



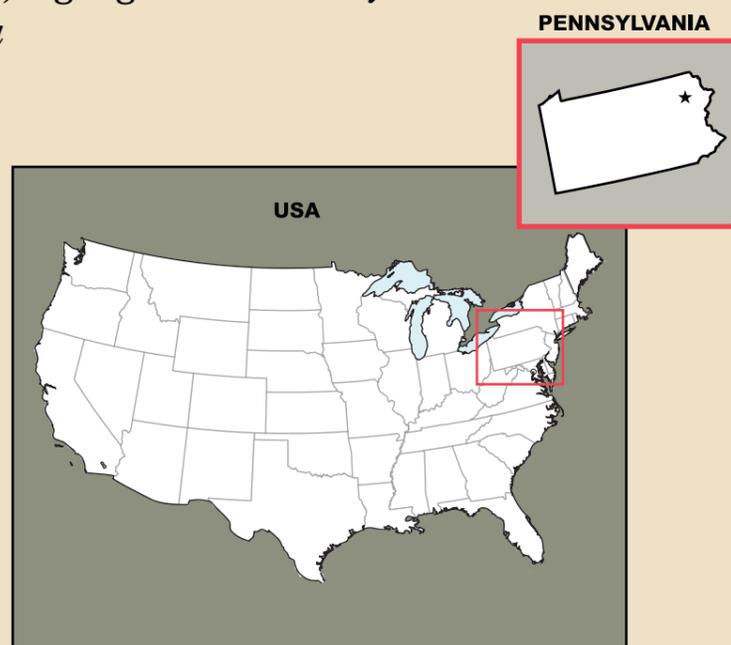
Clash of Empires

James H. Hillestad, Member No. 6, highlights an Indian frontier raid in northeastern Pennsylvania

In the last issue of *The Standard*, Ken Osen wrote of the conflicts between the Native peoples of North America and the European intruders between 1754 and 1794. He focused on the area encompassing the Great Lakes and the Ohio Valley, then referred to as the Northwest Territories.

This article looks at the clash of similar forces in northeastern Pennsylvania.

The American Revolution was in full fury. After spending the 1777 winter in Philadelphia, the British marched across New Jersey and returned to their base in New



York. With its main force bottled up in that area, the British government sought to exploit a perceived Patriot weakness: the fact that the frontier to Washington's rear was vulnerable to Indian raids. British loyalists (Tories) incited and encouraged Indians of the Iroquois nation in New York State to attack settlements in Pennsylvania, and on July 3, 1778, there occurred one of the most horrific events of the frontier war.

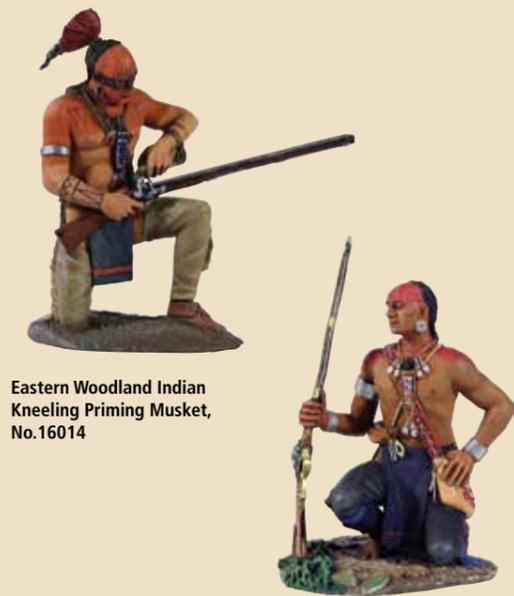
The Wyoming Valley Massacre site is less than 30 miles from



ABOVE
The Susquehanna River

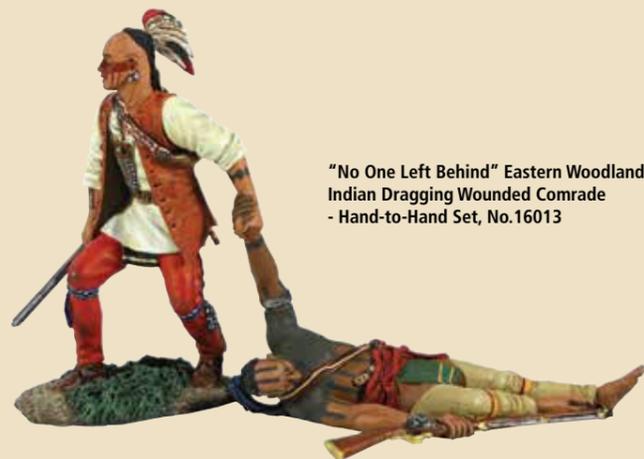
where I sit in the Pocono Mountains. ("Wyoming" derives from the Munsee language, meaning "at the big river flat.") A wide, bucolic plain, the Wyoming Valley is bounded on two sides by moun-

tain ranges and bisected by the Susquehanna River. Forty settlers from Connecticut had established a town along the river, which came to be known as Forty Fort, where the massacre took place.



Eastern Woodland Indian Kneeling Priming Musket, No.16014

Eastern Woodland Indian Kneeling with Hand on Hip, No.16011



"No One Left Behind" Eastern Woodland Indian Dragging Wounded Comrade - Hand-to-Hand Set, No.16013



A body of 400 British loyalists along with 700 Seneca Indians, members of the Iroquois nation, captured and killed or maimed 300 Patriot militia and civilians. Survivor accounts of the grisly ordeal sent chills throughout the Pocono Mountains and the nearby Delaware River Valley.

Responding to this threatening situation, George Washington ordered General John Sullivan to lead a punitive expedition to the Wyoming Valley and to eradicate the Indian menace. After building a road through the forbidding wilderness, Sullivan departed Easton, Pennsylvania, and trekked off

with a force of 2,300 men, eight artillery pieces, 1,200 pack horses, and 800 cattle, along "Sullivan's Trail," headed for the Wyoming Valley. Sullivan's expedition methodically destroyed 40 Iroquois villages and enormous quantities of stored corn and vegetables. The Iroquois never recovered.

W. Britain's detailed new releases of Eastern Woodland Indians, coupled with a visit to the Wyoming Valley, were the inspiration for a diorama depicting an attack on a colonial farmstead, defended by local militia . . . a historic clash of empires captured in miniature detail by W. Britain. ■

Jim Hillestad is a frequent contributor to The Standard and is proprietor of The Toy Soldier Museum. His museum, containing more than 35,000 figures and a large collection of militaria, is located in the Pocono Mountains of northeastern Pennsylvania. For directions and hours, call him at 570 629-7227 or visit his website: www.the-toy-soldier.com