. It is seen in the name of the State of Kentucky.

(Conneghta is the northern equivalent of Catechna, and belongs with set 7.)

- 
- |     |   |    |   |    |  |
|-----|---|----|---|----|--|
| 4a. | <Neoheroka><br><Nooherooka><br><br>/Neyuherú·kẹ?/ | b. | <Toherooka><br><Touchairouka><br><br>/Teyuherú·kẹ?/ | c. | <Anna-Ooka><br><Tonarooka><br><br>/Teyuhne?rú·kẹ?/ |
|-----|---|----|---|----|--|
- a. Neyuherú·kẹ?  
ne-yu-her-ukẹ-?  
dualic-third singular neuter patient-green-be forked  
'forked field'
- b. Teyuherú·kẹ?  
te-yu-her-ukẹ-?  
dualic-third singular neuter patient-green-be forked  
'forked field'
- c. Teyuhne?rú·kẹ?  
ne-yu-hne?r-ukẹ-?  
dualic-third singular neuter patient-root-be forked  
'forked root'

Comments: again, a. is the modern Tuscarora form of the word; b. is what would be expected from Nottoway, Meherrin or northern Tuscarora towns. The medial /n/ in Anna-Ooka and Tanarooka suggests that we are dealing with a different root here. I have suggested the root for root, but it might be something else entirely. I would write it off to a scribal error except that it occurs in the hand of two different authors.

---

5. <Innennits>  
<Chaunaneets>  
<Juninits>  
<Chouanantz>

/čuné·ʔniθ/

- a. čuné·ʔniθ  
či-yu-nęT-iθ  
repetitive-third singular neuter patient-hill-join  
'conjoined hills' (i.e., two or more hills that merge into one hill)

Comments: none

---

- 6a. <Caunookehoe> b. <Conauh-kare Harooka> c. <Consotobe>

/Kaʔnakehúyʔ/

/Kaʔnakariharʔúyʔ/

?

- a. Kaʔnakehúyʔ  
ka-ʔnak-eh-uyʔ  
third singular neuter agent-pot/kettle-noun suffix-augmentative  
'great pot/kettle'
- b. Kaʔnakariharʔúyʔ  
ka-ʔnak(ar)-(i)har-(ʔ)uyʔ  
third singular neuter agent-pot/kettle-hang-augmentative  
'great hanging pot/kettle'
- c. Etymology unknown

Comments: The etymology for Caunookehoe is clear, although it contains an archaic word for 'pot, kettle' that appears in Lawson's vocabulary, but not in later sources.

My etymology of Conauh-kare Harooka is a best guess. As an Iroquoian place name, 'Hanging Kettle' is attested in the name of the town of Canajoharie, New York. However, here, the etymology assumes that the archaic root -ʔnak 'pot, kettle' had a variant -ʔnakar- when incorporated (compounded) with a verb stem. There are several other noun roots that show a similar alternation in root forms. Also, it is a bit of a stretch to assume that Lawson's <-ooka> here stood for the augmentative suffix, which he usually writes as <-(h)oe>. So, I would treat this etymology with caution.

Consotobe is unrelated to the other two words. The fact that it is spelled with <b> suggests that it is not a Tuscarora or other Iroquoian word at all. None of the Iroquoian languages contains the sounds <p> or <b>, except in recent loan words.

---

7. <Catechna>  
<Contah-nah>

<Caughteghnah>

/Kahtéhnu·?/

- a. Kahtéhnu·?  
ka-htehn-u·-?

third singular neuter agent-loblolly pine-be in water-stative  
'submerged loblolly pine'

Comments: Hewitt gives this word, with some additional variants from other sources, in his article on the Tuscarora in the Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico. He mistakenly claims that the kahtehnu?á·ka·? (people of Kahtéhnu·?) were one of three tribes that formed the Tuscarora nation in North Carolina. Note that Conneghta from set 3 belongs here.

## REFERENCES

- Anonymous  
1711 A treaty between several Tuscarora communities and the Virginia colony, December 11, 1711. *Executive Journals of the Council of the Colony of Virginia* III:293.  
1712 A treaty between several Tuscarora communities and the North Carolina colony, November 25, 1711. Raleigh: North Carolina State Archives.
- Barnwell, J.  
1908 The Tuscarora expedition: letters of Colonel John Barnwell. *South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine* 9(1):28-54.
- Cumming, W.P.  
1958 *The Southeast in Early Maps*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.  
(contains the 1733 Moseley map)
- Holloman, C.R.  
1966 Expeditionary forces in the Tuscarora War. *We the People* XXIII(10):15-30.  
(contains the 1711 von Graffenried map)
- Lawson, J.  
1967 *A New Voyage to Carolina*, edited by H.T. Lefler. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.